

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators

Report for 2025-26

The Forestry Commission increases the value of woodlands to society and the environment. It is the government department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands.

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators Report for 2025-26

Key findings

In 2025-26, 6,386 hectares of new tree planting was undertaken in England (7.8 million trees).

Of this, 5,250 hectares (6.9 million trees) was in the form of woodland creation, and 1,137 hectares (925,000 trees) planted outside woodland.

With regards to woodland creation, 5,105 hectares were government supported, and 145 hectares by other organisations. In terms of trees outside woodlands, 964 hectares were government supported, and 173 hectares by other organisations and individuals.

In 2025-26, 58% of tree planting funded through the England Woodland Creation Offer increased the species diversity of England's woodlands.

At 31 March 2026, 57% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed.

In the ten-year period between 2016-25, three tree pests and diseases became established in England.

In the year to 31 March 2026, 99.9% of known tree felling in England was carried with Forestry Commission approval.

In 2024, 8.533 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent was sequestered by woodland England.

The natural capital value of England's forests and woodlands was £314.0 billion in 2023 (at 2024 prices).

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Introduction

1. This Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) report contains our annual report on our corporate performance for 2025-26.
2. 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 2023-28¹. This report provides updates on the Forestry Commission's ten headline indicators, Forestry England's six headline indicators and 24 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

Responsible Statistician: David Cross
evidence@forestrycommission.gov.uk

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Summary

A proper review of this Indicators Report 2025-26 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

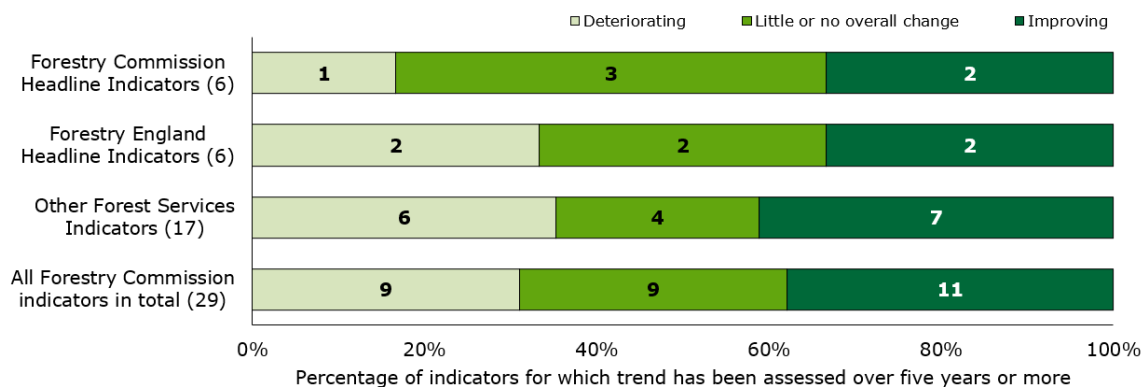
	Trend	Page
Forestry Commission headline indicators		
New planting of woodland and trees in England	Improving	9
Proportion of England Woodland Creation Offer new planting of woodland that is contributing to increasing the diversity of tree species in England	Improving	13
Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed	Little change	14
Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England	Little change	15
Proportion of known tree felling carried out with Forestry Commission approval	Little change	16
Carbon sequestered by England's woodland	Deteriorating	17
Natural capital value of England's forests and woodland	Little change	18
Ecological condition of woodland in England	Not assessed	19
Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland	Little change	22
Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England	Improving	23
Forestry England headline indicators		
Land area of the nation's forests held by Forestry England	Little change	24
Total natural capital value of the nation's forests	Improving	25
Public engagement: Number of visits per annum to the nation's forests managed by Forestry England	Improving	26
Percentage of Forestry England's income that is self-generated	Deteriorating	27
Health and safety: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England	Deteriorating	28
Health and safety: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests	Little change	29

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

		Trend	Page
Forest Services indicators			
Area of woodland in England		Little change	30
Area of tree cover outside woodland in England		Improving	32
Area of land in agroforestry systems in England		Improving	33
Percentage of new planting of woodland in England that is broadleaved woodland		Not assessed	34
Net change in woodland area, based on the balance between new planting of woodland, and woodland removal		Improving	35
Connectivity of woodland in England		Little change	38
Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed		Deteriorating	39
Number of high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR)		Improving	40
Area of felling licences issued		Improving	44
Number of apprentices, those with work-based diplomas, and university students entering forestry	Apprentices and those with work-based diplomas	Improving	45
	University students	Little change	45
Forest Services' training support for the English forestry sector (hours of training events)		Improving	47
Projected carbon capture in 2050 by validated Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects in England		Improving	48
Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is harvested		Deteriorating	49
Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources		Little change	50
Percentage of woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest in desired condition in England	Favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	Deteriorating	51
	Favourable condition	Little change	51
Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) and of open habitat from woodland in England	PAWS	Not assessed	52
	Open habitat	Deteriorating	52
Measure of what is happening to the number and variety of species that live in woodland; using Woodland Birds data		Deteriorating	55
Percentage of people in Priority Places close to accessible woodland in England		Little change	56
Percentage of grant and felling licence transactions completed on time or early		Improving	57
Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling licence customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied		Not assessed	58
Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees (headcount) in Forest Services		Deteriorating	59

A precis of the short-term trend assessments is also provided. This is for 29 out of the 40 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, 2025-26



Methodology

The coverage of all the key performance indicators is England. Most are based on statistical and geographical analysis of Forestry Commission administrative data, the National Forest Inventory woodland map, surveys conducted and commissioned for us by the Forest Research Statistics team, and statistics available from other parts of Defra and other providers. We also publish supplementary data to this report in spreadsheet format.

The methodology for the short-term time series trend assessments is like a key part of that developed for the UK Biodiversity Indicators (JNCC, 2025²). Table 2 has the assessment criteria.

Table 2: 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

Where data allow it a 3-year average is used to calculate the starting value reducing the likelihood of any unusual years unduly influencing the assessment. The assessments do not account for fluctuations in intervening years between then and the value in the most recent year. Where there is not yet 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.

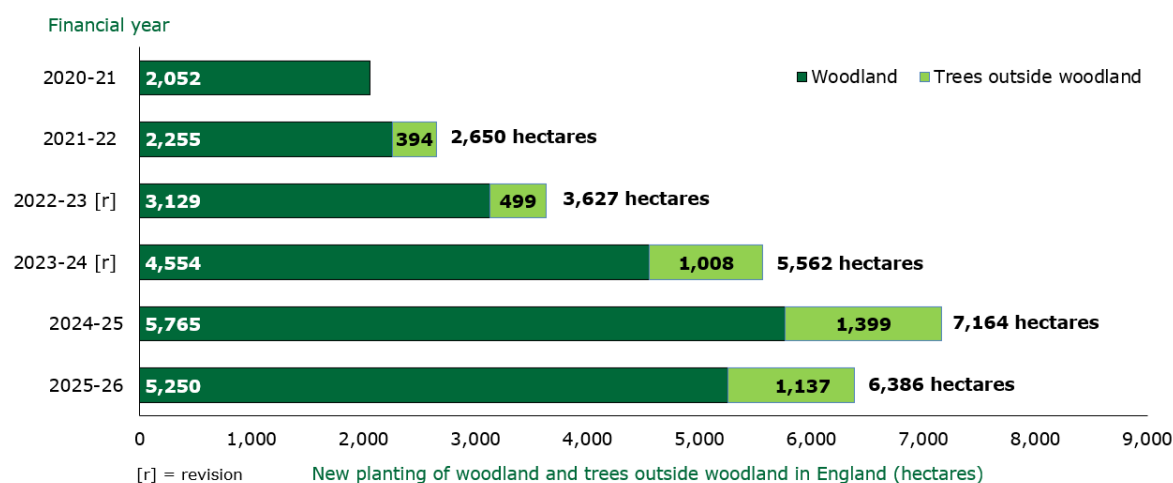
² JNCC (2025) UK Biodiversity Indicators, Peterborough: Joint Nature Conservation Committee available at: <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-biodiversity-indicators/>

Forestry Commission headline indicators

New planting of woodland and trees in England

1. Summary: In 2025-26, 6,386 hectares of new tree planting was achieved in England (7.8 million trees). Of this, 5,250 hectares (6.9 million trees) were in the form of woodland, and 925,000 trees (1,137 hectares equivalent) as trees outside woodland (Figure 2).

Figure 2: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 2020-21 to 2025-26



Note: Statistics for 2020-21 are for planting of new woodland and from 2021-22 onwards for planting of new woodland and trees outside woodland.

Source: Forestry Statistics 2025 (Forest Research) and Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators.

In 2025-26, 5,250 hectares of new woodland were established in England, of which 5,105 hectares received government funding, mostly through the Nature for Climate Fund. The Forestry Commission’s ‘England Woodland Creation Offer’ was the largest contributor (2,364 hectares) while England’s Community Forests ‘Trees for Climate programme’ (1,414 hectares) and Forestry England (733 hectares) were the next highest contributors. Woodland creation rates in 2025-26 were slightly lower (a decrease of 8.9%) than the figure for 2024-25 (5,765 hectares) but still more than twice the annual planting rate achieved between 2019 and 2022.

In addition, 925,000 trees were planted outside woodland, equivalent to 1,137 hectares, bringing the total area of tree canopy established and numbers of trees planted to 6,386 hectares and 7.8 million trees, respectively. This was a 18.7% decrease compared to 2024/25 (1,399) but an increase compared to the previous three years.

Table 3: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 2025-26

New planting of woodland by type of support¹	Area of woodland newly planted, 2025-26 (hectares)	Area of woodland newly planted, 2025-26 (equivalent in number of trees)
Woodland^{2,3}		
Government-supported		
England Woodland Creation Offer	2,364	3,355,000
High Speed 2 Woodland Fund	66	88,000
Forestry England	733	1,142,000
Countryside Stewardship: other tree planting options	99	158,000
Environment Agency	164	208,000
Northern Forest	133	154,000
National Forest Company	46	74,000
Community Forests	1,414	1,415,000
Forest for Cornwall	47	41,000
Great Northumberland Forest	8	10,000
National Heritage Lottery Fund	30	42,000
Sub-total Government-supported	5,105	6,688,000
Of that woodland agroforestry	323	203,000
Other support and non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Trust	145	183,000
Sub-total	145	183,000
Of that woodland agroforestry	0	0
Total woodland	5,250 hectares of woodland	6,871,000 trees within woodland
Of that woodland agroforestry	323 hectares	203,000 trees

Table 3 continued:

New planting of trees outside woodland by type of support	Approximate area equivalent, 2025-26 (hectares)	Number of individual trees newly planted, 2025-26 (number)
Trees outside woodland^{4,5}		
Government-supported		
Countryside Stewardship single trees ^a	29	23,000
Environment Agency ^a	48	39,000
Northern Forest ^b	13	7,000
National Forest Company ^{a,b}	16	7,000
Community Forests ^{a,b}	392	585,000
Coronation Living Heritage Fund ^a	3	2,000
Forest for Cornwall ^{a,b}	178	27,000
Great Northumberland Forest ^{a,b}	34	77,000
Local Authority Treescapes Fund ^a	3	2,000
Urban Trees Challenge Fund ^a	1	1,000
National Health Service ^b	2	2,000
National Heritage Lottery Fund ^{a,b}	221	63,000
The Tree Council ^{a,c}	23	46,000
Sub-total Government-supported	964	882,000
Of that trees outside woodland agroforestry	205	65,000
Other support and non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Trust ^b	173	43,000
Sub-total	173	43,000
Of that trees outside woodland agroforestry	0	0
Total trees outside woodland	Approx. 1,137 hectares	925,000 trees outside woodland
Of that trees outside woodland agroforestry	205 hectares	65,000 trees
Total woodland and trees outside woodland⁶	Approx. 6,386 hectares within and outside woodland	7,796,000 trees within and outside woodland
Of that woodland agroforestry and trees outside woodland agroforestry	528 hectares	268,000 trees

