Forestry Commission

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators

Report for 2024-25

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators Report for 2024-25

Key findings

In 2024-25, 7,164 hectares of new tree planting was undertaken in England (10.4 million trees).

Of this, 5,765 hectares (9.5 million trees) was in the form of woodland creation, and 1,399 hectares (888,000 trees) planted outside woodland.

With regards to woodland creation, 5,450 hectares were government supported, and 315 hectares by other organisations. In terms of trees outside woodlands, 1,345 ha were government supported, and 54ha by other organisations and individuals.

In 2024-25, 53% of tree planting funded through the England Woodland Creation Offer increased the species diversity of England’s woodlands.

At 31 March 2025, 57% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed.

In the ten-year period between 2015-24, three tree pests and diseases became established in England.

In the year to 31 March 2025, 99.8% of known tree felling in England was carried with Forestry Commission approval.

In 2023, 8.418 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent sequestered by woodland England.

The natural capital value of England's forests and woodlands was £276.1 billion in 2022 (at 2023 prices).

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Introduction

This Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) report contains our annual report on our corporate performance for 2024-25.

The Forestry Commission are government's forestry and woodland experts and increase the value of woodlands to society and the environment. Our aims and objectives are described in the Thriving for the Future: Forestry Commission Strategy 2023-28[1]. This report provides updates on the Forestry Commission's ten headline indicators, Forestry England's six headline indicators and 23 further indicators for Forest Services. Produced with a view to adhering to the standards of the Code of Practice for Statistics this is an Official Statistics publication. Further information is on the Forestry Commission key performance indicators web pages on gov.uk.

Economics, Evidence and Analysis
Strategy and Transformation
Forest Services
Forestry Commission

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26 June 2025

[1] Forestry Commission (2023) Thriving for the Future: Forestry Commission Strategy 2023-28, Bristol: Forestry Commission, 44p.

Summary

A proper review of this Indicators Report 2024-25 is best made by reading the report in full. We also provide assessments of short-term trends by comparing the difference between the value of the indicator in the most recent single year for which data are available with the data from five years earlier. Where suitable data exists the earlier data point is smoothed using a three-year average. This summary is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary: short term trends in each indicator

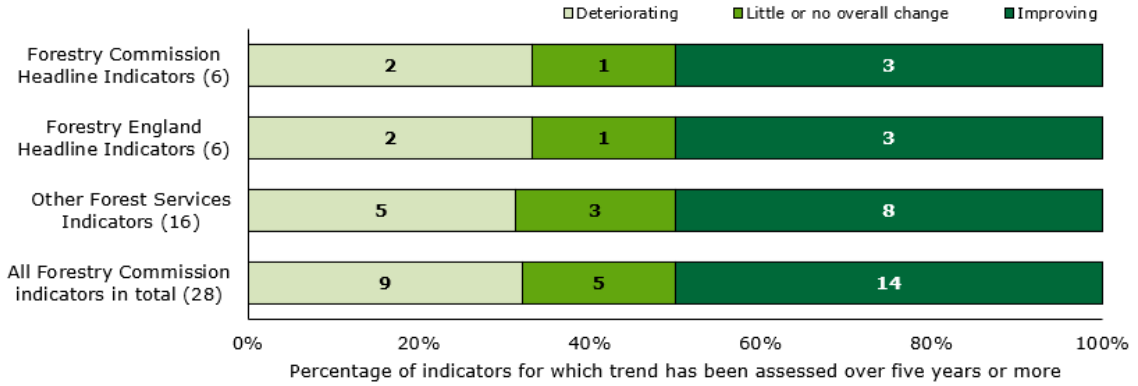
Indicator	Trend	Page
Forestry Commission headline indicators		
New planting of woodland and trees in England	Improving	8
Proportion of England Woodland Creation Offer new planting of woodland that is contributing to diversity of tree species in England	Little change	12
Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed	Deteriorating	13
Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England	Improving	14
Proportion of known tree felling carried out with Forestry Commission approval	Little change	15
Carbon sequestered by England's woodland	Deteriorating	16
Natural capital value of England's forests and woodland	Improving	17
Ecological condition of woodland in England	Not assessed	18
Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland	Little change	21
Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England	Improving	22
Forestry England headline indicators		
Land area of the nation’s forests held by Forestry England	Little change	23
Total natural capital value of the nation’s forests	Improving	24
Public engagement: Number of visits per annum to the nation’s forests managed by Forestry England	Improving	25
Percentage of Forestry England’s income that is self-generated	Deteriorating	26
Health and safety: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England	Deteriorating	27
Health and safety: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation’s forests	Improving	28

Table 1: Summary: short term trends in each indicator continued

Indicator		Trend	Page
Forest Services indicators			
Area of woodland in England		Little change	29
Area of tree cover outside woodland in England		Improving	31
Percentage of new planting of woodland in England that is broadleaved woodland		Improving	32
Net change in woodland area, based on the balance between new planting of woodland, and woodland removal		Improving	33
Connectivity of woodland in England		Little change	36
Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed		Deteriorating	37
Number of high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR)		Improving	38
Area of felling licences issued		Improving	42
Number of apprentices, those with work-based diplomas, and university students entering forestry	Apprentices and those with work-based diplomas	Deteriorating	43
	University students	Little change	44
Forest Services' training support for the English forestry sector (hours of training events)		Improving	45
Projected carbon capture in 2050 by validated Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects in England		Little change	43
Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is harvested		Deteriorating	46
Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources		Deteriorating	47
Percentage of woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest in desired condition in England	Favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	Little change	48
	Favourable condition	Little change	48
Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and of open habitat from woodland in England	PAWS	Not assessed	49
	Open habitat	Improving	49
Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data		Deteriorating	51
Percentage of people in Priority Places close to accessible woodland in England		Little change	53
Percentage of grant and felling licence transactions completed on time or early		Improving	54
Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling licence customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied		Not assessed	55
Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees (headcount) in Forest Services		Improving	56

A precis of the short-term trend assessments is also provided. This is for 28 out of the 39 Forestry Commission indicators where the trend has been assessed over a period of five years or more (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Precis of short-term trends in the Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators, 2024-25



Methodology

The methodology for the short-term time series trend assessments is like a key part of that developed for the UK Biodiversity Indicators (JNCC, 2024). Table 1 has the assessment criteria.

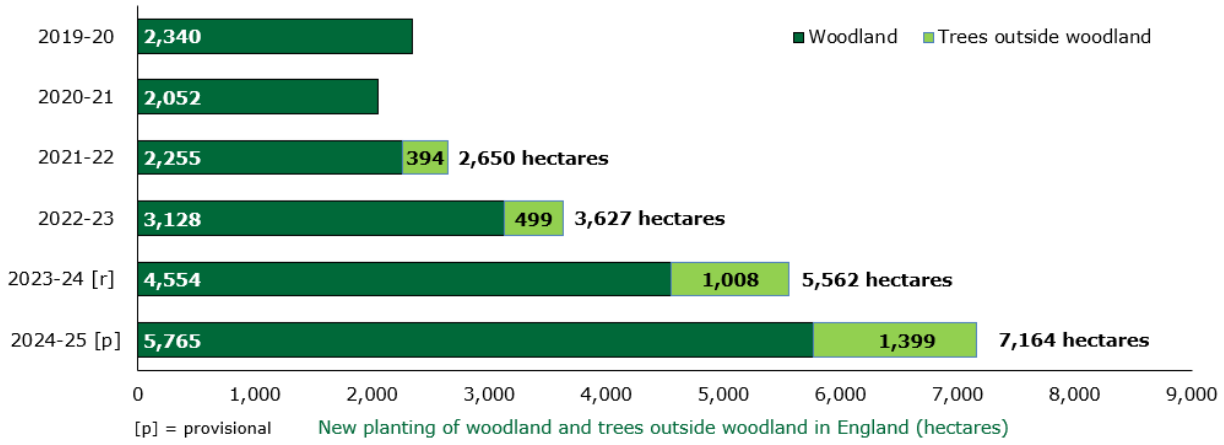
Table 1: Indicator trend assessment criteria

Category	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

The assessments do not account for other fluctuations in intervening years. Where we do not yet have a time series covering at least five years the assessment threshold is 1% per annum for the longest time period available, and these assessments should be treated with more care.

Forestry Commission headline indicators

New planting of woodland and trees in England



Note: Statistics until 2021-22 are for planting of new woodland and from 2022-23 onwards for planting of new woodland and trees outside woodland. Statistics for 2023-24 have been revised to include further data returned.

Source: Forestry Statistics 2024 (Forest Research) and Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators.

In 2024-25, 5,765 hectares of new woodland were established in England, of which 5,450 hectares received government funding, mostly through the Nature for Climate Fund. The Forestry Commission's 'England Woodland Creation Offer' and England's Community Forests 'Trees for Climate programme' were the largest contributors. Woodland creation rates in 2024-25 were 27% higher than the revised figure for 2023-24, and 156% those achieved in 2021-22.

In addition, 888,000 trees were planted outside woodland, equivalent to 1,399 hectares, bringing the total area of tree canopy established and numbers of trees planted to 7,164 hectares and 10.4 million trees, respectively. This represents a 29% increase in the total area of tree and woodland canopy established, and a 46% increase in the number of trees planted compared to the previous year's revised figures.

Table 3: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 2024-25

New planting of woodland by type of support[1]	Area of woodland newly planted, 2024-25 (hectares)	Area of woodland newly planted, 2024-25 (equivalent in number of trees)
Woodland[2]		
Government-supported		
Countryside Stewardship woodland	7	12,000
England Woodland Creation Offer	2,098	3,202,000
High Speed 2 Woodland Fund	27	46,000
Forestry England	433	921,000
Countryside Stewardship: other tree planting options	83	134,000
Environment Agency	176	200,000
Northern Forest	263	325,000
National Forest Company	75	137,000
Community Forests	2,011	3,885,000
Forest of Cornwall	112	96,000
Great Northumberland Forest	160	118,000
Shared Outcomes Fund	5	4,000
Sub-total Government-supported	**5,450**	**9,079,000**
Other support and non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Carbon Guarantee	161	259,000
Woodland Trust	154	215,000
Sub-total	**315**	**474,000**
Total woodland	**5,765 hectares of woodland**	**9,553,000 trees within woodland**

Table 3 continued:

New planting of trees outside woodland by type of support	Approximate area equivalent, 2024-25 (hectares)	Number of individual trees newly planted, 2024-25 (number)
Trees outside woodland[3]		
Government-supported		
Countryside Stewardship single trees[a]	28	23,000
Forestry England[b]	196	37,000
Environment Agency[b]	138	31,000
Northern Forest[b]	17	24,000
National Forest Company[b]	59	3,000
Community Forests[b]	516	453,000
Coronation Living Heritage Fund[a]	16	13,000
Forest of Cornwall[b]	64	32,000
Great Northumberland Forest[b]	8	8,000
Shared Outcomes Fund[a]	5	4,000
Local Authority Treescapes Fund[a]	261	209,000
Urban Trees Challenge Fund[a]	20	16,000
National Health Service[a]	15	12,000
Sub-total Government-supported	**1,345**	**864,000**
Other support and non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Trust	54	25,000
Sub-total	**54**	**25,000**
Total trees outside woodland	**Approx. 1,399 hectares**	**888,000 trees outside woodland**
Total woodland and trees outside woodland[4]	**Approx. 7,164 hectares within and outside woodland**	**10,442,000 trees within and outside woodland**

Notes to Table 3:

1. The statistics are estimates for the full 2024-25 year based on returns provided including revisions since the interim report at 30 September 2024. The density of tree planting in numbers of trees planted per hectare of land varies between planting schemes. Statistics in the table may not sum due to rounding. Areas of woodland are rounded to the nearest hectare and tree numbers are approximate and rounded to the nearest 1,000 trees.

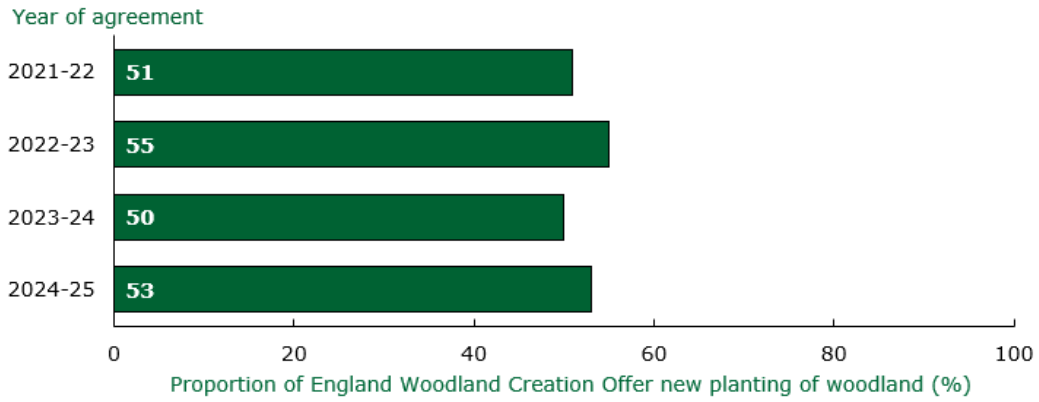
2. Statistics for woodland are for new planting that is estimated to meet the National Forest Inventory (NFI) definition of woodland, namely as land with a minimum area of 0.5 hectare under stands of trees, and tree crown cover of at least 20%, or the potential to achieve this. The minimum width for woodland is 20 metres. Statistics are largely based on contributions that satisfy both the criteria of a gross area of >=0.5 hectare and stocking density of >=400 stems per hectare. Where we otherwise identified planting that was not woodland this was excluded. Statistics for woodland include agroforestry schemes where we identified these and where they have a >=100 stems per hectare stocking density.

3. Statistics for trees outside woodland have been converted to an approximate equivalent gross area in hectares based on (a) the professional advice of the Trees and Woodland Scientific Advisory Group at an assumed stocking density of 800 trees to 1 hectare or (b) records of new planting.

4. This indicator at present includes returns received for new planting either supported by government or that facilitated by the Woodland Carbon Guarantee or supported by the Woodland Trust. It is anticipated that future reports will include further new planting in England.

Assessment of change in: New planting of woodland and trees in England	
Five-year trend, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Improving

Proportion of England Woodland Creation Offer new planting of woodland that is contributing to diversity of tree species in England



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

In 2024-25, 53% of tree planting funded through the England Woodland Creation Offer were 'non-core' species, increasing the species diversity of England's woodlands. This compares with 50% in 2023-24, although no obvious trend is evident over the four years that we have data for this new indicator; indeed, 53% of non-core species planted in 2024-25 is almost identical to the average over the four years for which data are available.

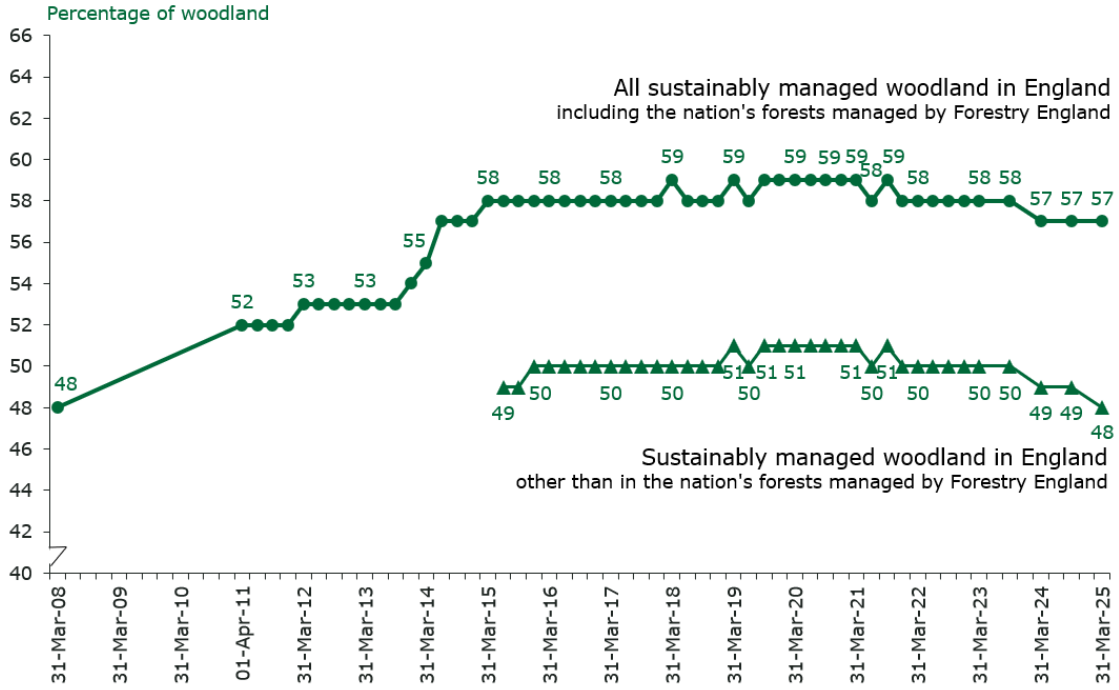
Table 4: Principal tree species in England included as core species in this indicator

Broadleaf	**Conifer**
Oak – sessile and pedunculate only	Sitka spruce
Birch – downy and silver only	Corsican pine
Beech – only *Fagus sylvatica*	Scots pine
Ash – only common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)	Douglas fir
	Larches (all)
	Norway Spruce
	Lodgepole Pine

Note to table: At present, the indicator is based on the year that agreements were signed and only includes agreements when fully planted and claimed. As such, the data point for 2024-25 (and previous years) may change as a larger proportion of agreements are planted.

Assessment of change in: The proportion of England Woodland Creation Offer new planting of woodland that is contributing to diversity of tree species in England	
Three-year trend only, 2024-25 compared to 2021-22	Little or no overall change

Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed



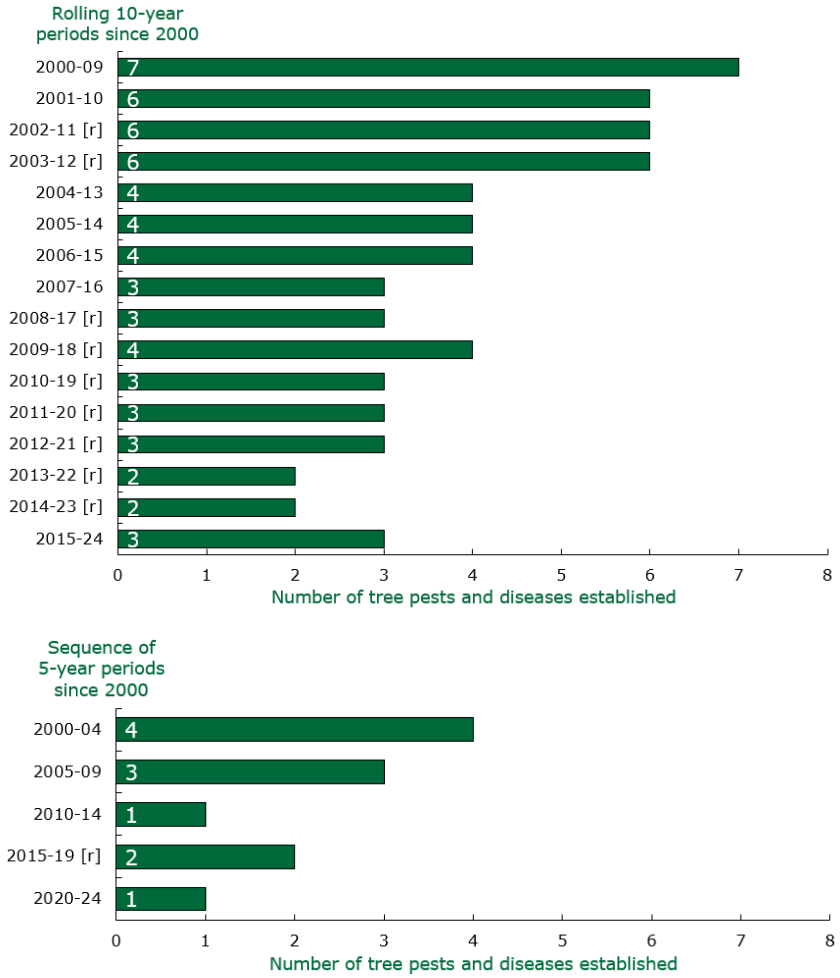
Source: Forestry Commission administrative data and the National Forest Inventory (Forest Research).

As at 31st March 2025, 57% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed.

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 grant or felling licence approval 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.

Assessment of change in: Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed	
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-25 compared to 31-Mar-20	Deteriorating

Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England



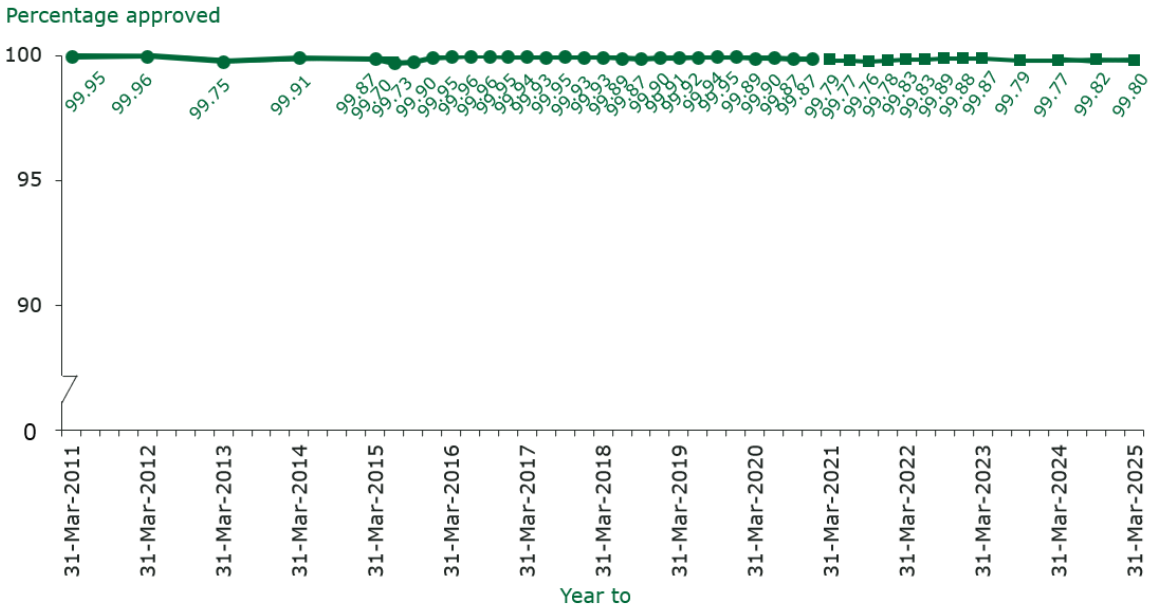
Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

In the most recent ten-year period (2015-24), three tree pests and diseases became 'established' in England. These are oriental chestnut gall wasp (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*), elm zigzag sawfly (*Aproceros leucopoda*) and, most recently, plane lace bug (*Corythucha ciliata).* Forestry Commission confirmed findings of plane lace bug in central London in 2024, and although it is not a regulated pest which means there is no requirement to take statutory action, people are encouraged to remain vigilant for signs of this pest and to report any suspected findings using our online portal TreeAlert. As part of our extensive surveillance programme, Forestry Commission continues to conduct surveillance for a range of pest and diseases, including a number of priority pest and diseases.

The time-series has been revised to now exclude sweet chestnut blight to reflect the assessment in the UK Plant Health Risk Register.

Assessment of change in: Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England	
Five-year trend, 2015-24 compared to 2010-19	Improving

Proportion of known tree felling in England carried out with Forestry Commission approval

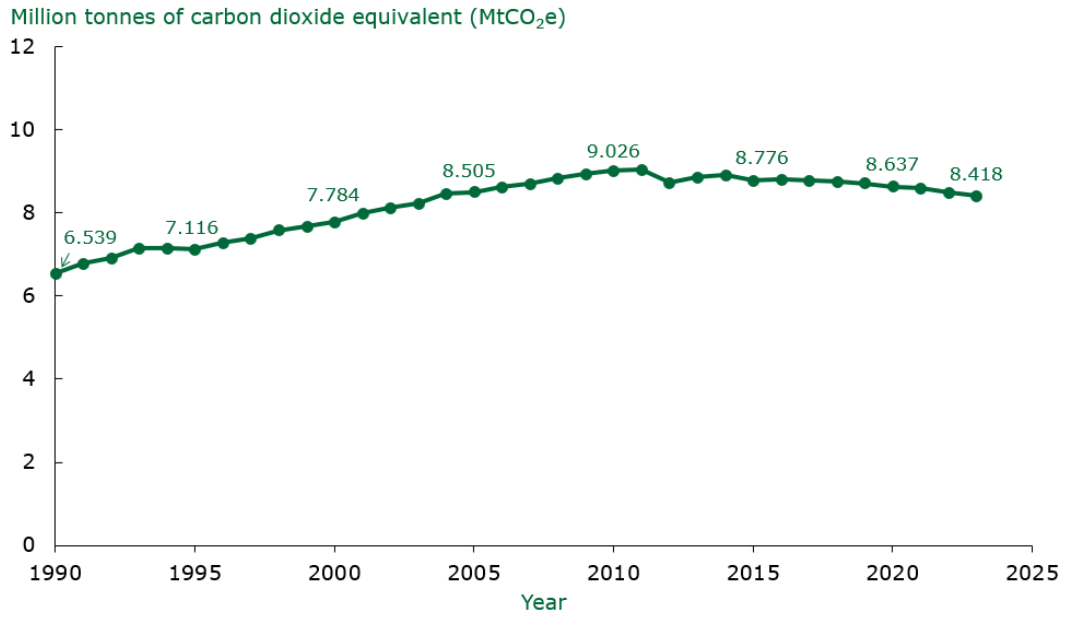


Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

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

Assessment of change in: Proportion of known tree felling in England carried out with Forestry Commission approval	
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-25 compared to 31-Mar-20	Little or no overall change

Carbon sequestered by England's woodland



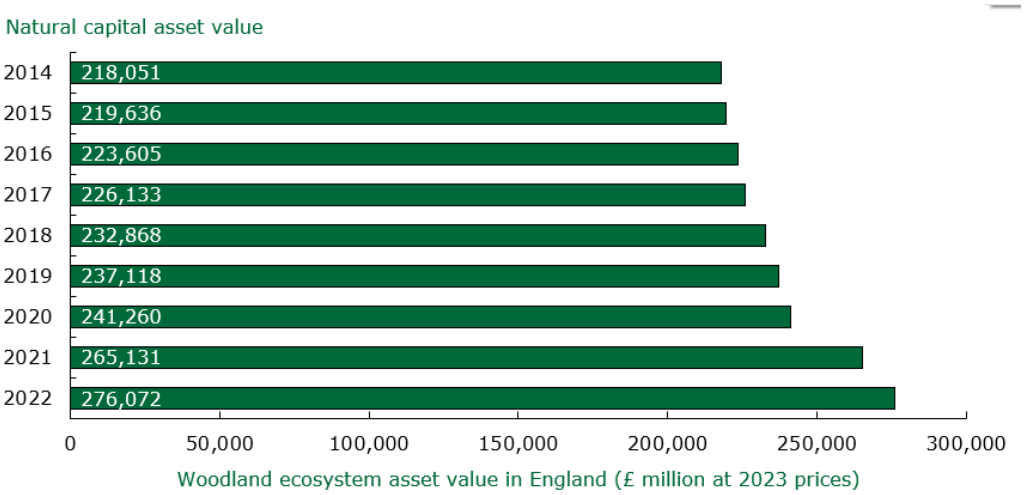
Source: Data from the UK greenhouse gas emissions statistics (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero).

The net greenhouse gas sink strength of England's woodlands decreased slightly from 8.500 $MtCO_2e$ in 2022 to 8.418 $MtCO_2e$ in 2023 (based on the updated time-series), but remained 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. No further update is available.

A removal (or sink) of 8.418 $MtCO_2e$ is equivalent to 2.2% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions for 2023, or 18.1% of agricultural emissions (for UK total GHG emissions and UK Agricultural emissions see Table 1.2 of https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e3e460e8428b01705de02f/final-greenhouse-gas-emissions-tables-2023.xlsx).

Assessment of change in: Carbon sequestered by England's woodland	
Five-year trend, 2023 compared to 2018	Deteriorating

Natural Capital Value of England's forests and woodlands



Source: Woodland natural capital accounts, UK: 2025 (Office for National Statistics, 2025).

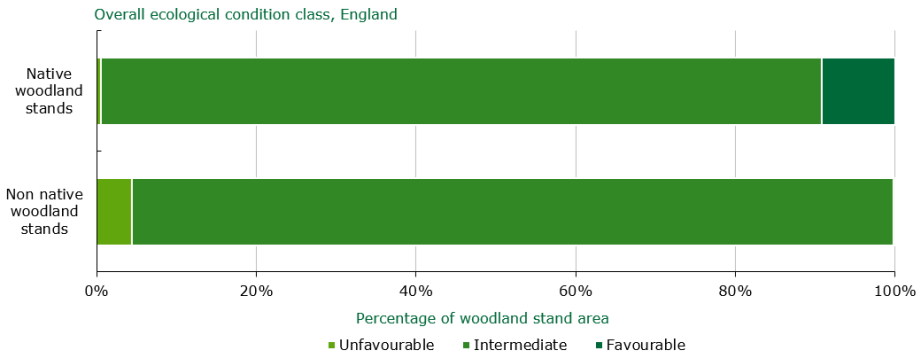
Note: Statistics shown include the same eight ecosystem types for 2014 to 2020 inclusive and nine for 2021 and 2022. Full comparable statistics for 2023 are not yet available and are planned to be provided in the next report.