Notes to Table 3:

1. The statistics are estimates for the full 2025-26 year based on returns provided including revisions since the interim report at 30 September 2025. Statistics in the table may not sum due to rounding. The density of tree planting in numbers of trees planted per hectare of land varies between planting schemes. Areas of woodland are rounded to the nearest hectare and tree numbers are approximate and rounded to the nearest 1,000 trees. They may include some new planting that took place in winter 2024-25 and that has been verified since then.
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. Areas of new planting < 0.5 hectare were included as woodland where we identified these are extending an existing woodland or when combined with another planting area we identified these together were ≥ 0.5 hectare. Where we otherwise identified planting that was not woodland this was excluded.
3. Statistics for woodland include woodland agroforestry schemes where we identified these and where they satisfy both the criteria of a gross area of ≥ 0.5 hectare and have a stocking density ≥ 100 stems per hectare.
4. 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 and/or (b) records of new planting received and/or (c) for Miyawaki new planting of trees at an assumed stocking density of 40,000 trees to 1 hectare.
5. Statistics for trees outside woodland include trees outside woodland agroforestry schemes where we identified these and where they satisfy both the criteria of a gross area of ≥ 0.5 hectare and have stocking density of ≥ 30 stems per hectare.
6. This indicator at present includes returns received for new planting either supported by government 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

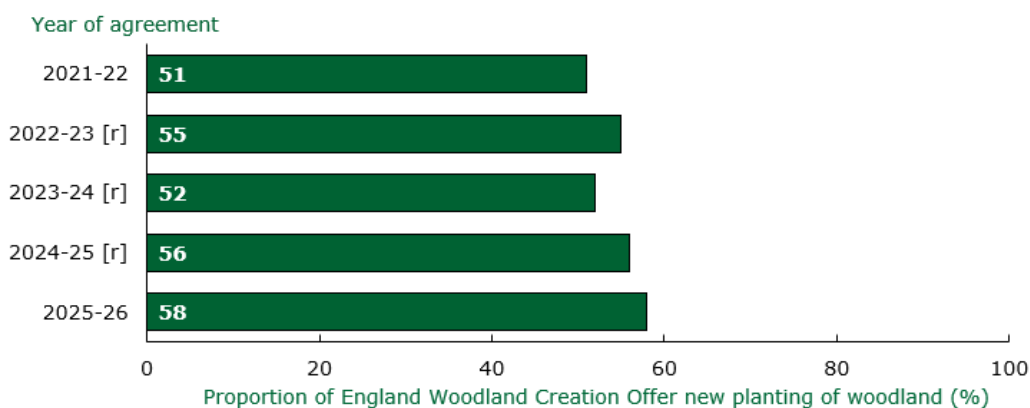
Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Improving

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

2. Summary: In 2025-26, 58% of tree planting funded through the England Woodland Creation Offer increased the species diversity of England’s woodlands (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Proportion of England Woodland Creation Offer new planting of woodland that is contributing to increasing the diversity of tree species in England, 2021-22 to 2025-26



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

In 2025-26, 58% of tree planting funded through the England Woodland Creation Offer comprised ‘non-core’ species, increasing the species diversity of England’s woodlands. This compares with 56% in 2024-25, although no obvious trend is evident over the five years that we have data for this indicator. The 2025-26 figure of 58% is 3.6% above the average for the five 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 <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Scots pine
Ash – only common ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	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 2025-26 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 increasing the diversity of tree species in England

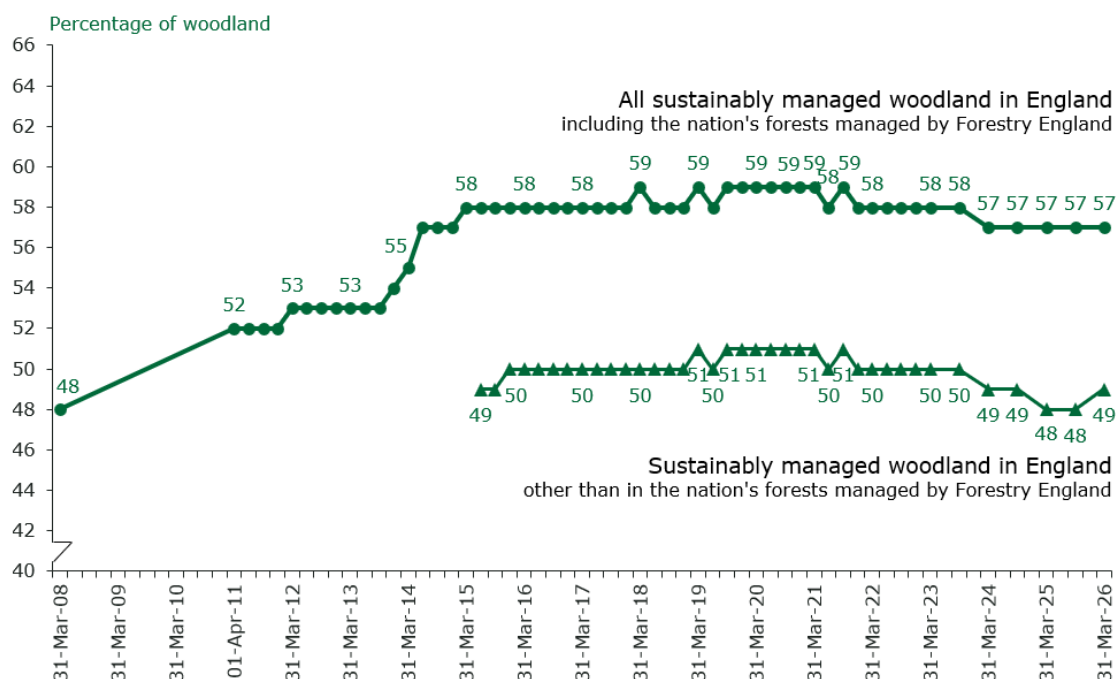
Four-year trend only, 2025-26 compared to 2021-22

Improving

Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed

- Summary: At 30 March 2026, 57% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed; totaling 758,000 hectares of woodland in management (at this date, when rounded) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed, March 2008 to March 2026



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

As at 31st March 2026, 57% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed. This indicates that the indicator has remained stable since the last reporting period.

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

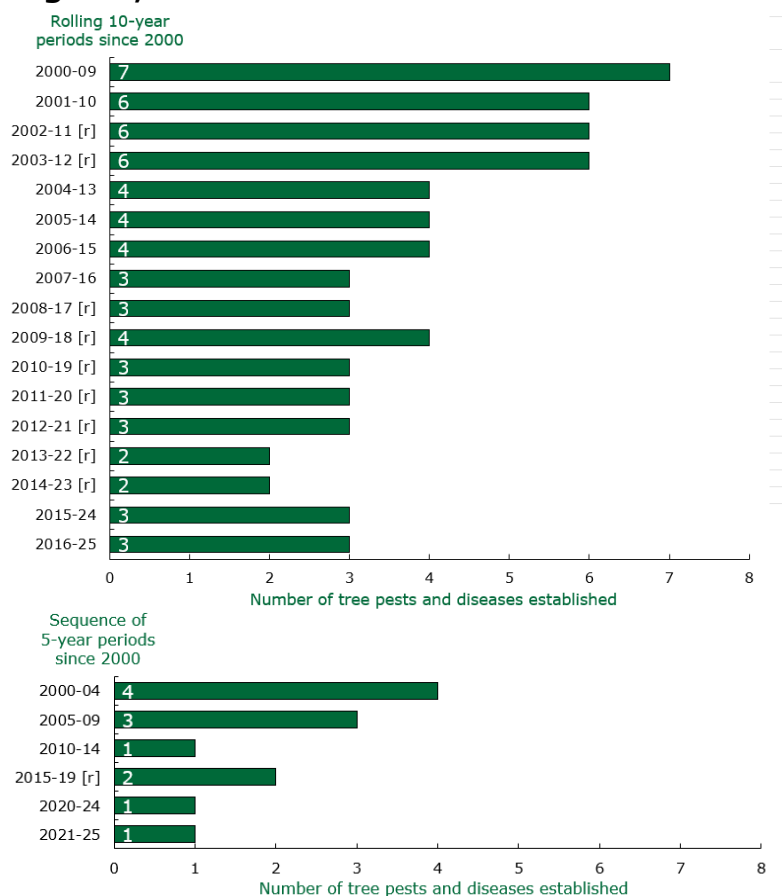
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-26 compared to 31-Mar-21

Little or no overall change

Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England

4. Summary: In the ten-year period between 2016-25, three tree pests and diseases became established in England (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England, 2000-09 to 2016-25



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

In the most recent ten-year period (2016-25) 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. It is not a regulated pest which means there is no requirement to take statutory action. However, 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

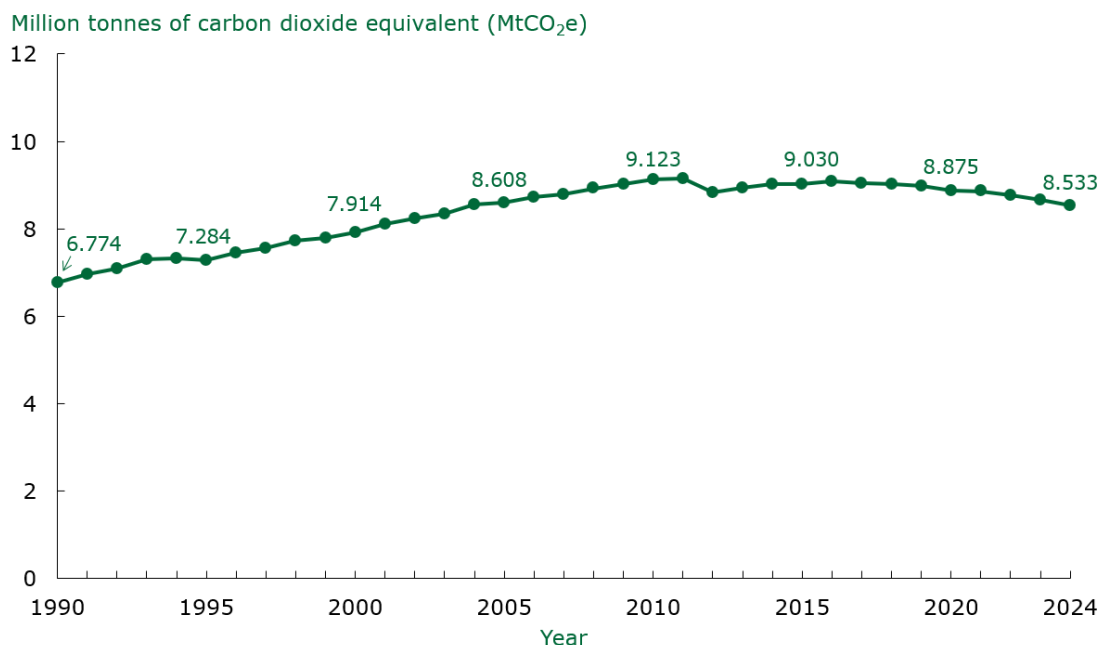
Five-year trend, 2016-25 compared to 2011-20

Little or no overall change

Carbon sequestered by England's woodland

6. Summary: In 2024, 8.533 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent was sequestered by woodland in England (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Carbon sequestered by England's woodland, 1990 to 2024



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 has decreased slightly from 8.665 MtCO₂e in 2023 to 8.533 MtCO₂e in 2024 (based on the updated time-series), but remained broadly stable; it is expected to continue to decline in the medium term as the greenhouse gas sink strength is dominated by past planting rates and subsequent harvesting activity. A removal (or sink) of 8.533 MtCO₂e is equivalent to 2.3% of total UK greenhouse gas emissions for 2024, or 18.4% of agricultural emissions. For the UK total GHG emissions and UK Agricultural emissions see Table 1.2 of <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6982294819d3abdb495f37ce/final-greenhouse-gas-emissions-tables-2024.xlsx>.