The Office for National Statistics' "woodland natural capital accounts 2025" provide the financial and societal value of the woodland natural resource in England, from the range of ecosystem services that they provides. These include timber production, greenhouse gas regulation and the value from recreation and tourism. These accounts are designated as official statistics in development and are being continually revised to produce the best statistics with the available data and methods. The analytical method and range of services valued has changed over time, and so the accounts cannot be directly compared over the full assessment period. The overall value of natural capital from England's woodlands is estimated at £276 billion in 2022, an increase of 4% on 2021 when the asset value of the same nine ecosystem services were reported. This partly reflects an increasing level of woodland cover in England associated with new planting. No further update is available. The largest contributions in 2022 were 30% from air pollution regulation, 26% from greenhouse gas regulating and 18% from the health benefits of recreation.

Assessment of change in: Natural Capital Value of England's forests and woodlands

One-year trend only, 2022 compared to 2021	Improving

Ecological condition of woodland in England



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

Woodland ecological condition (WEC) measures a range of characteristics of woodland that are related to its capacity to support wildlife or provide other environmental, social or economic benefits. There are 15 characteristics or features of woodland in the indicator, including size of woodland parcel, vertical structure, age distribution of tree species, nativeness of occupancy and tree pests and diseases (for details, see: NFI Woodland Ecological Condition - Forest Research). Improved condition of woodlands will increase their contribution to government commitments to recover biodiversity and to increase resilience of woodlands to climate change.

There are 914 thousand hectares of native woodland in England (around 68% of all woodland) and 398 thousand hectares of non-native woodland (30%), and 29 thousand hectares identified as 'near native and fragments' (2%); plus a small area that was not determinable. Of this, 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. Sites have been re-surveyed and further updates will be included in future.

Figure 2: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in native woodland stands in England

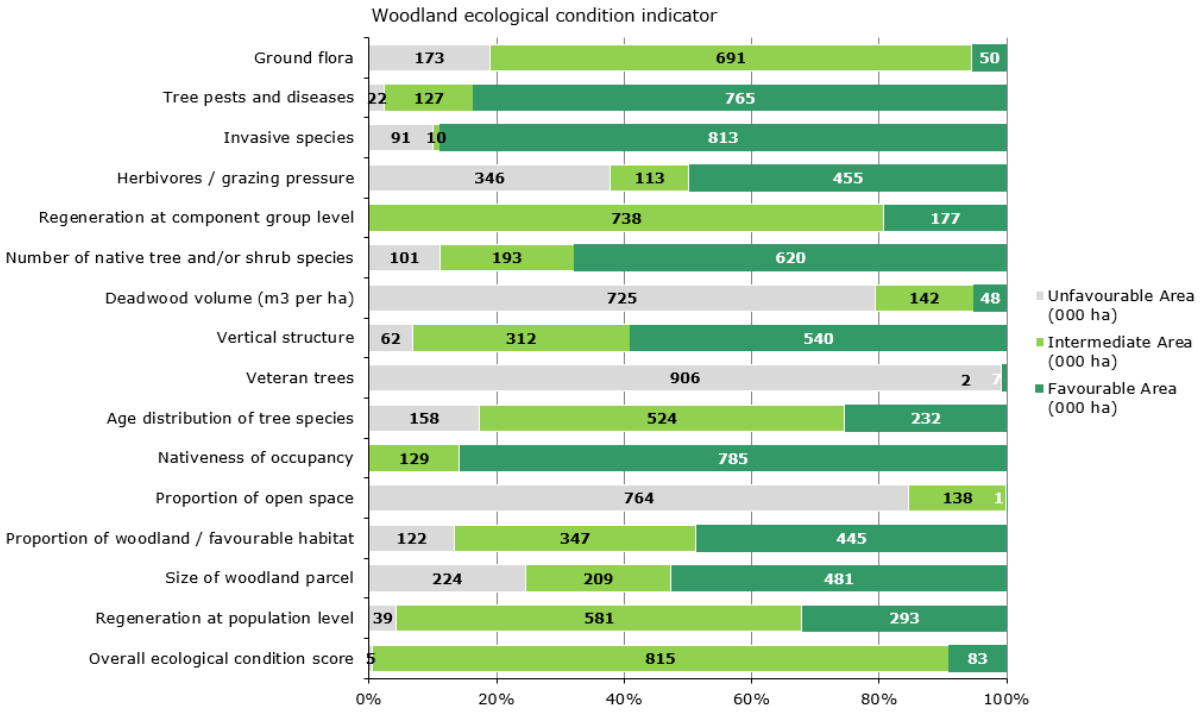
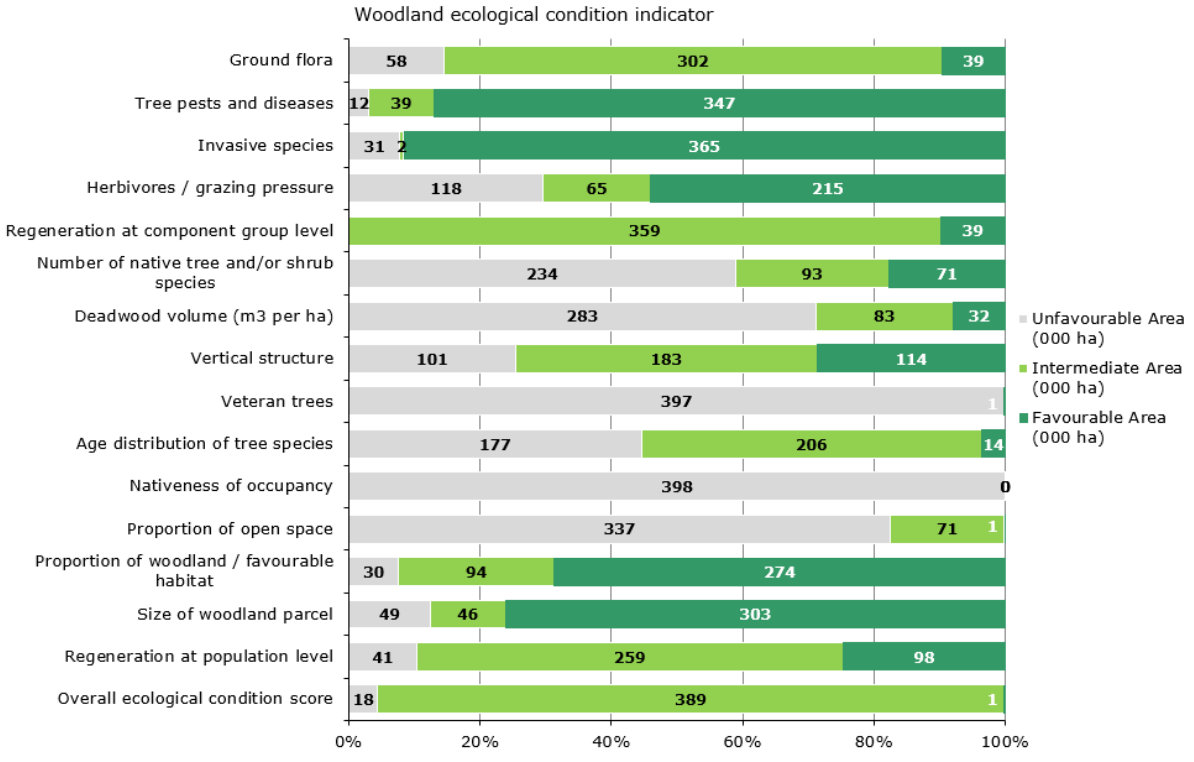


Figure 3: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in non-native woodland stands in England



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:

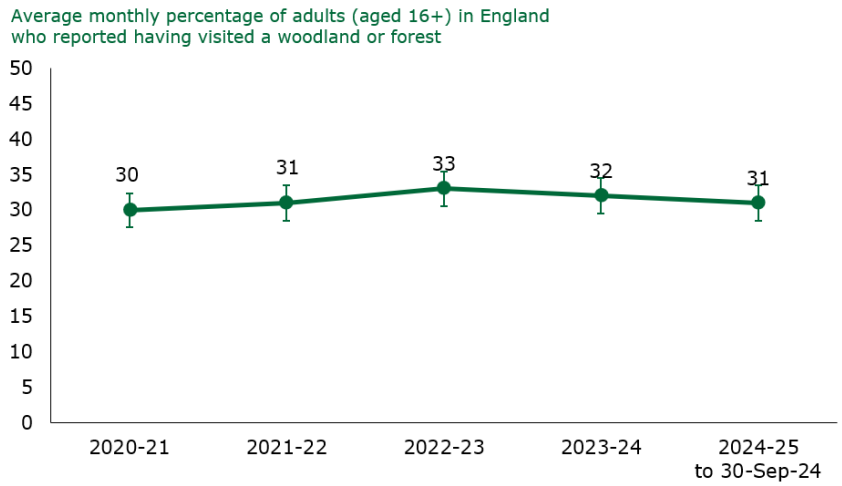
The woodland ecological condition classification categories and indicators are defined in the methodology report: Forestry Commission (2020), NFI woodland ecological condition in Great Britain: Methodology National Forest Inventory.

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. NFI Woodland Ecological Condition - Forest Research

Assessment of change in: Ecological condition of woodland in England	
This indicator	Not assessed due to no comparable data

Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland

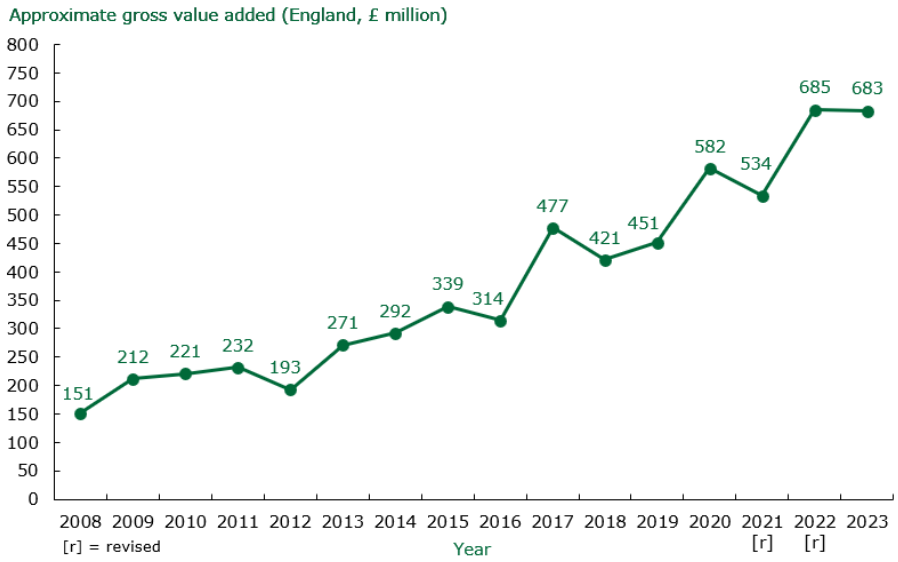


Source: People and Nature Survey for England (Natural England).

The estimate of the proportion of visitors to woodlands has remained broadly steady with no statistically significant change. For the first half year of 2024-25 it is at the level last seen in 2021-22, at 31%. This is marginally below the estimates from the past two years but still above the level of 30% seen in 2020-21.

Assessment of change in: Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland	
Four and a half year trend only, 2024-25 to 30-Sep-25 compared to 2020-21	Little change

Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England



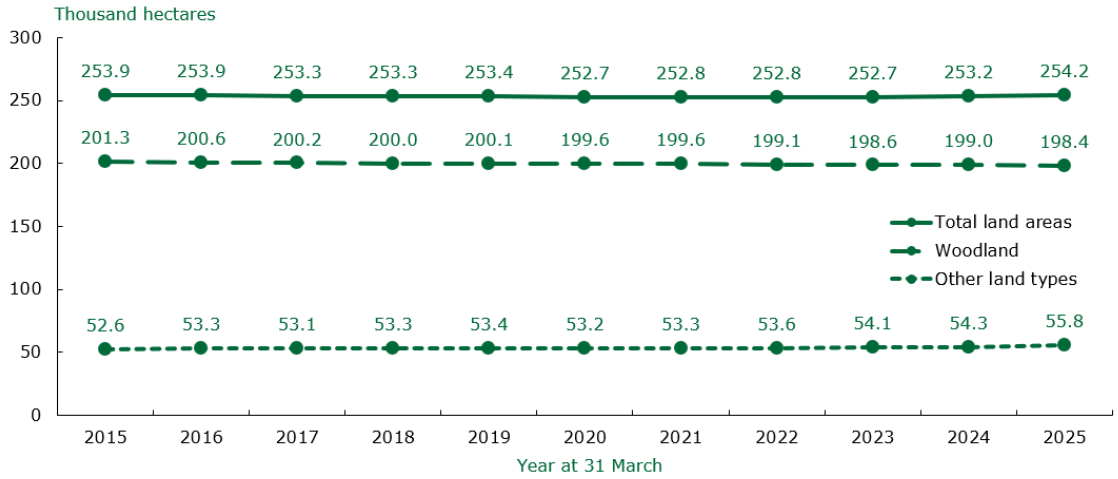
Source: Annual Business Survey 2023 (Office for National Statistics, 2025). No further update is available.

The Gross Value Added from forestry continues the long-term upward trend of significant positive contribution to the UK economy. Government support for productive forestry and use of domestic timber in construction will help this trend, while also boosting the environmental and social benefits of sustainable forest management.