Assessment of change in: Carbon sequestered by England's woodland

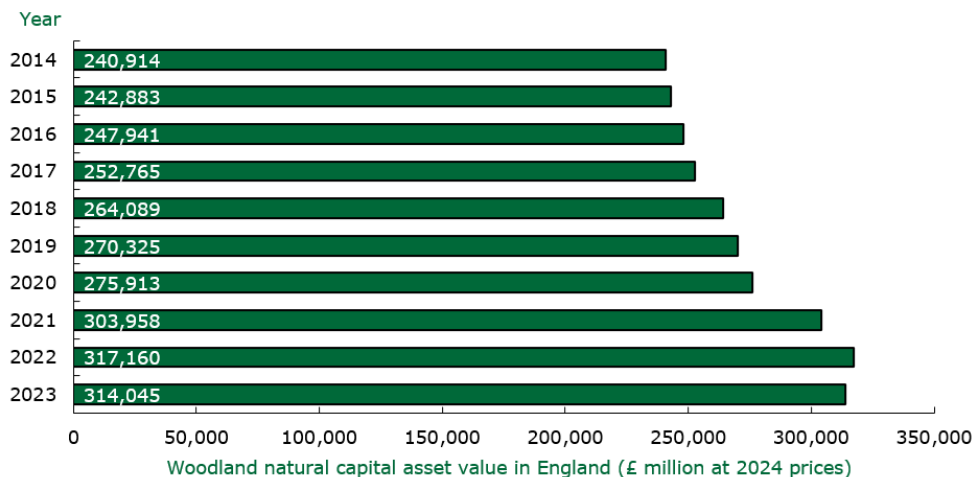
Five-year trend, 2024 compared to 2019

Deteriorating

Natural Capital Value of England's forests and woodlands

7. Summary: The natural capital value of England's forests and woodlands was £314.0 billion in 2023 (at 2024 prices) (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Natural Capital Value of England's forests and woodlands, 2014 to 2023



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 to 2023 inclusive. Full comparable statistics for 2024 are not yet available and are planned to be provided in the next report.

The Office for National Statistics' "woodland natural capital accounts 2026" provide the financial and societal value of the woodland natural resource in England, from the range of ecosystem services that they provide. 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 series has been updated to 2024 prices. 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 £314.0 billion in 2023, a decrease of 1% since 2022: due mainly to a reduction in the amounts attributed to urban heat regulating and recreation and tourism (expenditure). The largest contributions in the estimates of the value of woodland ecosystem services in England in 2023 were: air pollution regulating (28%), greenhouse gas regulating (24%) and recreation: health benefits (18%).

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

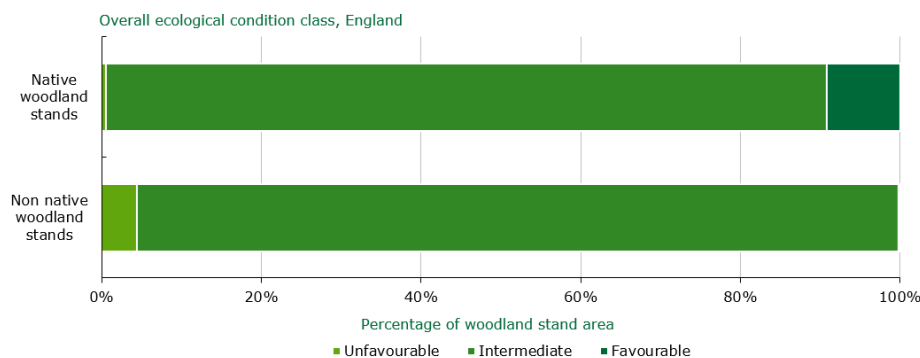
One-year trend only, 2023 compared to 2022

Little or no overall change

Ecological condition of woodland in England

8. Summary: Some 99.5% of native woodland and 95.6% of non-native woodland, is in favourable or intermediate condition in 2010-15 (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Ecological condition of woodland in England, 2010-15 (percentage of woodland stand area)



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), 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 (Figures 9 and 10). Sites have been re-surveyed and further updates will be included in future.

Figure 10: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in native woodland stands in England

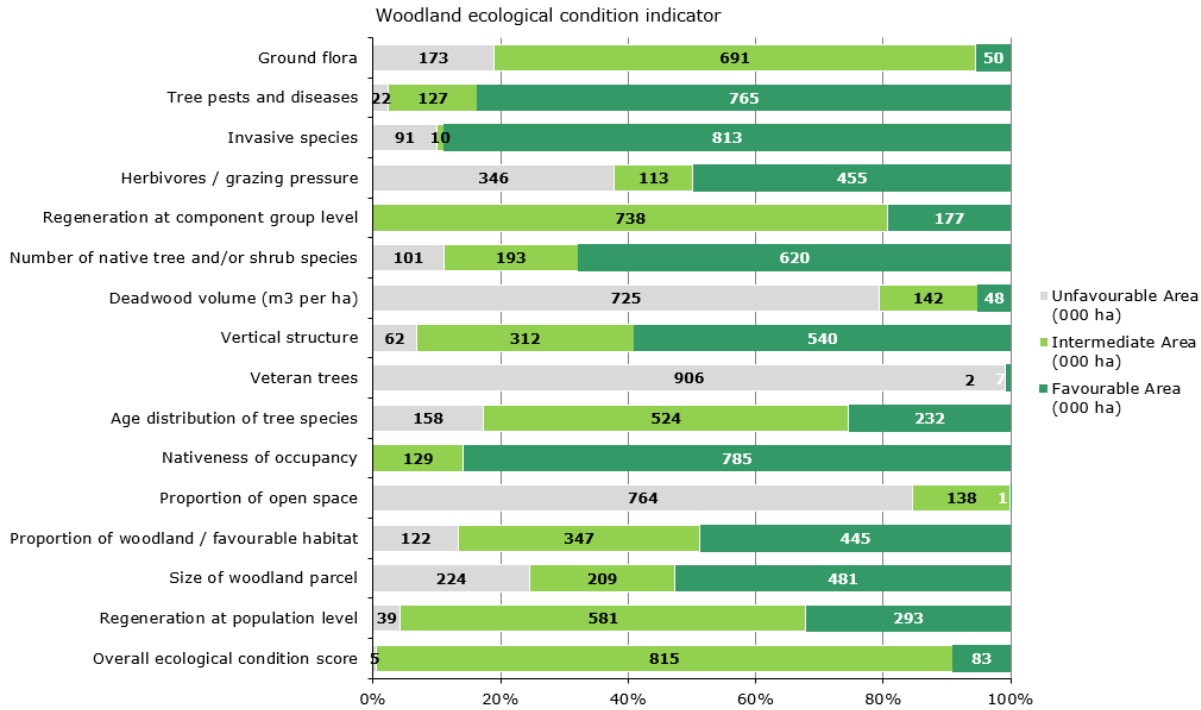
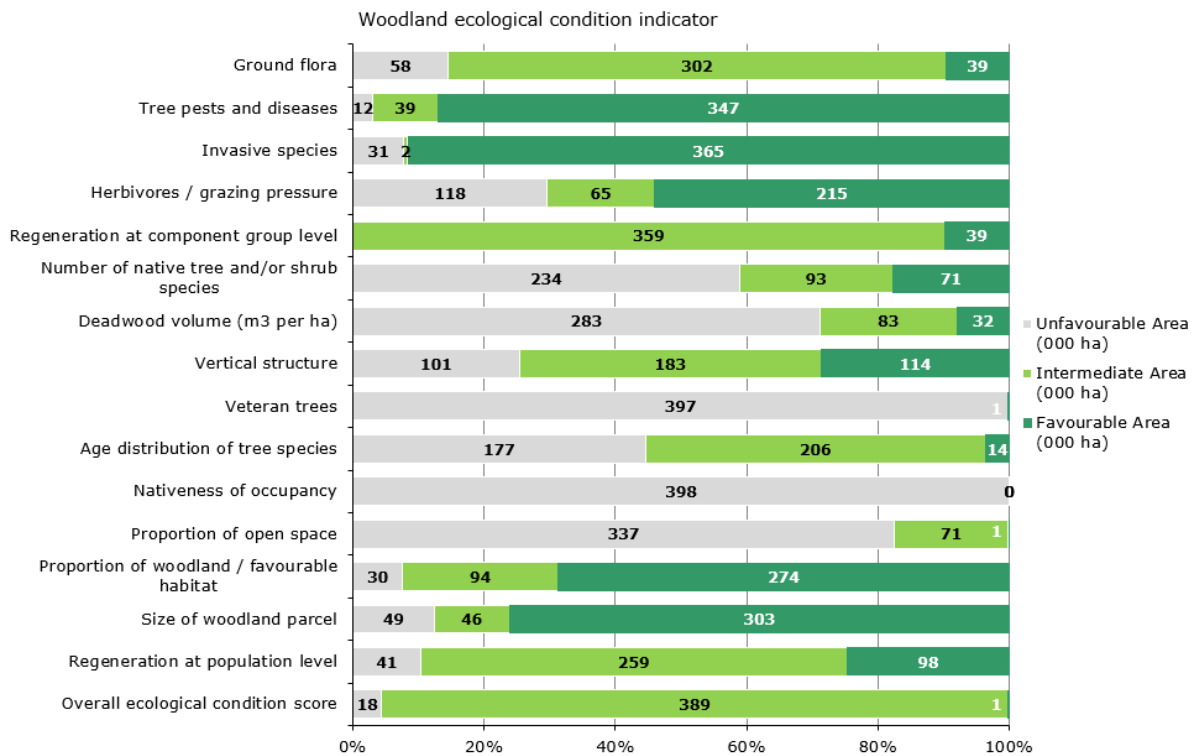


Figure 11: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in non-native woodland stands in England



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

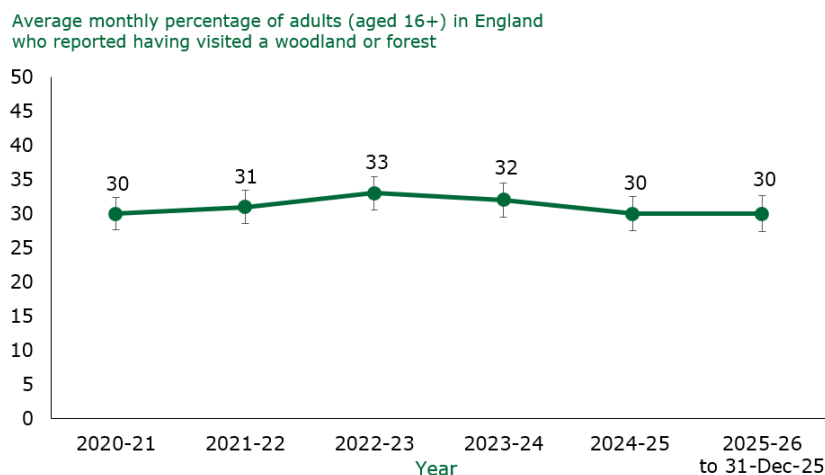
This indicator

Not assessed due to no comparable data

Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland

9. Summary: An estimated 30% of adults in England visited a forest or woodland in the first three quarters of 2025-26 (monthly average) (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland, 2020-21 to 31 December 2025



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

The estimated percentage of respondents visiting woodlands monthly has remained steady at 30%. Other statistics on woodland access over the last few years vary. The Public Opinion of Forestry Survey (Forest Research, 2025) reported a slight decrease between 2023 and 2025 in the percentage of respondents who had visited woodlands 'in the last few years', whilst over that time the number of visits per annum to the nation's forests managed by Forestry England has been increasing.

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

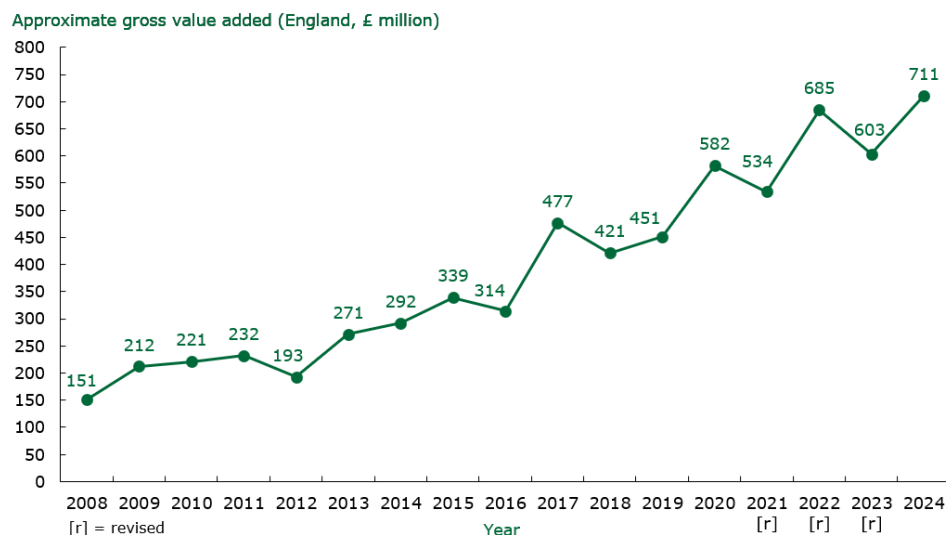
Four-year trend, 2024-25 to 31-Dec-25 compared to 2020-21

Little or no overall change

Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England

10. Summary: An estimated £711 million was the Gross Valued Added of the forestry sector for the economy in England in 2024 (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England, 2008 to 2024



Source: Annual Business Survey 2024 (Office for National Statistics, 2026). 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, and 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, 2024 compared to 2019

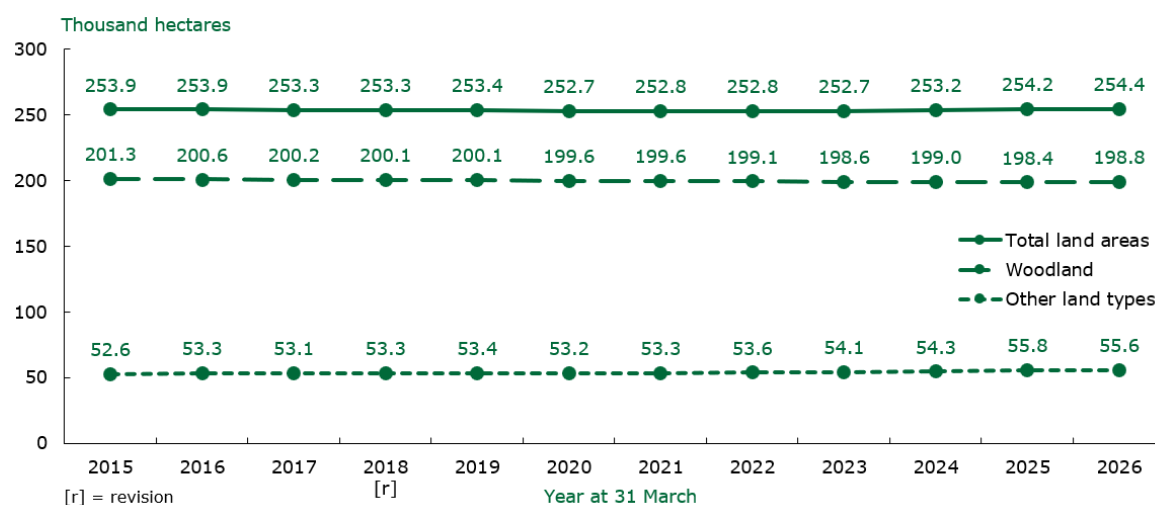
Improving

Forestry England headline indicators

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

11. Summary: The land area of the nation’s forests held by Forestry England was 254.4 thousand hectares at 31 March 2026 (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Land area of the nation’s forests held by Forestry England, 2015 to 2026



Source: Forestry England administrative data.

The total area of the nation’s forests held and managed by Forestry England has continued to expand, increasing by around 1,600 hectares over the past five years to 254,385 hectares. This steady growth reflects Forestry England’s ongoing commitment to woodland creation, supported by Defra, and demonstrates continued delivery against the Ministerial commitment to maintain the size of the Public Forest Estate.

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

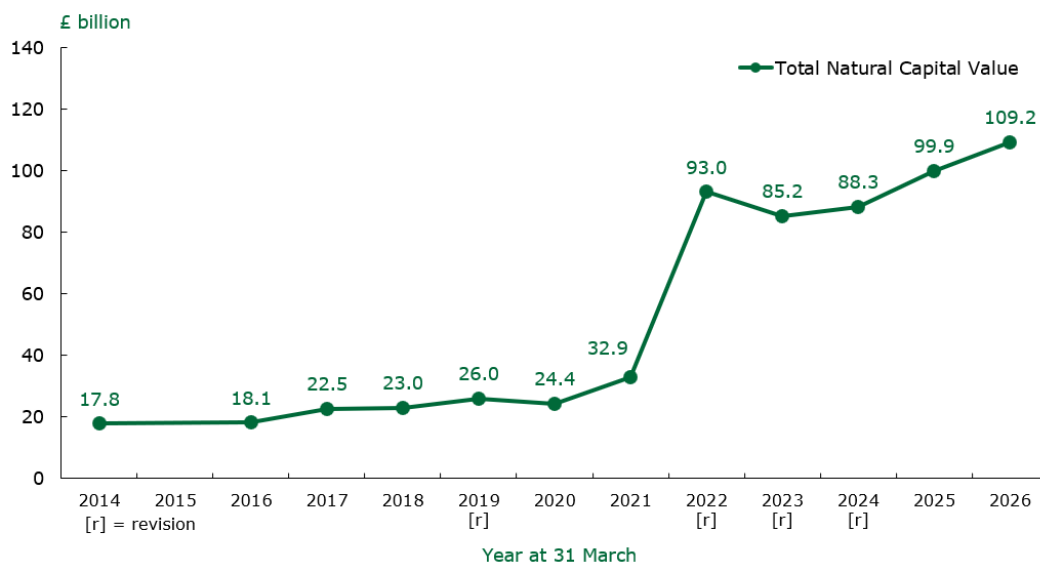
Five-year trend, 31 March 2026 compared to 31 March 2021

Little or no overall change

Total natural capital value of the nation's forests

12. Summary: The total natural capital value of the nation's forests was £109.2 billion at 31 March 2026 (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Total natural capital value of the nation's forests, 2014 to 2025



Source: Forestry England Natural Capital Accounts (Forestry England, 2026).

Note: The introduction of the physical health measure in 2021-22 accounts for the significant increase in value from 2020-21.

Natural capital value rose to £109.2 billion in 2025-26, representing an approximate 9% increase on the previous year. This continues a strong upward trajectory, demonstrating sustained growth in value across the estate, alongside ongoing enhancements in methodology and scope that reflect the continuous improvement in the content of the accounts. The increase captures the cumulative impact of Forestry England's sustainable land management and ecosystem enhancement activity, together with continued open access to forests and nature for recreation. Collectively, these factors highlight the effective stewardship of the nation's forests in delivering long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits.

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

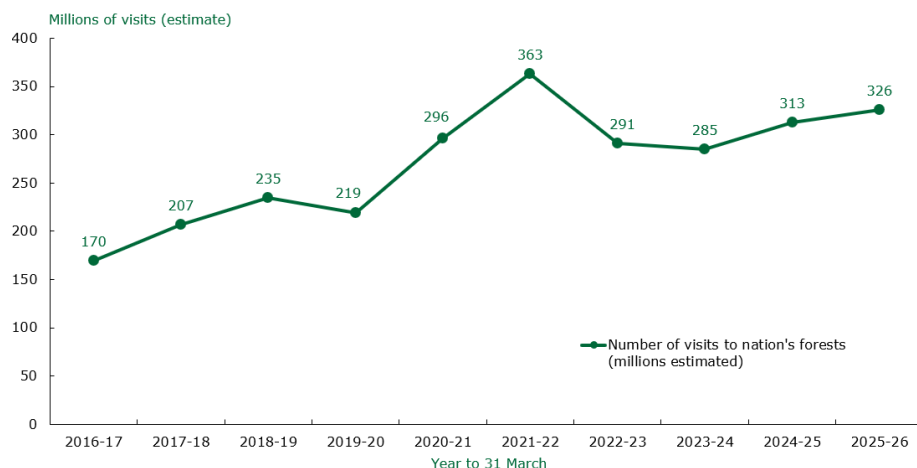
Five-year trend, March 2026 compared to March 2021

Improving

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

13. Summary: The number of visits per annum to the nation’s forests managed by Forestry England was 326 million in 2025-26 (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Number of visits per annum to the nation’s forests managed by Forestry England, 2016-17 to 2025-26



Source: Surveys conducted for Forestry England.

Visits increased by around 4% in the latest year, reaching an estimated 326 million. This sustained growth reflects the impact of continued investment and targeted initiatives, with visits now nearly 49% higher than pre pandemic (2019-20) levels, reinforcing the nation’s forests as an increasingly accessible and valued destination for all.