Assessment of change in: Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England	
Five-year trend, 2023 compared to 2018	Improving

Forestry England headline indicators

Land area of the nation’s forests held by Forestry England



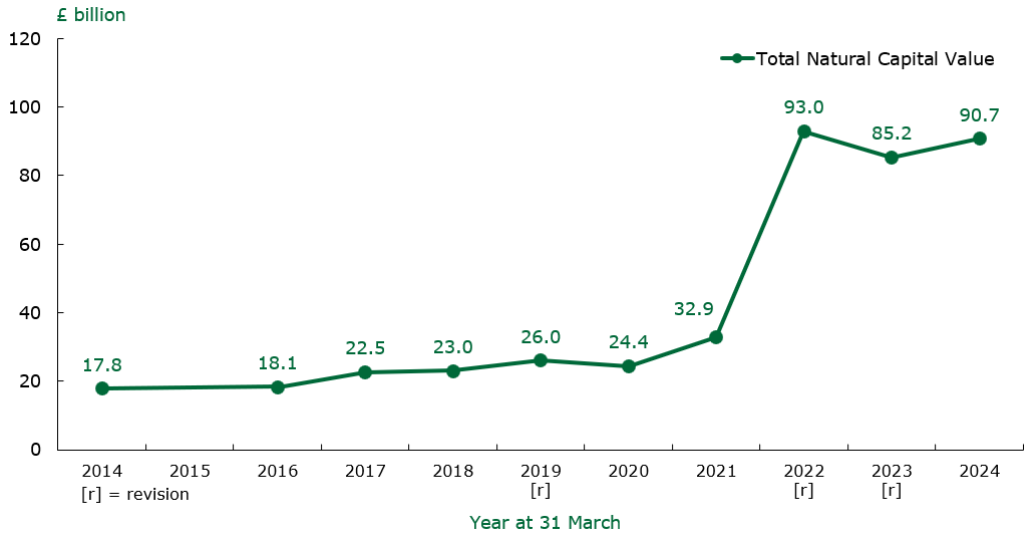
Source: Forestry England administrative data.

The total area of the nation’s forests, which includes those which are owned freehold or through leasehold by Forestry England, has increased by 985 hectares in the last year due to our proactive Woodland Creation programme, largely funded by the Nature for Climate Fund. The total area is now 254,216 hectares, the highest level in the past 10 years.

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

Five-year trend, 31 March 2025 compared to 31 March 2020	Little or no overall change

Total natural capital value of the nation's forests



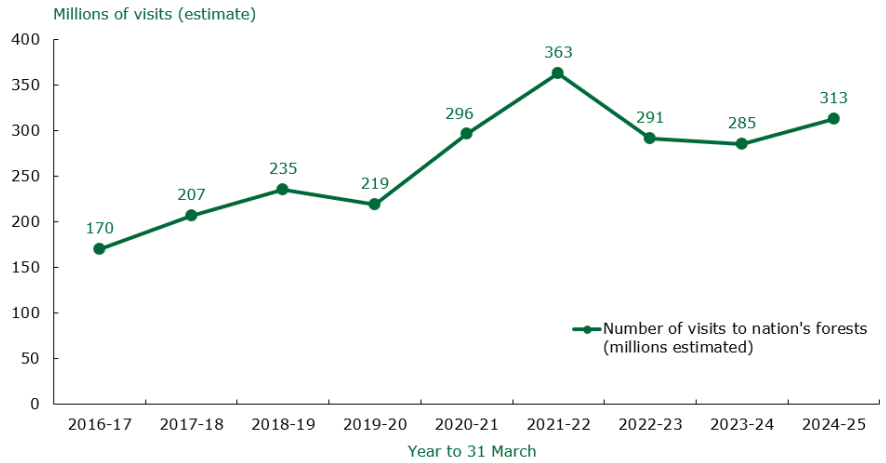
Source: Forestry England Natural Capital Accounts (Forestry England, 2023).

Note: The 2021-22 and 2022-23 figure have been adjusted from the previously published figure of £61.6 and £63.5 billion respectively as a result of an error identified in the calculation of the physical health asset value resulting in it being understated since it was introduced in 2021-22. The introduction of the physical health measure in 2021-22 accounts for the significant increase in value from 2020-21.

As at 31 March 2024, the net natural capital asset value of England's forests is estimated at £90.7 billion — up from £85.2 billion (adjusted figure) in 2022-23, and more than 400% increase from the 2013-14 baseline. This continued growth reflects not only improved valuation methods, but also the real, on-the-ground impact of Forestry England's work. Initiatives such as our 'Biodiversity Plan' which focuses on protecting species and sites, creating networks of open and dynamic habitats woodland creation, managing ancient woodlands and trees of special interest, restoring species, and forest wilding; our 'Access for All' programme which is transforming the nation's forests into inclusive, health-boosting spaces where everyone can connect with nature and thrive; and our Woodland Creation Programme are restoring ecosystems, expanding habitats, and increasing access and recreation offer enhancing the long-term benefits forests provide to people, nature, and the economy. The rise in value reinforces the role of England's forests as vital natural infrastructure, supporting national priorities around climate resilience, health, biodiversity, and sustainable growth.

Assessment of change in: Total natural capital value of the nation's forests	
Five-year trend, March 2025 compared to March 2020	Improving

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



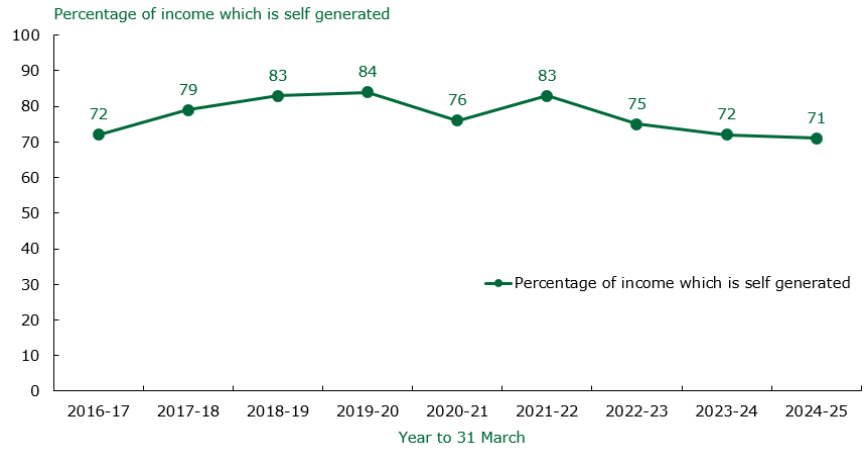
Source: Surveys conducted for Forestry England.

In 2024/25, visits to the nation’s forests increased by 10% compared to 2023-24 and remain significantly higher than pre-pandemic, up 33% since 2018-19.

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

Four-year trend only, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Improving

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



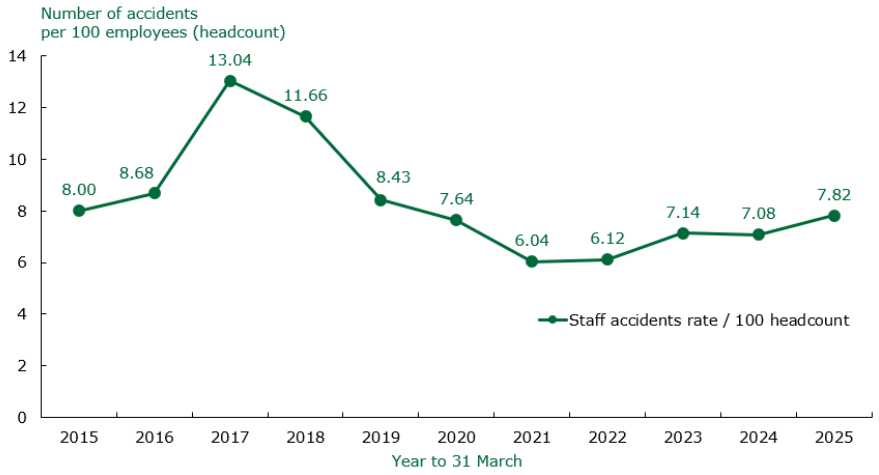
Source: Forestry England accounts.

This indicator shows how much of our operating income is self-generated and indicates the relative level of government funding. In 2024-25 our self-generated income increased by £5.4 million with increases in timber and recreation income, partially offset by a reduction in events income which is now received net of costs. Meanwhile, £4.3m additional funding was received, in line with increased delivery of Defra funded, ringfenced programmes. Such programmes include:

- Woodland creation – new planting of 433 hectares of woodland in 2024-25. This will be an under representation of what was finally planted as at 31 March 2025 due to the time lag involved in updating the sub-compartment database.
- Biodiversity – forest wilding and nature recovery
- Access for all – completion of 70 projects improving accessibility of the Nation's Forests e.g. changing places and accessible trails.

Assessment of change in: Percentage of Forestry England's income that is self-generated	
Five-year trend, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Deteriorating

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

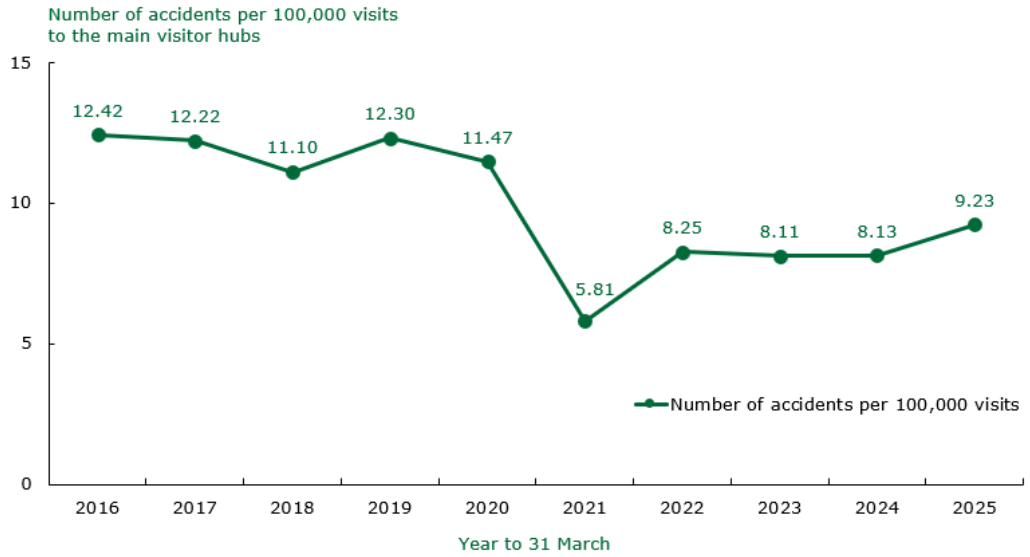


Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

The number of accidents per 100 employees (headcount) for the financial year 2024-25 was 7.82. Work to improve reporting and the quality of investigations is well underway, and the organisation is now looking at how to improve learning and sharing of lessons that may help to further prevent recurrence.

Assessment of change in: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England	
Five-year trend, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Deteriorating

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



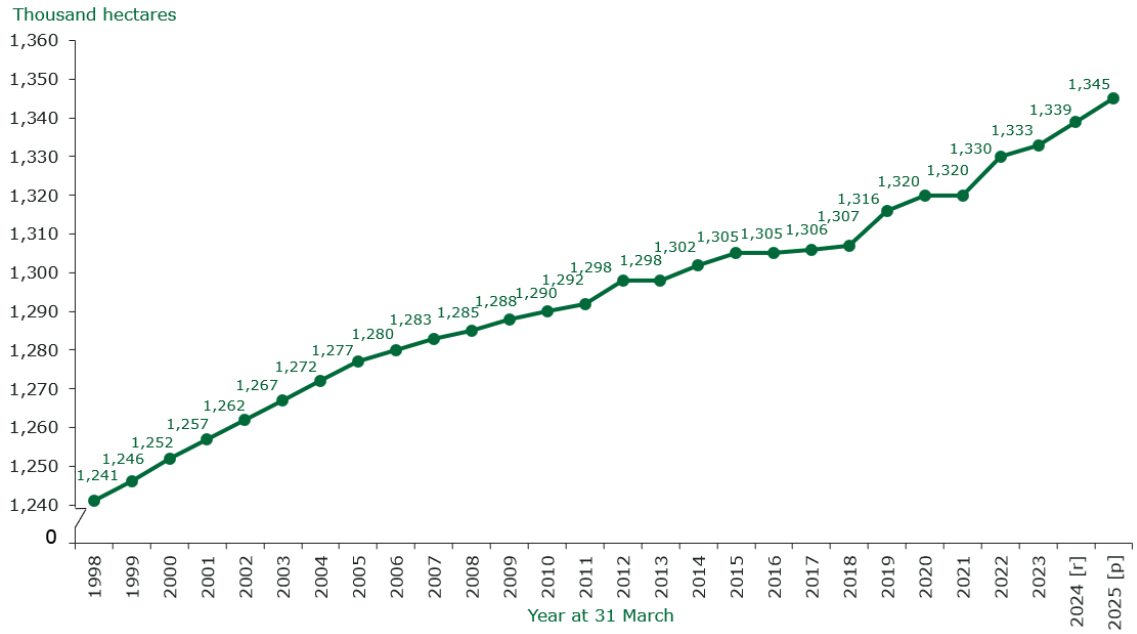
Source: Forestry England administrative data.

The public accident rate is calculated from the total number of accidents over the financial year, which is divided by the total visits to main hubs. The rate is then shown as accidents per 100,000 visits. The accident rate for 2024-25 was 9.23 – a 14% increase in the number of accidents reported compared to 2023-24 data.

Assessment of change in: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests	
Five-year trend, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Improving

Forest Services indicators

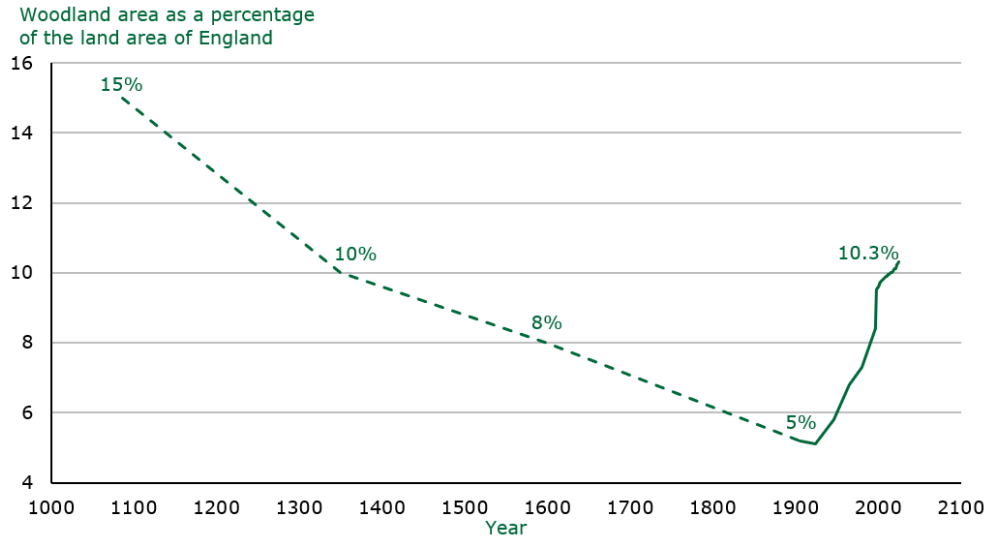
Area of woodland in England



Source: Forestry Statistics and Provisional Woodland Statistics (Forest Research).

The area of woodland in England is 1,345 thousand hectares (10.3% of the land area) at 31 March 2025 (provisional statistics). This statistic is scheduled to be confirmed in Forestry Statistics 2025 (published by Forest Research) later in the year. The March 2025 figure is an increase of six thousand hectares compared with the revised statistic for the previous year.

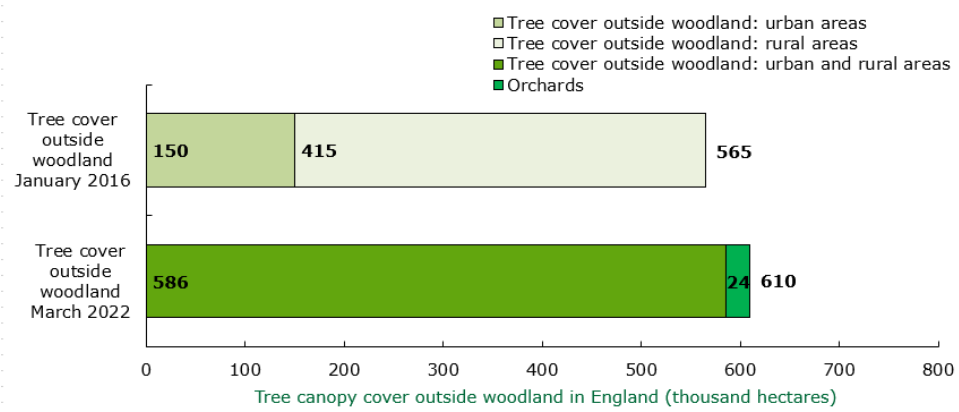
Figure 4: Woodland area as a percentage of land area of England



Source: Forestry Statistics.

Assessment of change in: Area of woodland	
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-25 compared to 31-Mar-20	Little or no overall change

Area of tree cover outside woodland in England

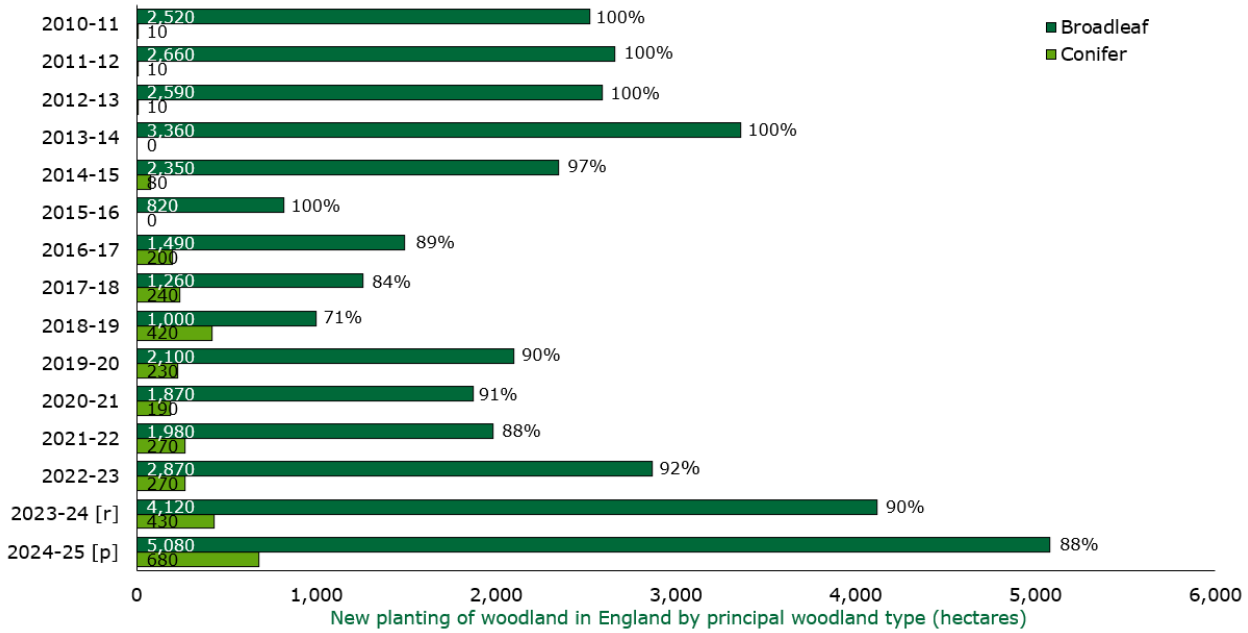


Source: Forestry Statistics 2023 (Forest Research).

The estimated tree canopy cover in England at March 2022 is 586 thousand hectares of trees outside woodland and 24 thousand hectares of traditional orchards bringing total canopy area of trees outside woodland and orchards to 610 thousand hectares. No further update is available.

Assessment of change in: Area of tree cover outside woodland in England	
Five or more year trend, Mar-22 compared to Jan-16	Improving

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



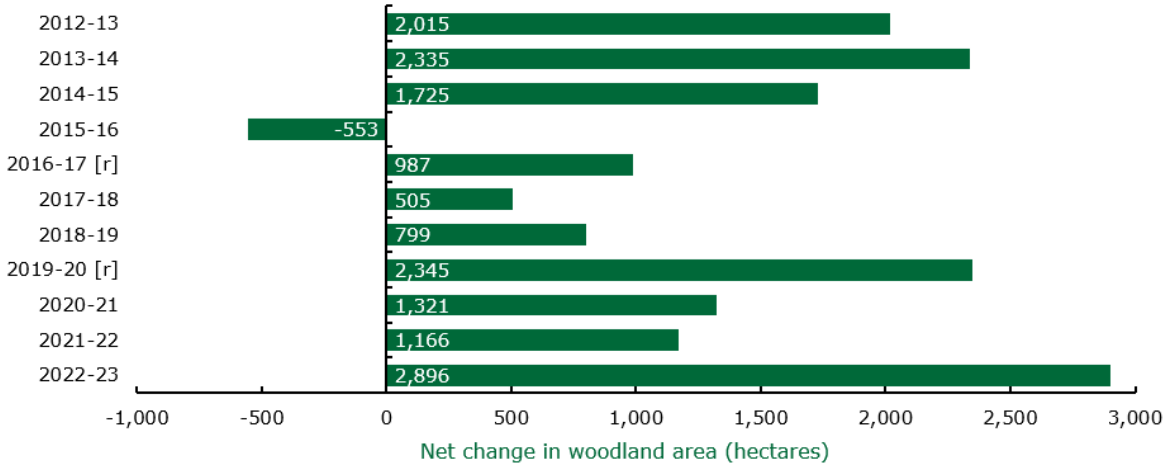
Source: Forestry Statistics 2024 and Provisional Woodland Statistics 2025 (Forest Research)

In 2024-25, 88% of new planting of woodland in England was broadleaf (5,085 hectares), with the remaining 12% conifer (681 hectares). This provisional figure will be confirmed later in the year in Forestry Statistics. The proportion of conifer planted in 2024-25 is a slight increase on the revised figure for the previous year (10%), but the vast majority remains broadleaf woodland.

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

This indicator	Improving

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



Sources: Forestry Commission administrative data and statistics.

In 2022-23, the most recent year for which information is available, there was a net increase in woodland area of 2,896 hectares. This is calculated from new woodland creation in 2022-23 less any areas of woodland removal for open habitat restoration and woodland loss to development. This means the total net change in woodland area over the previous five years (2018-19 to 2022-23) was +8,527 hectares which equates to an average of +1,705 hectares per annum.

The net increase was substantially higher than that reported for 2021-22 (1,166 hectares) and the average over the five years preceding 2022-23 (1,127 hectares). This reflects the year-on-year increase in the area of new woodland created coinciding with a fall in the area converted to open habitat in the nation's forests in the same year. The area of woodland lost to development (125 hectares) was 65% less than the average over the preceding five years (355 hectares).

Table 4: Components of net change in woodland area in England

Contribution to change in woodland area (Hectares)	**2012-13**	**2013-14**	**2014-15**	**2015-16**	**2016-17** [r]	**2017-18**
Woodland creation (+)						
a. Total new planting[1]	**2,595**	**3,361**	**2,426**	**824**	**1,685**	**1,501**
Woodland removal (-)						
Open habitat restoration other than in the nation's forests[2]	341	693	273	434	200	197
Open habitat restoration in the nation's forests[2]	119	213	70	116	85	138
Attributable to development[3]	120	120	358	827	413	661
b. Total woodland removal	**580**	**1,026**	**701**	**1,377**	**698**	**996**
c. Total net change in woodland area (a. minus b.)	**2,015**	**2,335**	**1,725**	**-553**	**987**	**505**

Contribution to change in woodland area (Hectares)	**2018-19**	**2019-20** [r]	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**
Woodland creation (+)					
a. Total new planting[1]	**1,413**	**2,340**	**2,052**	**2,255**	**3,129**
Woodland removal (-)					
Open habitat restoration other than in the nation's forests[2]	286	89	9	30	7
Open habitat restoration in the nation's forests[2]	-105	-169	399	777	101
Attributable to development[3]	433	75	324	282	125
b. Total woodland removal	**614**	**-5**	**732**	**1,089**	**233**
c. Total net change in woodland area (a. minus b.)	**799**	**2,345**	**1,321**	**1,166**	**2,896**

[r] = revision

Sources:

1. Forestry Commission (2024) Forestry Statistics 2024, Edinburgh: Forestry Commission.
2. Forestry Commission (2025) Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2024-25, 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, and updates from the National Forest Inventory team.

Summary of methodology

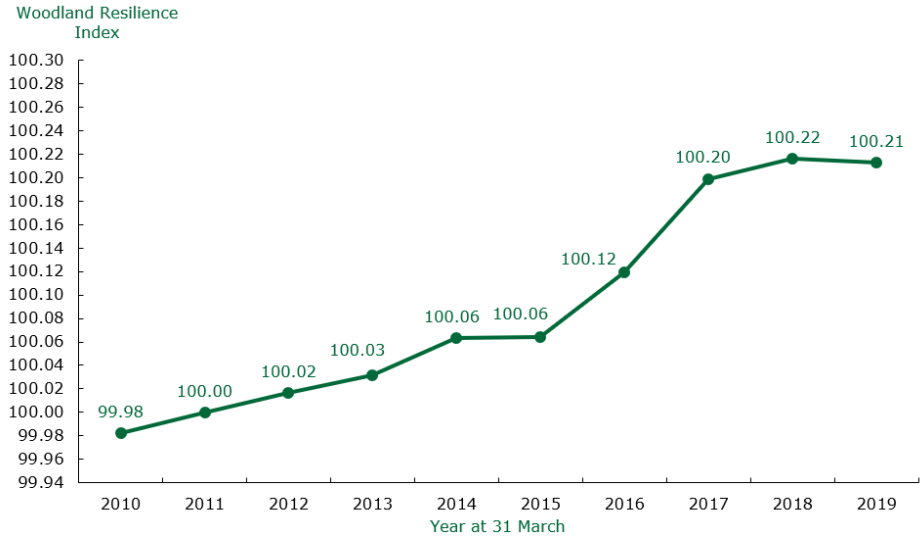
This indicator combines all relevant known sources of woodland creation (gross) and woodland removal (gross) data, to show the balance (net change) over the short term. This is to add to the fuller picture of change provided by the area of woodland in England.

The indicator generally reports woodland creation and loss of woodland in England conforming 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). The introduction of integral open space within existing woodland is not reported as woodland loss as long as it is completely surrounded by woodland.

In this indicator figures for gains and losses are for the years of records namely financial years to 31 March, except figures for area of woodland removal attributable to development that are for months June to June.

Assessment of change in: Net change in woodland area	
Five-year trend, 2022-23 compared to 2017-18	Improving

Connectivity of woodland in England



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data and National Forest Inventory woodland map (Forest Research).

Connectivity is based on the size and distribution of habitat patches and how easily a species is likely to be able to move through the landscape between those patches. It aims to measure how well we are addressing habitat fragmentation – the process of splitting habitat into smaller patches over time as land is converted to other uses – a process that has been a major driver of biodiversity loss.

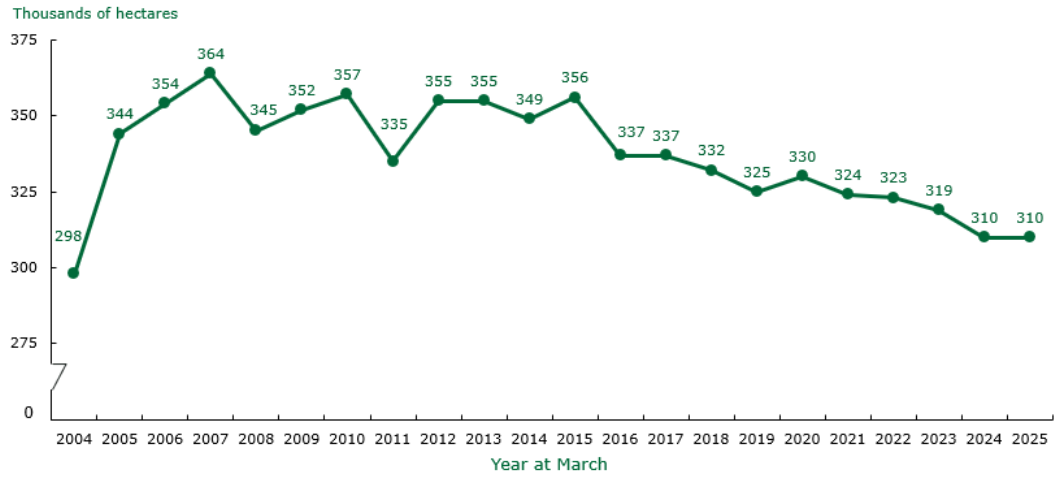
The UK government has committed to a statutory target creating or restoring at least 500,000 ha of wildlife-rich habitat. The Forestry Commission administers the England Woodland Creation Offer, and provides additional 'nature recovery' payments for woodland creation that extends existing areas of ancient and native woodland - enhancing connectivity and increasing the resilience of woodland biodiversity to climate change.

This indicator calculates the changes in woodland habitat patch size and distribution within woodland types in the National Forest Inventory in 2011, supplemented with an annual assessment of losses and gains. It assesses change relative to 2011, where connectivity in 2011 is given a baseline of 100. The index shows little or no overall change over the five-year period from 2014-2019, increasing marginally from 100.06 in 2015 to 100.21 in 2019.

Funding for woodland creation has risen significantly in the last five years, and it has become increasing difficult to compare data from multiple organisations involved in woodland creation with baseline years. Updates to the indicator were therefore paused in 2019, whilst alternative methodologies were explored. You can read about some of this work here: Frontiers | Co-designing an Indicator of Habitat Connectivity for England.