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

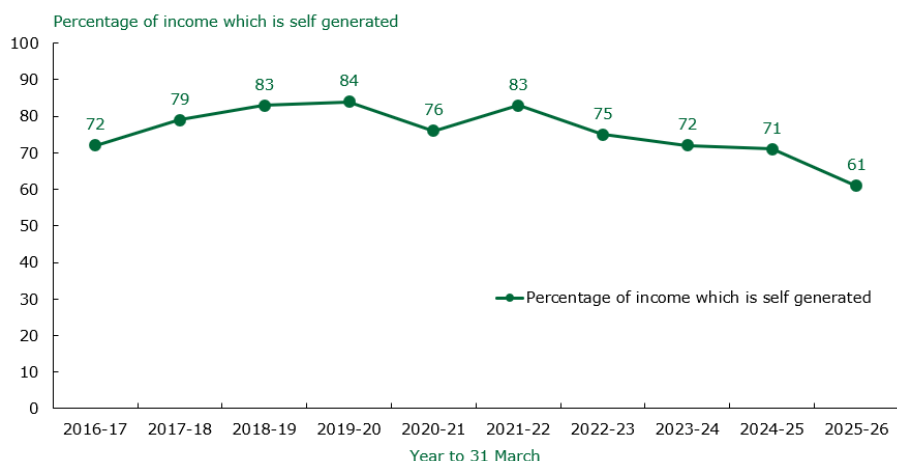
Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Improving

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

14. Summary: Some 61% percent of Forestry England’s income that was self-generated in 2025-26 (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Percentage of Forestry England’s income that is self-generated, 2016-17 to 2025-26



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 2025-26 our self-generated income increased by £1.3 million with increases in recreation income offsetting reductions in uplifted timber.

Meanwhile, £24.6m additional Defra funding was awarded for estates and public benefit activities (£16.1m) and a scaling up of ringfenced programmes (£8.5m) including Woodland creation, Biodiversity and Access for all.

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

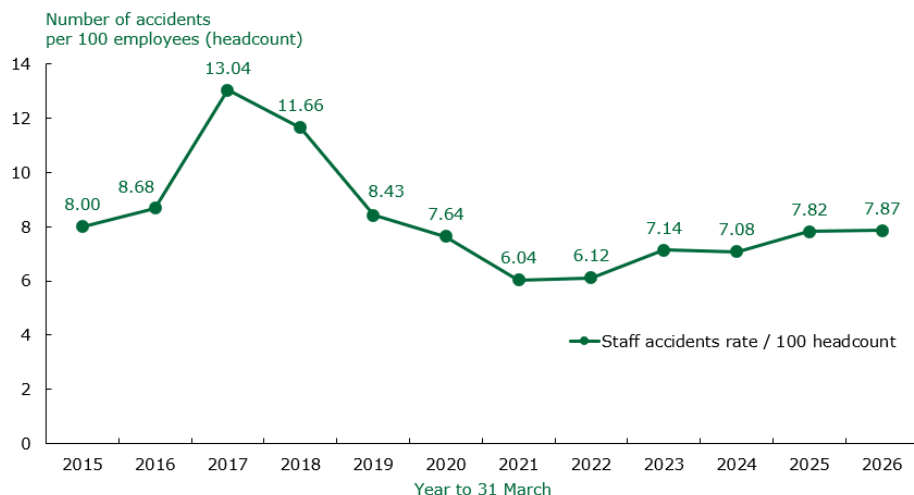
Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Deteriorating

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

15. Summary: There were 7.87 work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England in 2025-26 (Figure 18).

Figure 18: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forestry England, 2015 to 2026



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Forestry England staff accident rate in 2025-26 was 7.87 accidents per 100 employees, broadly in line with the previous year (7.82). While the rate remains below pre-2020 levels and significantly lower than the peak observed in 2016-17, it represents a continued gradual increase since 2021-22.

This trend reflects a combination of stable staffing levels and improved reporting practices. Through a sustained culture and behaviours programme the organisation continues to strengthen the quality of accident reporting and investigation processes, with an increasing focus on learning, sharing lessons, and strengthening preventative controls to reduce recurrence and further improve staff safety.

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

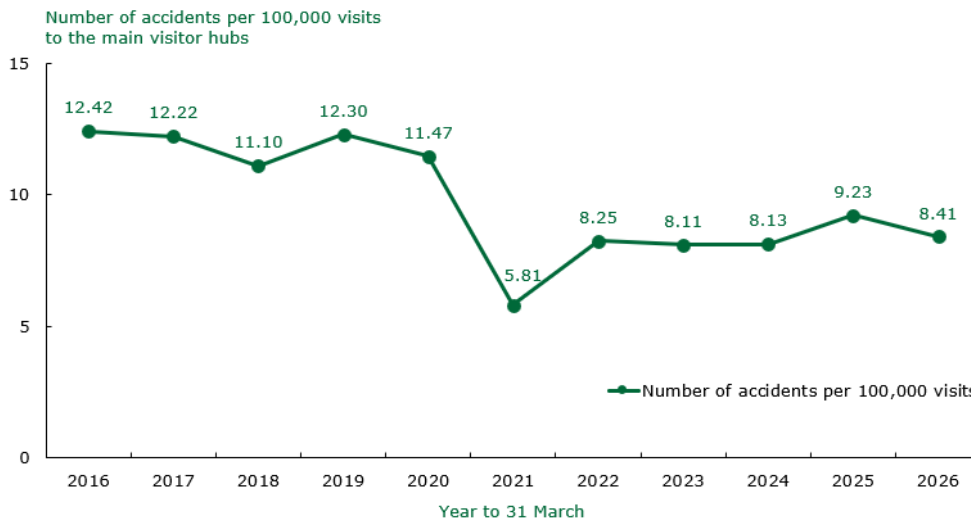
Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Deteriorating

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

16. Summary: There were 8.41 accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests in 2025-26 (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Number of accidents per 100,000 visits to the main visitor hubs in the nation's forests, 2016 to 2026



Source: Forestry England administrative data.

The public accident rate in 2025-26 was 8.41 accidents per 100,000 visits, a slight reduction from 2024-25 (9.23), continuing the overall downward trend observed since the peak in 2018-19.

This improvement has been achieved alongside sustained high visitor numbers and reflects ongoing efforts to strengthen site safety and risk management. Continued emphasis on clear and consistent reporting, along with increased awareness among staff, remains central to maintaining oversight of public safety and supporting further reductions in accidents in an outdoor natural environment.

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

Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

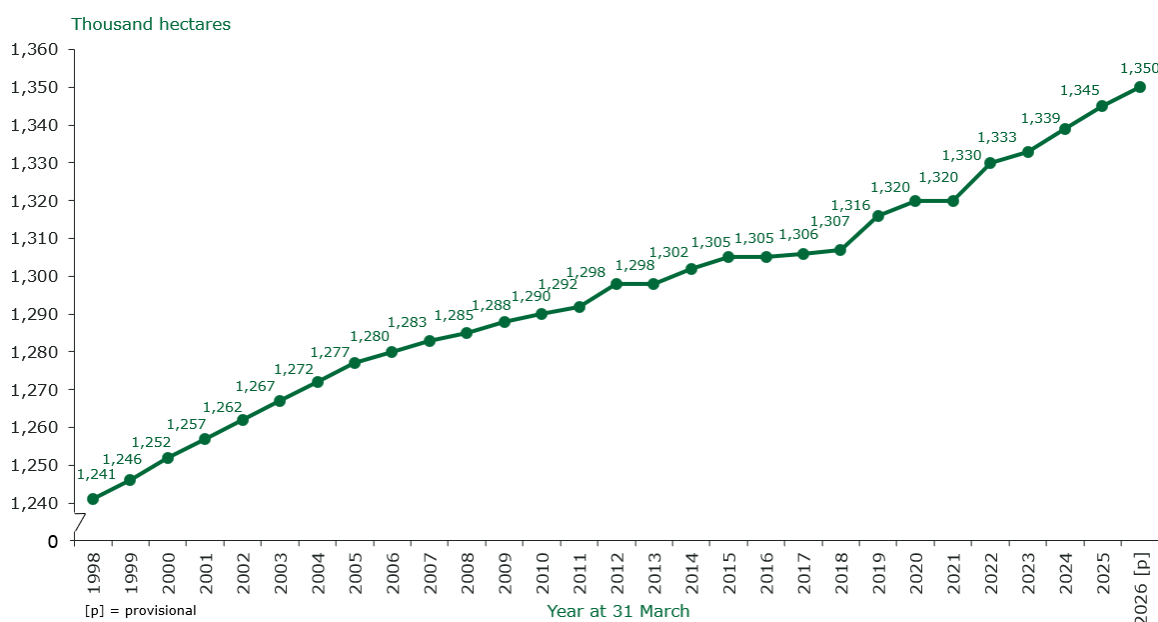
Little or no overall change

Forest Services indicators

Area of woodland in England

17. Summary: The area of woodland in England is 1,350 thousand hectares (10.4% of the land area) at 31 March 2026 (provisional statistics). (Figure 20).

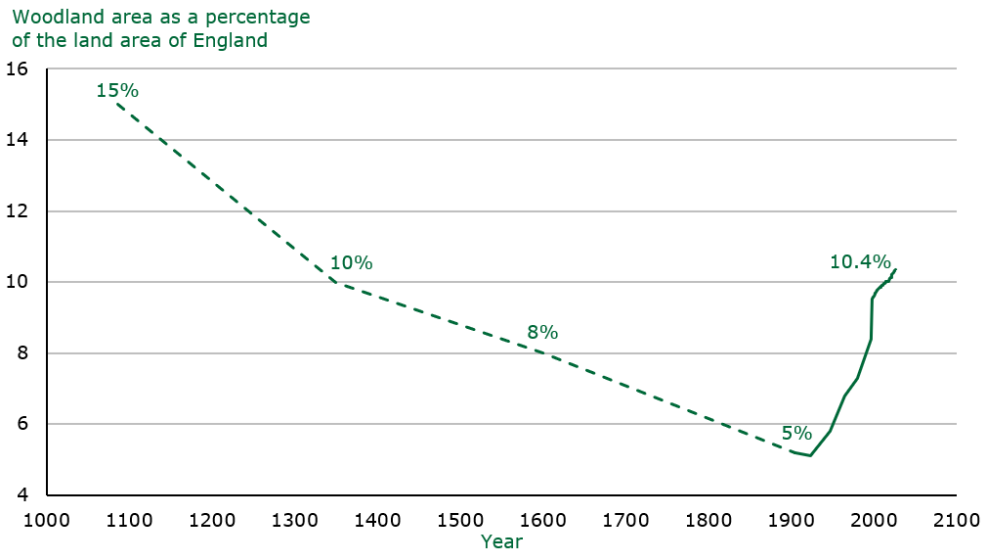
Figure 20: Area of woodland in England, 1998 to 2026



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

The area of woodland in England is 1,350 thousand hectares (10.4% of land area) at 31 March 2026 (provisional statistics). This statistic is scheduled to be confirmed in Forestry Statistics 2026 (published by Forest Research) later in the year. The March 2026 figure is an increase of five thousand hectares compared with the statistic for the previous year reflecting continuing delivery of higher planting rates, largely funded by the Nature for Climate Fund.

Figure 21: Woodland area as a percentage of land area of England



Source: Forestry Statistics.