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

Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed

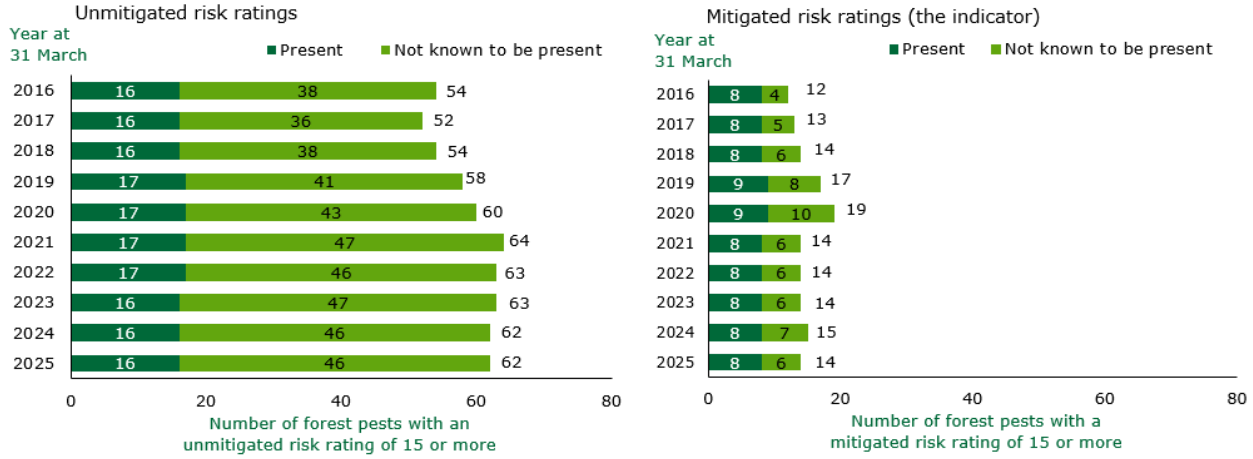


Source: Provisional Woodland Statistics 2025 (Forest Research).

No change has been observed in 2024/25 compared to the previous year with 310,000 ha being certified as sustainable managed. 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-25 compared to 31-Mar-20	Deteriorating

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



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

There has been a slight decrease in the overall number of forest pests and diseases of concern from 15 to 14 as the risk rating of *Lonsdalea populi* has been reduced because its likelihood score (based on likelihood of introduction or spread) has been reduced. The number of forest pests assessed as having an unmitigated risk rating of 15 or more at the end of March 2025 is 62 (15% of pests identified as forest pests on the UKPHRR). Eight of the fourteen pests considered to be high risk are currently present in England, three being classed as widespread - *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (ash dieback), *Phytophthora alni* (affects all alder species), and *Pseudomonas syringae pv. Aesculi* (Horse chestnut bleeding canker).

Table 5: 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 2025.

Pest or disease: common name	Pest or disease: Latin name	Type of pest or disease	Present in the UK?	Mitigated likelihood score	Mitigated impact rating	Mitigated likelihood multiplied by impact risk rating
Bleeding canker of horse chestnut	*Pseudomonas syringae pv. aesculi*	Bacterium	Present: widespread	5	4	20
Shoot blight on cedar/Tip blight on eastern hemlocks	*Sirococcus tsugae*	Fungus	Present: unknown distribution	5	4	20
Chalara ash dieback	*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*	Fungus	Present: widespread	4	4	16
Eight-toothed spruce bark beetle	*Ips typographus*	Insect	Absent	4	4	16
Sudden oak death; *ramorum* shoot dieback	*Phytophthora ramorum*	Oomycete[2]	Present: limited	4	4	16
Alder *Phytophthora* root disease	*Phytophthora alni*	Oomycete[6]	Present: widespread	4	4	16
Two-lined chestnut borer	*Agrilus bilineatus*	Insect	Absent	3	5	15
Emerald ash borer	*Agrilus planipennis*	Insect	Absent	3	5	15
Zigzag elm sawfly	*Aproceros leucopoda*	Insect	Present: unknown distribution	5	3	15
Sachalin fir bark beetle	*Polygraphus proximus*	Insect	Absent	3	5	15
Acute oak decline	*n/a*	Other	Present: limited	3	5	15
Two spotted woodborer	*Agrilus biguttatus*	Insect	Present: limited	3	5	15
Cypress jewel beetle or juniper buprestid	*Lamprodila festiva*	Insect	Absent	5	3	15
Fan-leaf virus nematode[3]	*Xiphinema* index	Nematodes	Absent	5	3	15

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

[2] An oomycete is an algae-like fungus.
[3] 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 (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.

Table 6: Possible Relative Risk Ratings

Impact

5	5 Green	10 Yellow	15 Amber	20 Red	25 Red
4	4 Blue	8 Green	12 Yellow	16 Amber	20 Red
3	3 Blue	6 Green	9 Green	12 Yellow	15 Amber
2	2 Blue	4 Green	6 Green	8 Green	10 Yellow
1	1 Blue	2 Blue	3 Blue	4 Blue	5 Green
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

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, 31 March 2022, 31 March 2023, 17 April 2024, 31 March 2025.

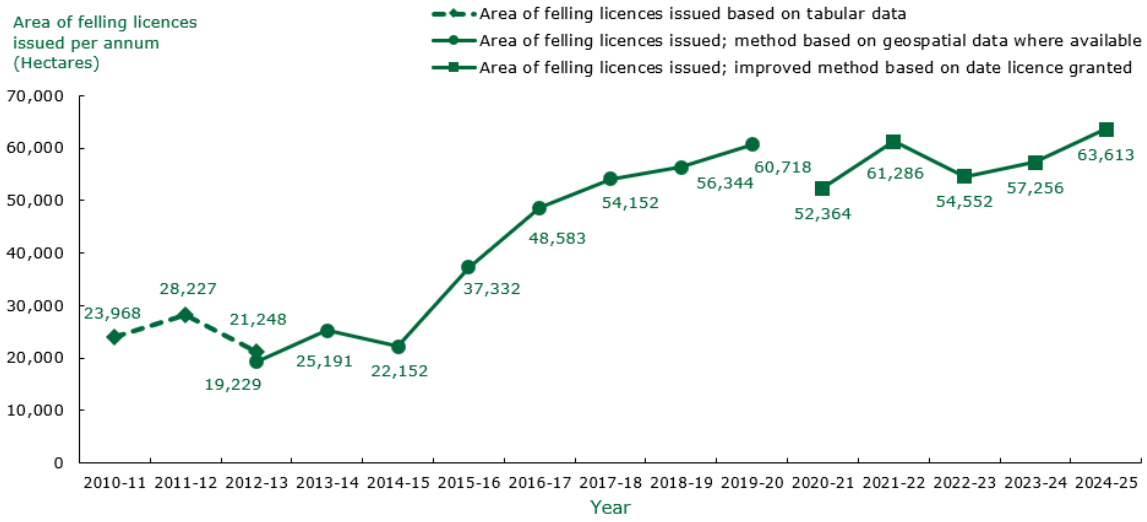
Source: UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR) data.

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-25 compared to Mar-20	Improving

Area of felling licences issued

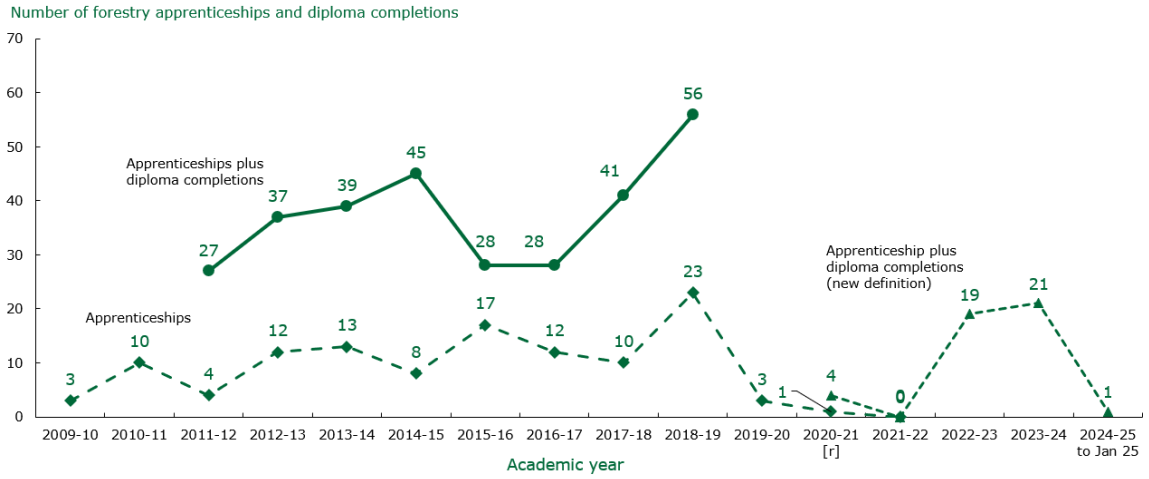


Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

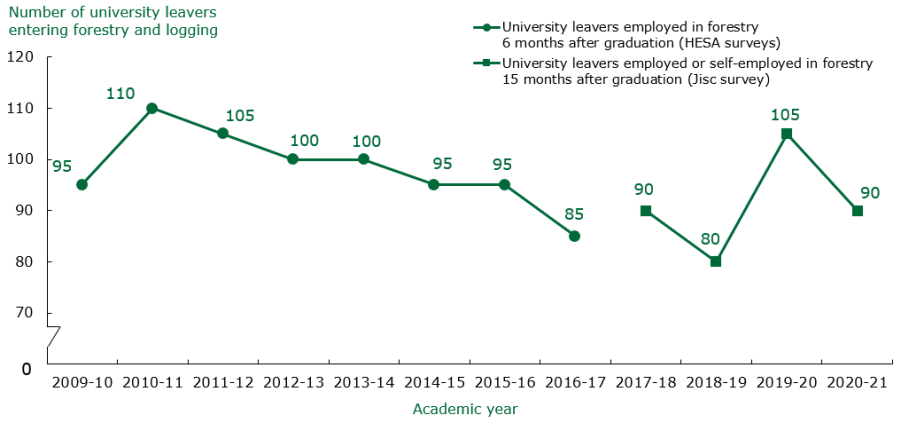
The area of woodland under felling licence remains at a high level, with an 11% increase between 2023/2024 (57,256 ha) and 2024/25 (63,613 ha). We continue to see a modest trend over recent years towards an increase in annual numbers of felling applications.

Assessment of change in: Area of felling licences issued	
Five-year trend, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Improving

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



Source: Apprenticeships and Further education and skills statistics (Department for Education, 2025) and LANTRA.

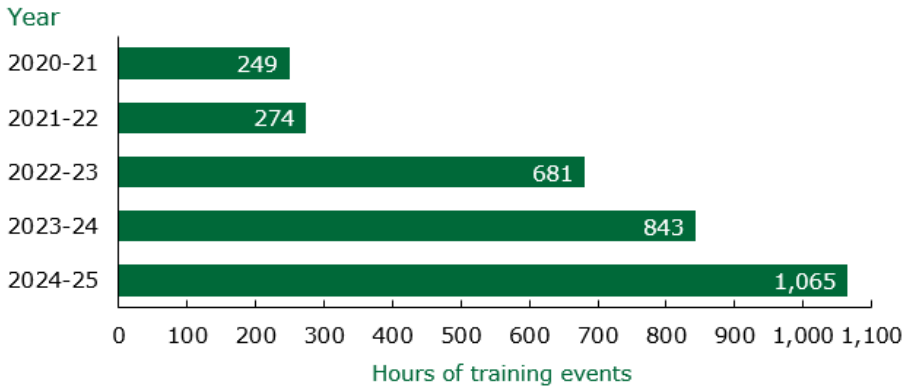


Sources: Destination of Leavers of Higher Education survey (Higher Education Statistics Agency) and the Graduate Outcomes Survey (Jisc).

The introduction of an improved indicator utilising a metric based on starts and completions of the new forestry apprenticeships being offered by training providers is beginning to deliver a more accurate measure of apprentices actually entering the forest industry. The first cohort of Professional Forester apprentices will graduate in July 2025 and will appear in a subsequent report.

Assessment of change in: Number of apprentices, those with work-based diplomas, and university students entering forestry	
Apprentices and diploma completions, almost four-year trend, 2024-25 to Jan-25 (latest data) compared to 2020-21	Deteriorating
University leavers, three-year trend only, 2020-21 (latest comparable data) compared to 2017-18	Little or no overall change

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



Source: Forestry Commission administrative records.

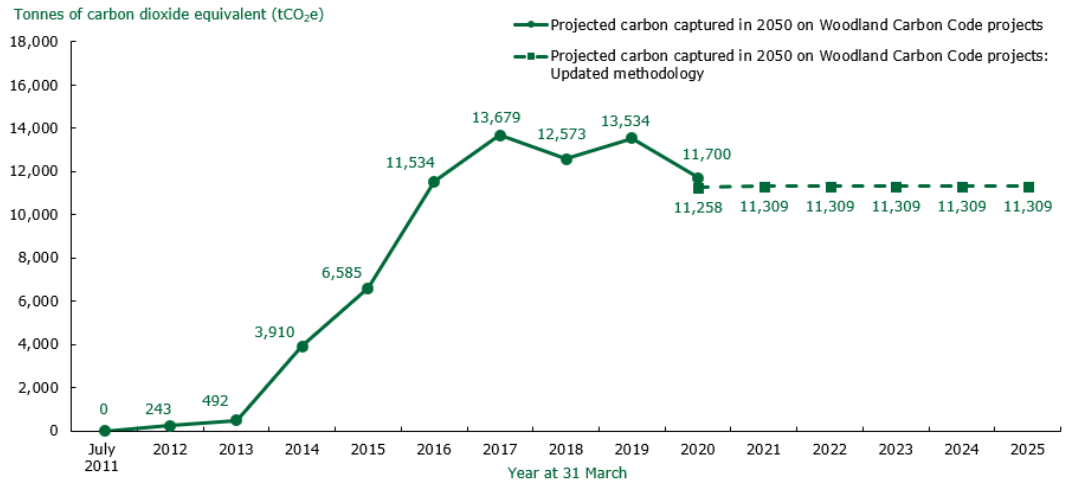
Note: Estimates from returns received.

Over 1,060 hours of training were provided for the sector, to almost 9,000 attendees, covering a wide range of topics including grants and regulations, woodland planning, creation and management, tree pests and diseases, landscape and ecology, landscape recovery, historic environment, agroforestry and deer management.