Assessment of change in: Area of woodland

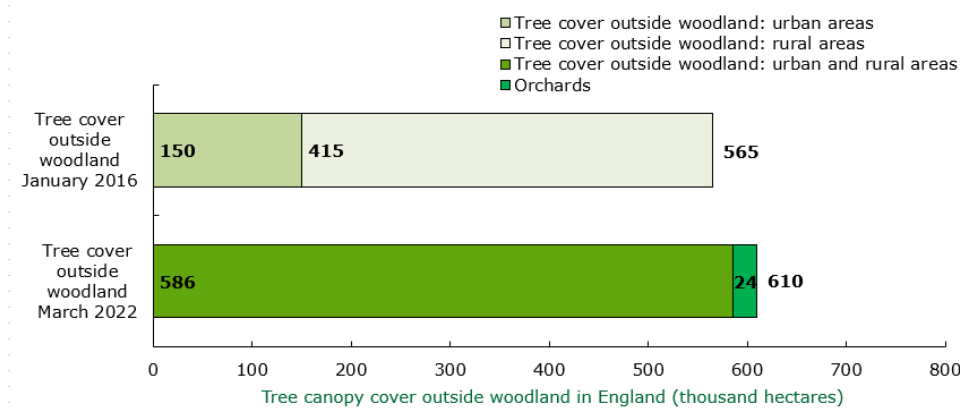
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-26 compared to 31-Mar-21

Little or no overall change

Area of tree cover outside woodland in England

18. Summary: The area of tree cover outside woodland in England is estimated to be 586 thousand hectares at March 2022 (Figure 22).

Figure 22: Area of tree cover outside woodland in England, 2016 to 2022



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

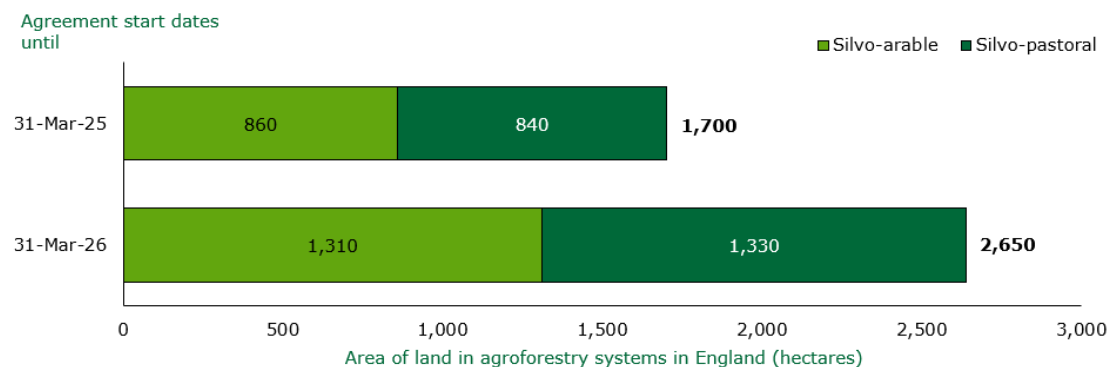
Five or more year trend, Mar-22 compared to Jan-16

Improving

Area of land in agroforestry systems in England

19. Summary: There were 2,650 hectares of land in agroforestry systems in England, composed of 1,310 hectares silvo-arable and 1,330 hectares silvo-pastoral at 31 March 2026 (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Area of land in agroforestry systems in England, 2025 to 2026



Notes:

1. The statistics may not sum due to rounding.
2. The definitions of the sub-types of agroforestry are based on the activity on the majority of the land parcel on which the action is being taken, as follows:
 - i) Silvo-arable agroforestry is land parcels with 50% or more of the area covered by arable land.
 - ii) Silvo-pastoral agroforestry (i.e. grassland) is land parcels with 50% or more of the area covered by permanent pasture or permanent crops.
3. The indicator excludes trees sometimes considered agroforestry such as wood-pasture and parkland, orchards, riparian planting, shelter belts, hedgerow trees and low density woodland where there is no agricultural activity.

Source: Administrative data for the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Countryside Stewardship (Defra, 2026).

The area of land in agroforestry systems in England at 31 March 2026 is reported as 2,650 hectares, comprising 1,310 hectares of silvo-arable and 1,330 hectares of silvo-pastoral systems. This indicator is based on land being in receipt of annual maintenance payments and represents a 56% increase compared with 31 March 2025.

Assessment of change in: Area of land in agroforestry systems in England

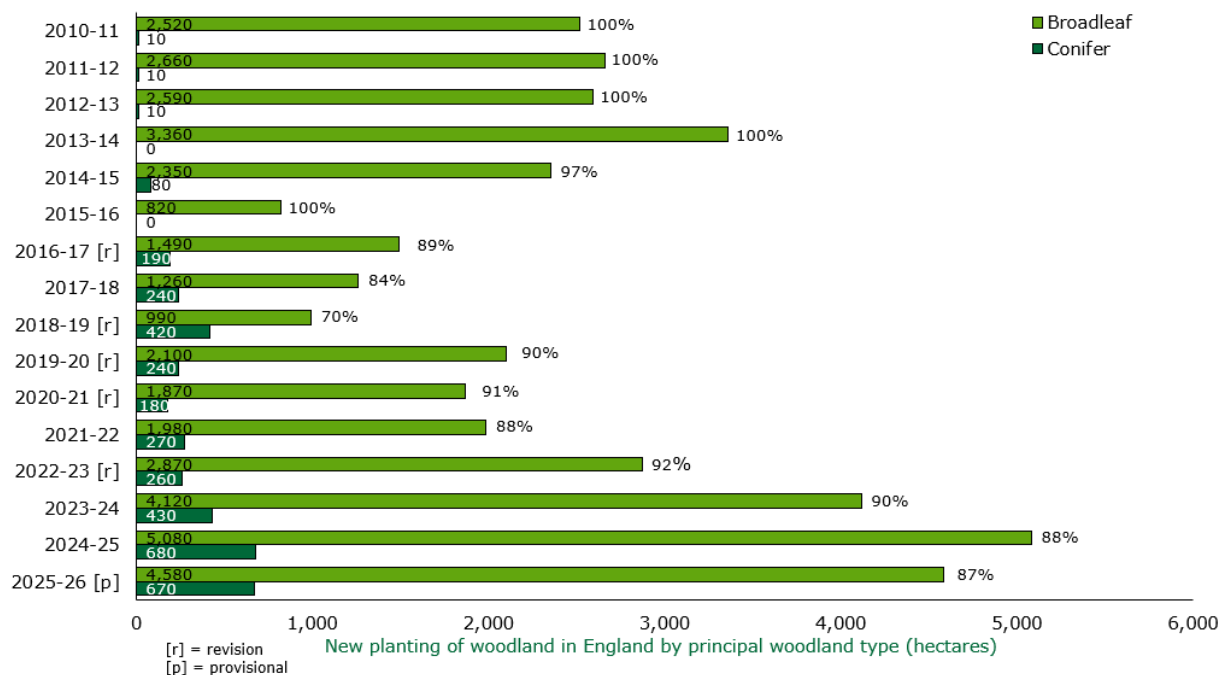
One year trend only, Mar-26 compared to Mar-25

Improving

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

20. Summary: In 2025-26, 87% of new planting of woodland in England was broadleaf (4,580 hectares), with the remaining 13% conifer (670 hectares) (Figure 24).

Figure 24: Percentage of new planting of woodland in England that is broadleaved woodland, 2010-11 to 2025-26



Source: Forestry Statistics 2025 and Provisional Woodland Statistics 2026 (Forest Research)

In 2025-26, 87% of new planting of woodland in England was broadleaf (4,580 hectares), with the remaining 13% conifer (670 hectares). This provisional figure will be confirmed later in the year in Forestry Statistics. The proportion of conifer planted in 2025-26 is a slight increase on the figure for the previous year (12%), but the vast majority remains broadleaf woodland.

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

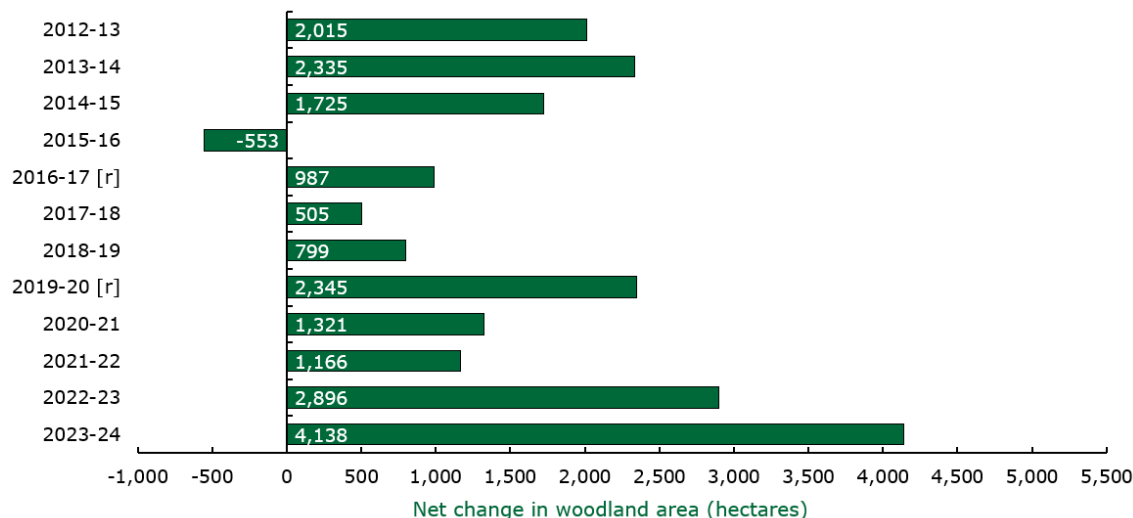
This indicator

Not assessed

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

21. Summary: In 2023-24, the most recent year for which information is available, there was a net increase in woodland area of 4,138 hectares (Figure 25).

Figure 25: Net change in woodland area, based on the balance between new planting of woodland and woodland removal, 2012-13 to 2023-24



Sources: Forestry Commission administrative data and statistics.

In 2023-24, the most recent year for which information is available, there was a net increase in woodland area of 4,138 hectares. This is calculated from new woodland creation in 2023-24 less any areas of reported woodland removal for open habitat restoration and woodland loss to development. This means the total net change in woodland area over the most recent five years (2019-20 to 2023-24) was +11,866 hectares which equates to an average of +2,373 hectares per annum (Table 4).

The net increase was substantially higher than that reported for 2022-23 (2,896 hectares) and the average over the preceding five years (1,705 hectares). This reflects the year-on-year increase in the area of new woodland created despite the modest increase in woodland loss, from 233 hectares in 2022-23 to 417 hectares in 2023-23. The area of woodland lost to development (240 hectares) was almost identical to the average over the preceding five years (248 hectares) while the area of woodland restored to open-ground habitat (177 hectares) was less than the preceding 5-year average (285 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	2018-19
Woodland creation (+)							
a. Total new planting¹	2,595	3,361	2,426	824	1,685	1,501	1,413
Woodland removal (-)							
Open habitat restoration other than in the nation's forests ²	341	693	273	434	200	197	286
Open habitat restoration in the nation's forests ²	119	213	70	116	85	138	-105
Attributable to development ³	120	120	358	827	413	661	433
b. Total woodland removal	580	1,026	701	1,377	698	996	614
c. Total net change in woodland area (a. minus b.)	2,015	2,335	1,725	-553	987	505	799

Table 4 continued:

Contribution to change in woodland area (Hectares)	2019-20 [r]	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Average per annum over the five years 2018-19 to 2022-23	Average per annum over last five years 2019-20 to 2023-24
Woodland creation (+)							
a. Total new planting¹	2,340	2,052	2,255	3,129	4,554	2,238	2,866
Woodland removal (-)							
Open habitat restoration other than in the nation's forests ²	89	9	30	7	45	84	36
Open habitat restoration in the nation's forests ²	-169	399	777	101	132	201	248
Attributable to development ³	75	324	282	125	240	248	209
b. Total woodland removal	-5	732	1,089	233	417	532	493
c. Total net change in woodland area (a. minus b.)	2,345	1,321	1,166	2,896	4,138	1,705	11,866
Average net change in woodland area per annum in five years (c. divided by 5)						2,373	1,705

[r] = revision

Sources:

1. Forestry Commission (2025) Forestry Statistics 2025, Edinburgh: Forestry Commission.
2. Forestry Commission (2026) Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2025-26, 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 that 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 indicator.

The indicator 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). Creation of integral open space of less than 1 hectare within existing woodland is not reported as woodland loss, but some of the losses to achieve open habitat restoration in the nation's forests and elsewhere can be of smaller areas of woodland.

In this indicator figures for losses and gains are for financial years to 31 March except figures for area of woodland removal attributable to development that are for months June to June. Figures are by year of records, not necessarily the year of woodland creation or woodland removal.

Assessment of change in: Net change in woodland area

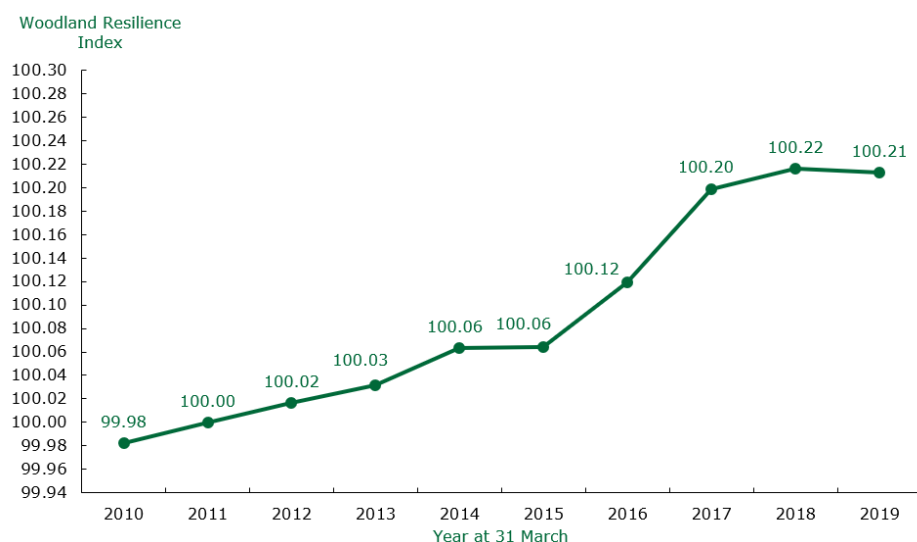
Five-year trend, 2023-24 compared to 2018-19

Improving

Connectivity of woodland in England

22.Summary: The index of connectivity of woodland in England was 100.21 at 31 March 2019 (Figure 26).

Figure 26: Connectivity of woodland in England, 2010 to 2019



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

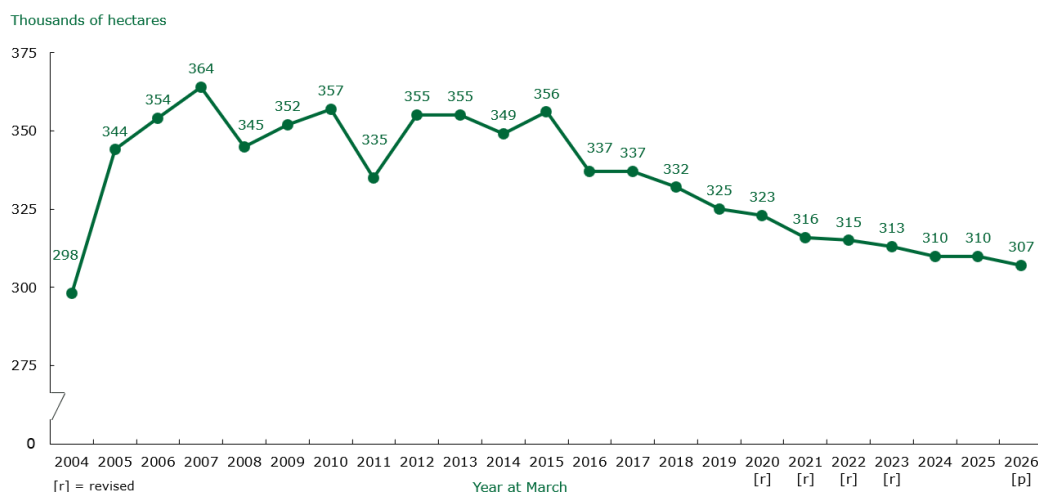
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-19 compared to 31-Mar-14

Little or no overall change

Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed

23. Summary: The area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed was 307 thousand hectares at 31 March 2026 (Figure 27).

Figure 27: Area of woodland in England that is certified as sustainably managed, 2004 to 2026



Source: Provisional Woodland Statistics 2026 (Forest Research).

The area of certified woodland was 307 thousand hectares in England at 31st March 2026. There is continued interest in the role of certification schemes in demonstrating sustainable forest management.

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

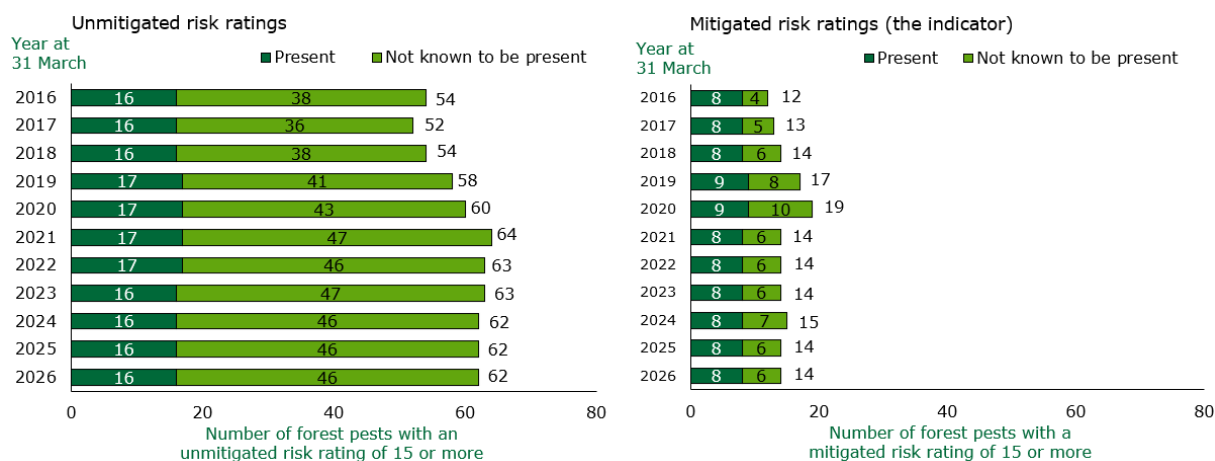
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-26 compared to 31-Mar-21

Deteriorating

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

24. Summary: There are 14 high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR) at 31 March 2026 (Figure 28).

Figure 28: Number of high priority forest pests in the UK Plant Health Risk Register (UKPHRR), 2016 to 2026



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

The number of forest pests and diseases of concern remains stable at 14. Eight of the 14 high-risk pests and diseases are now widespread in England, including *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (ash dieback), *Phytophthora alni* (affecting alder species), and *Pseudomonas syringae pv. aesculi* (horse chestnut bleeding canker).

As of March 2026, the number of forest pests with an unmitigated risk rating above 15 remains unchanged at 62 on the UK Plant Health Risk Register.

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 2026.

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	<i>Pseudomonas syringae</i> pv. <i>aesculi</i>	Bacterium	Present: widespread	5	4	20
Shoot blight on cedar/Tip blight on eastern hemlocks	<i>Sirococcus tsugae</i>	Fungus	Present: unknown distribution	5	4	20
<i>Chalara</i> ash dieback	<i>Hymenoscyphus fraxineus</i>	Fungus	Present: widespread	4	4	16
Eight-toothed spruce bark beetle	<i>Ips typographus</i>	Insect	Absent	4	4	16
Sudden oak death; <i>ramorum</i> shoot dieback	<i>Phytophthora ramorum</i>	Oomycete ³	Present: limited	4	4	16
Alder <i>Phytophthora</i> root disease	<i>Phytophthora alni</i>	Oomycete ⁶	Present: widespread	4	4	16
Two-lined chestnut borer	<i>Agrilus bilineatus</i>	Insect	Absent	3	5	15
Emerald ash borer	<i>Agrilus planipennis</i>	Insect	Absent	3	5	15
Zigzag elm sawfly	<i>Aproceros leucopoda</i>	Insect	Present: unknown distribution	5	3	15
Sachalin fir bark beetle	<i>Polygraphus proximus</i>	Insect	Absent	3	5	15
Acute oak decline	<i>n/a</i>	Other	Present: limited	3	5	15
Two spotted woodborer	<i>Agrilus biguttatus</i>	Insect	Present: limited	3	5	15
Cypress jewel beetle or juniper buprestid	<i>Lamprodila festiva</i>	Insect	Absent	5	3	15
Fan-leaf virus nematode ⁴	<i>Xiphinema index</i>	Nematodes	Absent	5	3	15

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

³ An oomycete is an algae-like fungus.

⁴ 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	10	15	20	25
	Green	Yellow	Amber	Red	Red
4	4	8	12	16	20
	Blue	Green	Yellow	Amber	Red
3	3	6	9	12	15
	Blue	Green	Green	Yellow	Amber
2	2	4	6	8	10
	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
1	1	2	3	4	5
	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	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, 31 March 2026.

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)

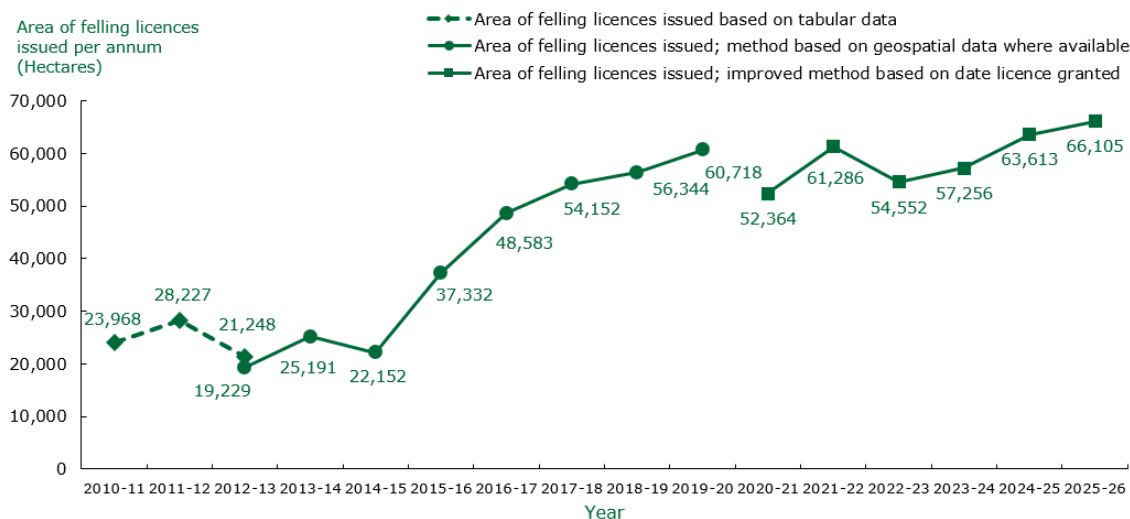
Five-year trend, Mar-26 compared to Mar-21

Improving

Area of felling licences issued

25. Summary: The area of felling licences issued was 66,105 hectares in 2025-26 (Figure 29).

Figure 29: Area of felling licences issued, 2010-11 to 2025-26



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

The area of woodland under felling licence remains at a high level. We continue to see a modest trend over recent years towards an increase in annual numbers of stand-alone felling applications. It is anticipated that licences associated with Woodland Management Plans linked to a grant will increase at a slightly higher rate.