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

Four-year trend only, 2024-25 compared to 2020-21	Improving

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



Source: Provisional Woodland Statistics 2024 (Forest Research)

At 31st March 2025, validated Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) projects in England were projected to sequester 11,309 tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e) in 2050 and a total of 608,373 tCO_2e by 2050. The amount predicted to be sequestered in 2050 has not changed as new WCUs issued around that date are due to be verified in years either side of 2050, but the amount sequestered by 2050 has increased from 512,641 tCO_2e at 31 March 2024.

At March 2025, 185 projects were validated to the Woodland Carbon Code in England, compared to 148 in 2024. This equates to 37 validations in a year, which is the highest ever completed.

Of the validated projects, six have also been verified/checked in the last year, to ensure they are well established and on track to deliver the predicted carbon savings. This brings the total number of verified projects to 52.

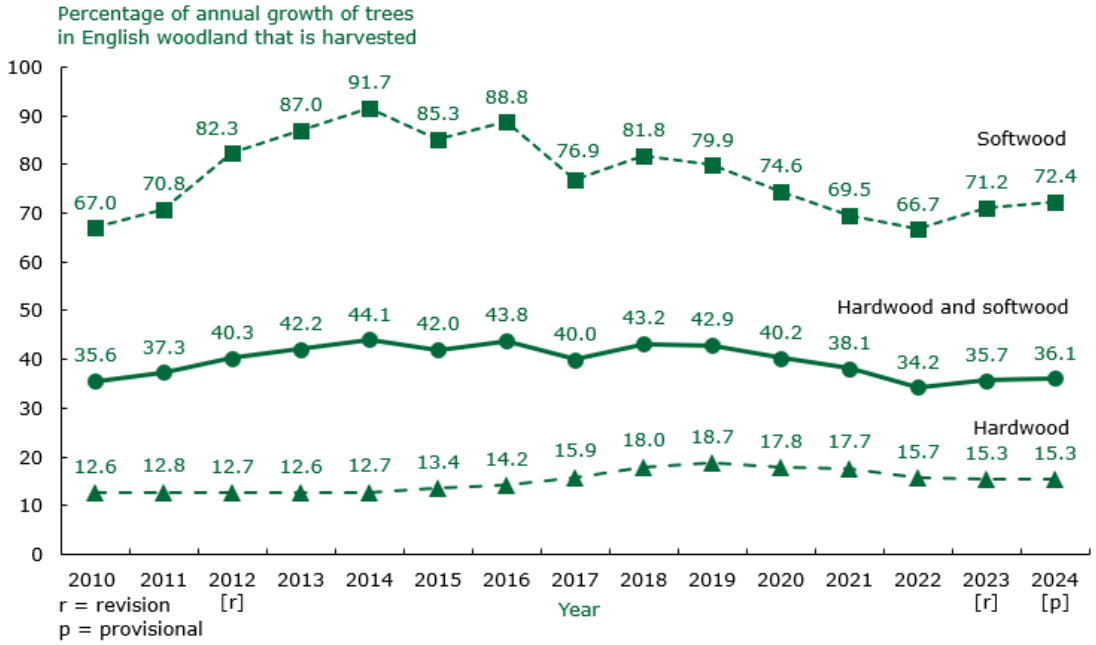
Registration of new projects with the WCC in England continues - 707 projects are currently registered and going through the validation process compared to 697 in 2024 and 596 in 2023.

There were 127 new projects registered over the past year, lower than the 165 new projects in 2024. However, 145 projects were removed from the registry resulting in a net decrease of 18 projects. The large number of projects removed from the registry was because during 2024-25 a minimum project size of 1 ha was introduced and registered projects below this size were encouraged to merge their projects or to remove them as they would not be viable. A total of 96 projects removed were merged with other projects, and for 20 it was concluded that the project was too small to be viable. Total project numbers (registered, validated and verified) are now at 827, slightly down from 845 in 2024, but up from 719 in 2023 and 551 in 2022.

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

Five-year trend, 31-Mar-25 compared to 31-Mar-20	Little or no overall change

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



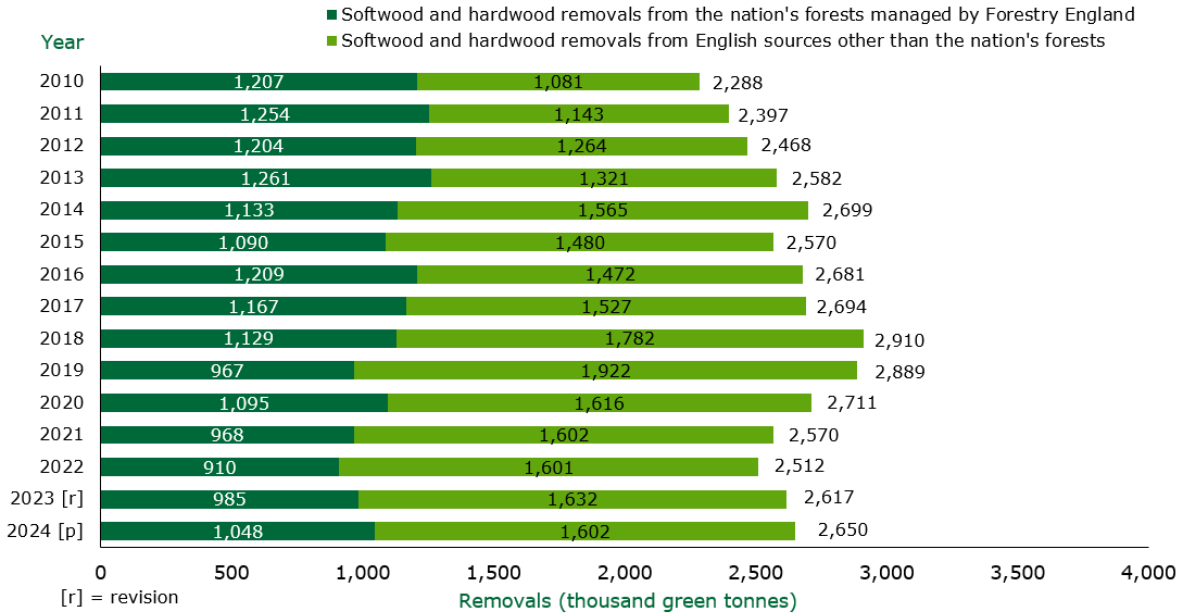
Source: UK Wood Production and Trade: 2024 Provisional Figures (Forest Research, 2025) and National Forest Inventory team forecasts (Forest Research).

Note: Statistics for 2012 have been revised to include improved estimates of the annual growth of the trees (i.e. increment). Those for 2023 have been revised to include additional information now available.

In 2024, there was been a marginal increase in the percentage of annual growth of trees harvested from conifer woodlands (72.4%) and conifer and broadleaf combined (36.1%) compared to the previous year whilst the percentage harvested from broadleaf woodland remained the same at 15.3%). Actions listed in the government's 'Timber in Construction Roadmap' and parallel industry-led 'National Wood Strategy' should help to stimulate domestic timber markets and increase the volumes of both soft and hardwoods being harvested. Government policy on increasing levels of housebuilding should see an increased demand for all building materials, offering an opportunity for domestic timber production to increase to accommodate the demand.

Assessment of change in: Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is a harvested	
Five-year trend, 2024 compared to 2019 (hardwood and softwood element)	Deteriorating

Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources



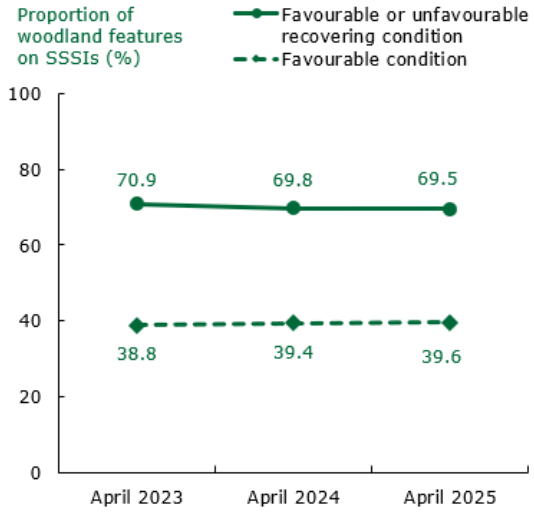
Source: UK Wood Production and Trade: 2024 Provisional Figures (Forest Research, 2025).

While global events continue to affect timber supply and demand, market demand for softwood remains strong and prices fluctuate but continue to be relatively high, maintaining relatively good levels of production in privately owned conifer woodlands. Uncertainty remains around estimated hardwood production, especially volumes of hardwood delivered to energy markets, particularly in light of 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, 2024 compared to 2019	Deteriorating

Percentage of woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest in desired condition in England



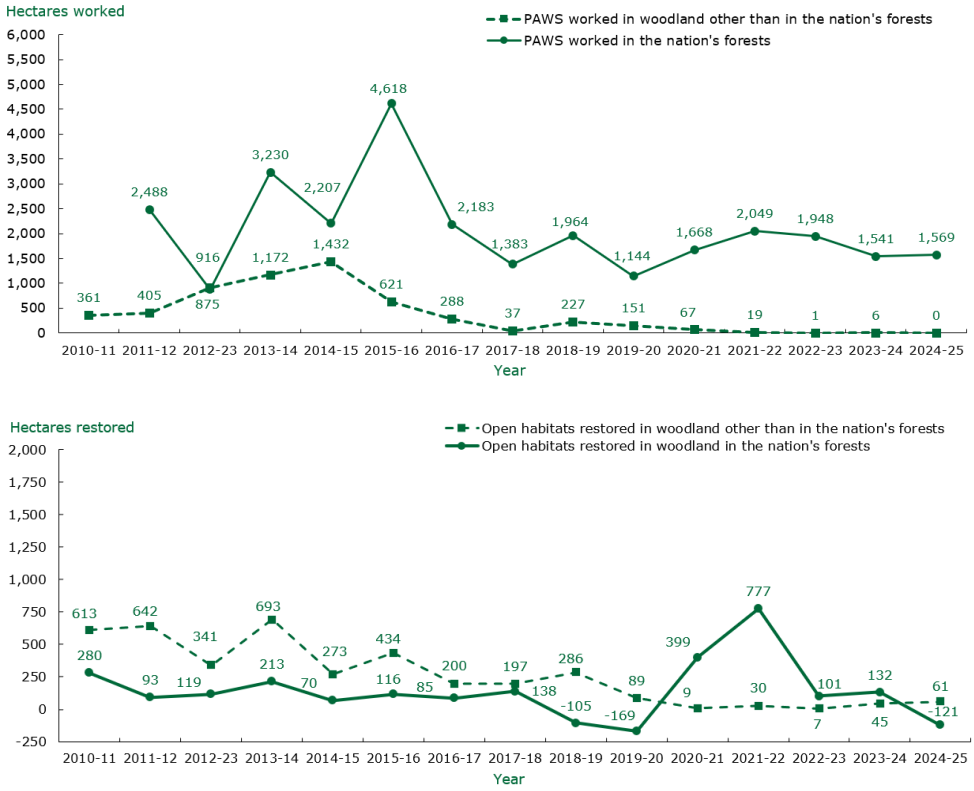
Source: Natural England.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are our best sites in England for wildlife or for their geological features. They are assessed periodically against criteria that represent their value for wildlife (for example the diversity of plant species, amount of bare ground, or area of scrub) – a site is in favourable condition if the assessment shows that its features are in a condition suitable for the long-term conservation of the species and habitats for which it was designated. The UK government has committed to restoring 75% of protected sites to favourable condition in England by 2042.

The indicator shows the proportions of all woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in either favourable or 'unfavourable recovering' status (the latter meaning that it fails the criteria but has management in place that will address this in the longer term). As of April 2025, 69.5% of the listed woodland features are assessed as in favourable or recovering condition and 39.6% in a favourable condition, showing little or no overall change across the assessment period. Proportions are cumulative – sites are assessed on a rolling basis and the latest data points include new assessments and previous assessments considered still to be up-to-date.

Assessment of change since in: Percentage of woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest in desired condition in England	
Two-year trend, favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	Little or no overall change
Two-year trend, favourable condition	Little or no overall change

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



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

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

This indicator shows two main metrics: i). the area of land where trees are being removed to restore ancient native woodland (on private land and in the nation's forests managed by Forestry England), and ii). the area of private land where trees are being removed to restore open semi-natural habitat such as heathland or grassland and changes in the extent of open semi-natural habitat within the nation's forests managed by Forestry England.

The restoration of these 'wildlife-rich' habitats is a government priority. Government has committed to bringing the majority of planted ancient woodland in England into management to restore semi-natural ancient woodland by 2030. Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England - GOV.UK. The UK government has also committed to a statutory target to create or restore at least 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside protected sites, including ancient semi-natural woodland and open priority habitat, in England by 2042. The Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2023

Restoration of planted ancient woodland

The first metric shows the area worked each year to restore ancient woodland habitat, through thinning or clear felling of non-native species, as shown by approved felling licence applications (or on the public estate, reporting against approved plans). It is therefore a measure of the extent of action to restore wildlife rich habitats. Ancient woodland restoration is often more successful if done gradually over multiple thinnings, and so the area worked is not the same as

the area of habitat being restored. Separate spatial analysis is used to report on progress to targets for habitat restoration.

The indicator shows 1,569 hectares of Planted Ancient Woodland worked by Forestry England in 2024-25, maintaining previous levels of effort with restoration of ancient woodland. Forestry England provide a separate report, as part of their natural capital assessment, on progress with restoration targets. The latest report in 2022-23 shows that the area of planted ancient woodland that has been restored to the extent that the canopy that is >80% native has increased from 9,066 hectares in 2013-14 to 11,550 hectares in 2022-23, an increase of 27.4% Our natural capital approach | Forestry England

The Area of Planted Ancient Woodland being worked on private land is shown for information only and is not assessed. In 2022, the UK Government introduced a new supplement for planted ancient woodland restoration in England through Countryside Stewardship (CS) (WS2). This is now the main mechanism for incentivising ancient woodland restoration outside the nation's forests and because woodland management plans are a pre-requisite for Countryside Stewardship higher tier, felling licence approvals are now done at a plan level, and attribution to ancient woodland has to be calculated manually. The Forestry Commission is reviewing how these data are collected, and the trend is not assessed whilst this takes place. CS uptake statistics from April 2025 show 2,100 hectares of land which were brought into the ancient woodland restoration supplement WS2 CS, ES and SFI option uptake data 2025 - GOV.UK

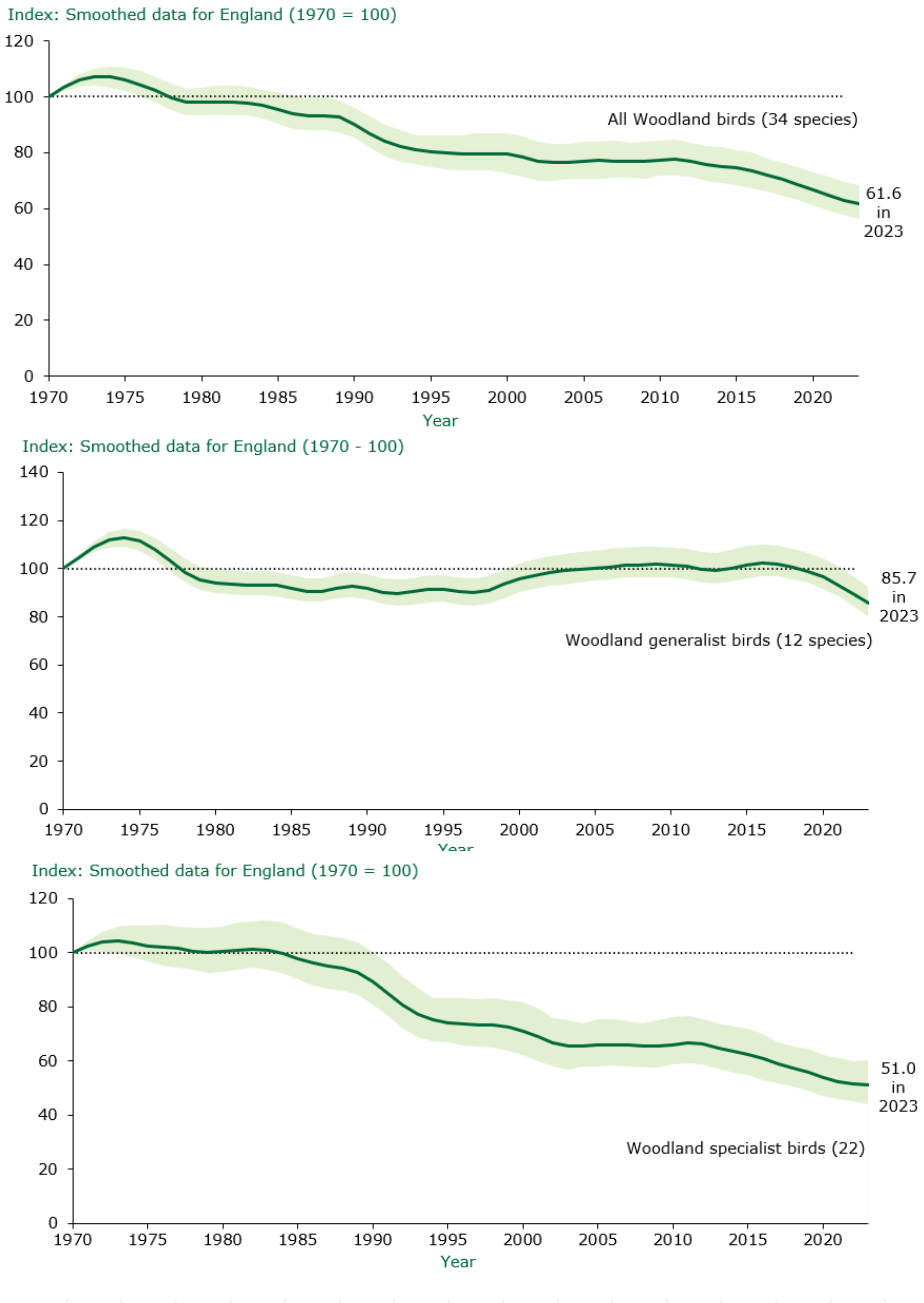
Restoration of open habitats

For the restoration of open habitats in 2024-25, the indicator shows 61 hectares worked or restored on private land and 121 hectares lost inside the nation's forests (a net change of minus 60 hectares). For open habitat restoration, tree species are usually removed in a single felling, and so the area worked broadly equates to the area restored. However, losses of open habitat can come about from two main sources. There are some small losses when land is sold, but primarily it is natural change as sites revert to scrub or other habitat.

In the nation's forests, Forestry England have committed to increasing the amount of open habitat from 16.8% in 2013, to 21.1% by 2060 Growing the future | For wildlife | Forestry England. Forestry England now manage over 30,400 hectares of priority grassland, heathland and bog in the nation's forests Our natural capital approach | Forestry England.

Assessment of change in: Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and of open habitat in woodland in England.	
PAWS worked in England Five-year trend, totals for 2024-25 compared to totals for 2019-20	Not assessed
Open habitat restored or created in England Five-year trend, totals for 2024-25 compared to totals for 2019-20	Improving

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



Source: Wild bird populations in the UK and England, 1970 to 2023 (Defra, 2025) data on relative abundance of breeding woodland bird populations in England.

Note: Each of the three graphs shows a smoothed, unstandardised woodland bird index for England and its 95% confidence interval.

The indicator of breeding woodland bird populations shows the average change in relative abundance across 34 bird species in England during the breeding season across species that are strongly associated and regularly found in woodland habitats. Separate trends are calculated for all 34 species, as well as for woodland specialists (species like willow tit which are more or less restricted to woodland and scrub habitats) and generalists (like chaffinch or robin which are found in woodland and other habitats). All trends are assessed on smoothed

data - where a line of best fit is ascribed to the data using a statistical model. Further information on the methodology and the species included can be found here: Wild bird populations in the UK and England, 1970 to 2023 - GOV.UK

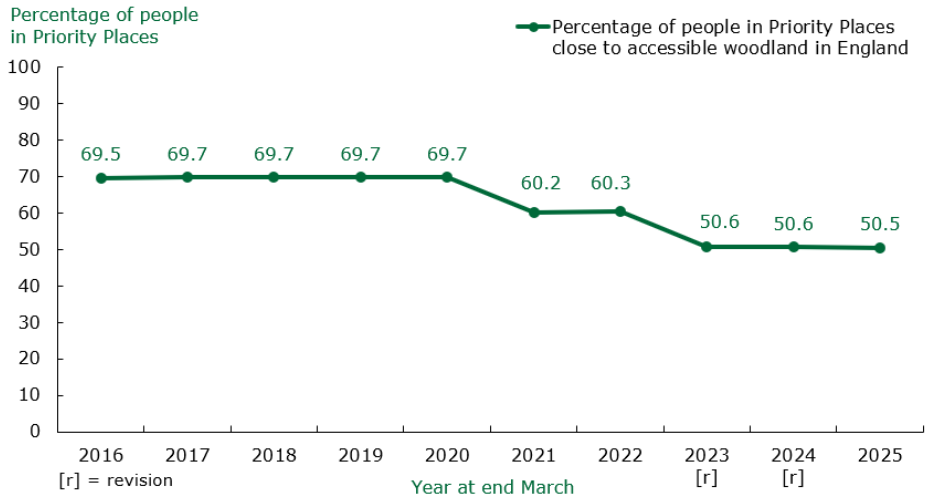
The UK government has committed to halting and subsequently reversing the decline in species abundance, and data on bird species abundance provides a source of evidence of progress with this commitment.

In 2023 the all-species woodland bird index for England was almost 39.0% lower than in 1970 and has declined by 12% in the last 5 years (to 2023). The largest average declines have been in the 22 specialist species, though the trend for generalist species has also shown some deterioration in the last 5 years. Not all species are declining. Some species such as blackcap or chiffchaff have increased over the long term. However, the majority of species have declined, some, such as the wood warbler or willow tit substantially, and so the index as a whole has deteriorated significantly.

The causes of bird decline are many and complex. The loss of structure and appropriate management is a known cause of decline, but population size is also impacted by climate change, habitat fragmentation, disease, predation and competition between species.

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, 2023 compared to 2008	Deteriorating

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



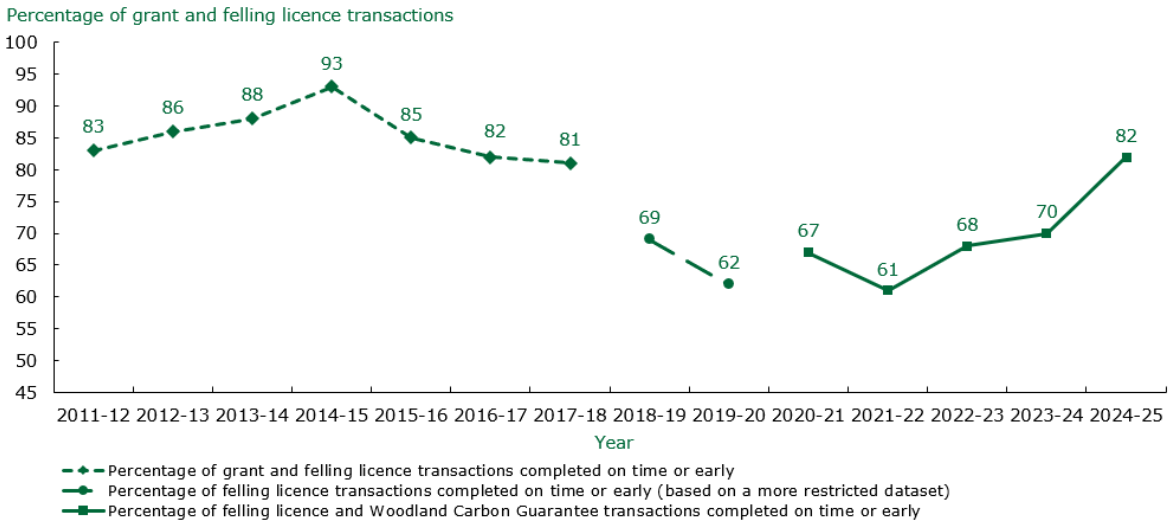
Source: Forestry Commission based on official data and Woodland Trust data.

Following a refresh, beginning in 2023, of the data and methodology for mapping woodland access, we are continuing to make refinements and establish a robust baseline. The figure has remained stable since the revised methodology was introduced.

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

Two-year trend only, Mar-25 compared to Mar-23	Little or no overall change

Percentage of grant and felling licence transactions completed on time or early



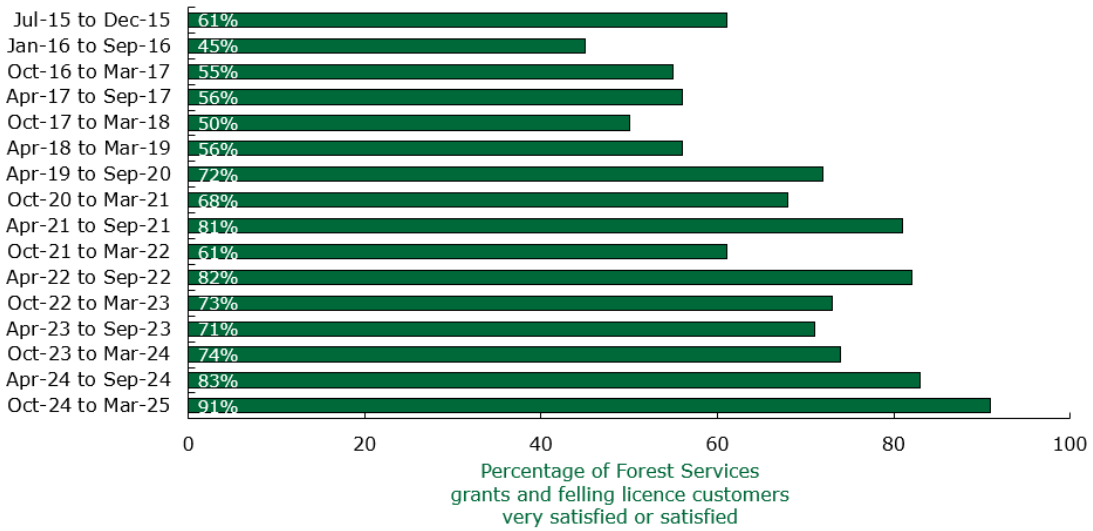
Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Felling licence transactions continue to make progress towards meeting the Charter target of 85%; there has been an improvement since 2023-24 (70%). This may have been aided by a delay to some elements of our grant scheme offers this year, allowing field staff to concentrate on felling licence applications.

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

Five-year trend, 2024-25 compared to 2019-20	Improving

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



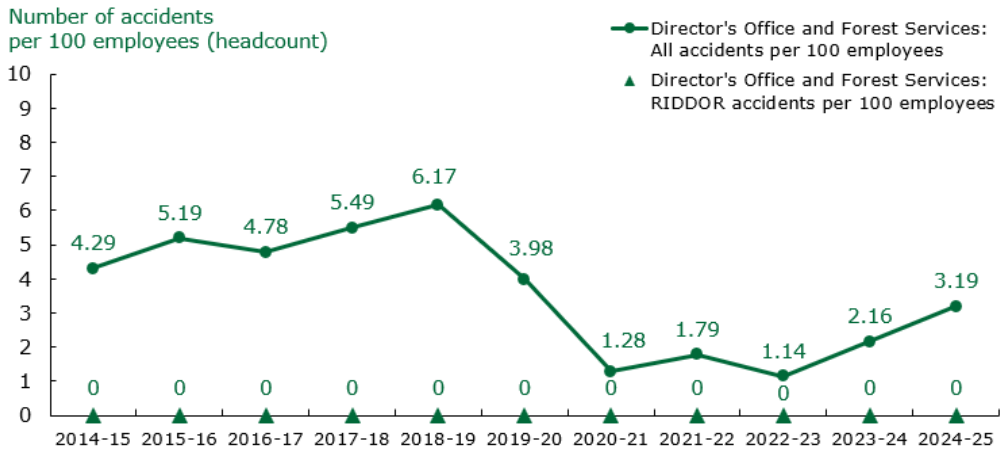
Source: Forestry Commission customer survey.

Note: The indicator shows estimates based on relatively small samples.

The increased rates of customer satisfaction (up 15% compared with 2023-24 financial year) have occurred at the same time as our investment in upskilling operational customer service staff including through use of the Operational Delivery Profession development programme. We have also grown the capabilities of our field teams to advise customers by embedding more specialist skills alongside our core woodland officer services on grants and felling licences.

Assessment of change in: Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling licence customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied.	
Trend for five years: Estimate for Oct-24/Mar-25 compared to that of Oct-19/Mar-20	Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data

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



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Note: 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.

The number of injury incidents remain below pre-pandemic levels though it has risen by 1.03 per 100 employees since last year, following a slight increase the year before. There continues to be an improved awareness of reporting requirements within the organisation. Health and Safety remains a fundamental priority, with a strong focus in the second half of the year on culture and mandatory training.

Assessment of change in: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees (headcount) in Forest Services	
Five-year trend: 2024-25 compared to 2019-20 (all accidents element)	Improving

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 2025 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 indicators, in the year ended 31 March 2025, to be appropriate.

Sally Flett

Sally Flett FCPFA, ACFS, IIA(Aff)
Head of Internal Audit, Forestry Commission
Government Internal Audit Agency
19 June 2025

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