Assessment of change in: Area of felling licences issued

Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Improving

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

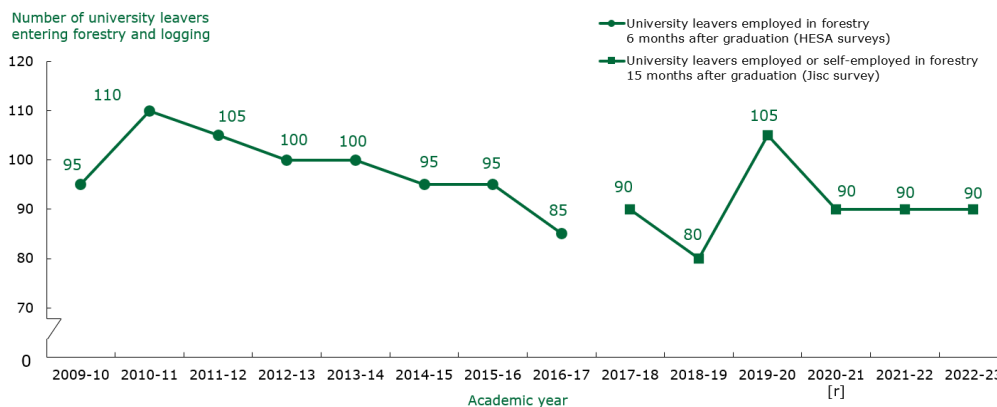
26. Summary: The most recent available statistics shown that there were 23 forestry apprenticeship completions in 2025-26 to January 2026, and 90 university students entered forestry in 2022-23 (latest statistics) (Figures 30 and 31).

Figure 30: Number of apprentices and those with work-based diplomas entering forestry, 2009-10 to January 2026



Source: Apprenticeships and Further Education and skills statistics (Department for Education, 2026) and LANTRA.

Figure 31: Number of university students entering forestry, 2009-10 to 2022-23



Source: Destination of Leavers of Higher Education survey (Higher Education Statistics Agency) and the Graduate Outcomes Survey, Copyright Jisc 2026. Numbers are rounded to the nearest multiple of 5. Any number lower than 2.5 has been rounded to 0. Neither Jisc nor Jisc Services Limited can accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived by third parties from data or other information supplied by Jisc or Jisc Services Limited.

The introduction of an improved indicator utilising a metric based on starts and completions of the new forestry apprenticeships being offered by training providers will begin to provide an accurate measure of apprentices actually entering the forest industry once the data is publicly available. The first cohort of Professional Forester apprentices graduated in July 2025 and will appear therefore in a subsequent report. In addition, Forestry Works Manager apprentices will begin to appear in the data in future reports.

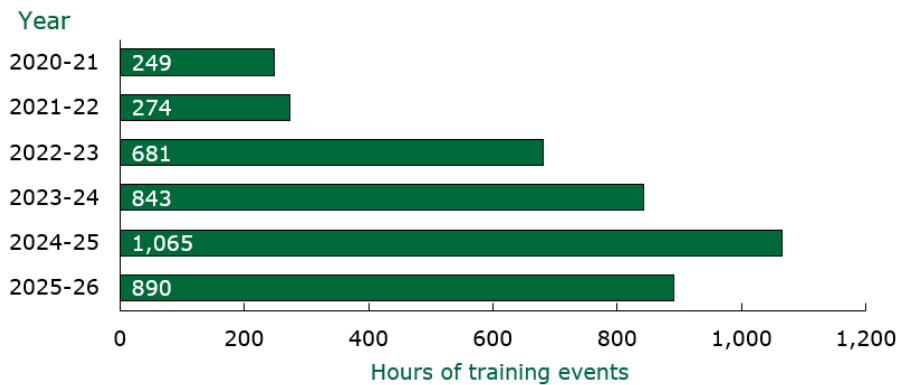
Assessment of change in: Number of apprentices, those with work-based diplomas, and university students entering forestry

Apprentices and diploma completions, almost five-year trend, 2025-26 to Jan-26 compared to 2020-21	Improving
University leavers, five-year trend, 2022-23 (latest data) compared to 2017-18	Little or no overall change

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

27. Summary: Forest Services provided an estimated 890 hours of training support for the English forestry sector in 2025-26 (Figure 32).

Figure 32: Forest Services' training support for the English forestry sector (hours of training events), 2020-21 to 2025-26



Source: Forestry Commission administrative records.

Note: Estimates from returns received.

Some 890 hours of training were provided for the forestry sector, to over 10,000 attendees, covering a wide range of topics including woodland planning, creation and management, tree pests and diseases, landscape and ecology, woodlands for water, climate smart forestry, agroforestry and deer management.

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

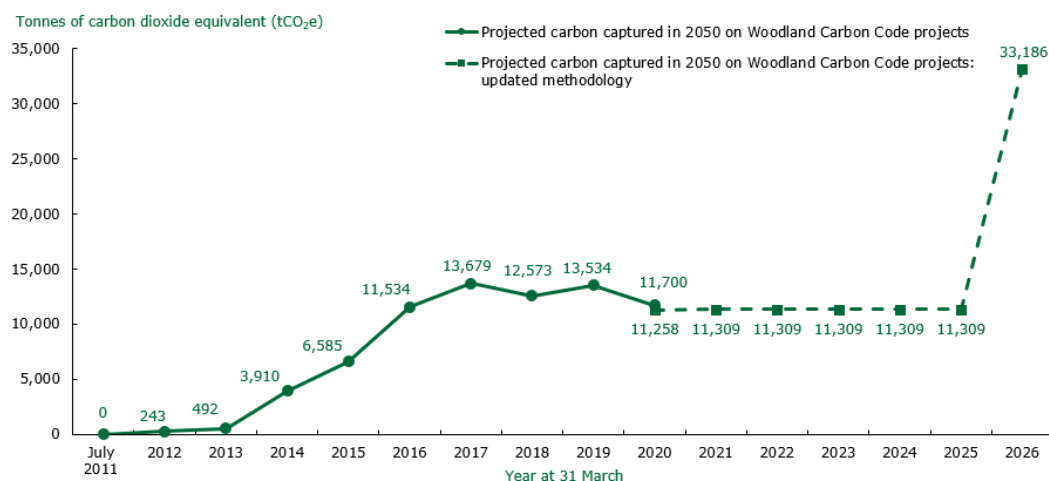
Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Improving

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

28. Summary: The projected carbon capture in 2050 by validated Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects in England was 33,186 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e) at 31 March 2026 (Figure 33).

Figure 33: Projected carbon capture in 2050 by validated Woodland Carbon Code woodland creation projects in England, 2011 to 2026



Source: Provisional Woodland Statistics 2026 (Forest Research)

As of March 2026, 244 projects were validated to the Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) in England, compared to 185 in March 2025. An increase of 59 validated projects in a year is the highest in the history of the code, up on 37 last year which itself was the highest number of validations in a year at the time. The 244 projects validated by March 2026 are expected to sequester 33,186 tCO₂e in the year 2050 and a total of 807,217 tCO₂e by 2050 (compared with 608,373 tCO₂e as of 31 March 2025).

The projects will create 15,094 hectares of new woodland (compared to 12,736 in 2025).

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

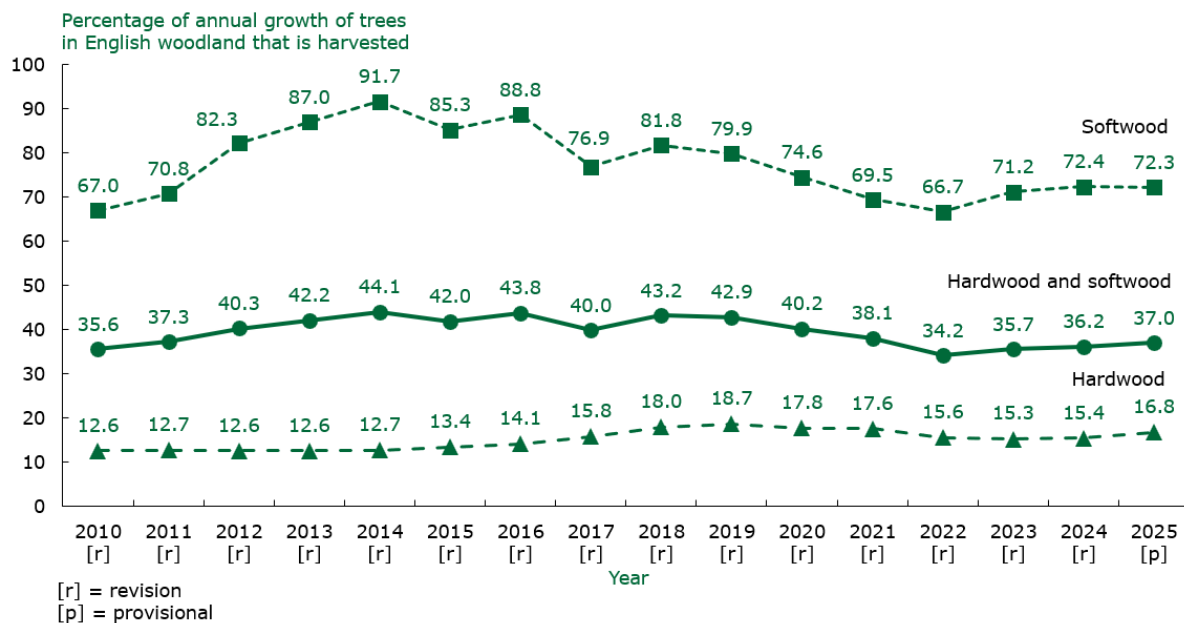
Five-year trend, 31-Mar-26 compared to 31-Mar-21

Improving

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

29. Summary: Some 37.0% percent of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands was harvested in 2025 (hardwood and softwood). The statistic for softwood was 72.3% and for hardwood it was 16.8% in that year (Figure 34).

Figure 34: Percentage of the annual growth of trees in English woodlands that is harvested, 2010 to 2025



Source: UK Wood Production and Trade: 2025 Provisional Figures (Forest Research, 2026) and National Forest Inventory team forecasts (Forest Research).

Note: Statistics have been revised to include additional information now available.

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 softwoods 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

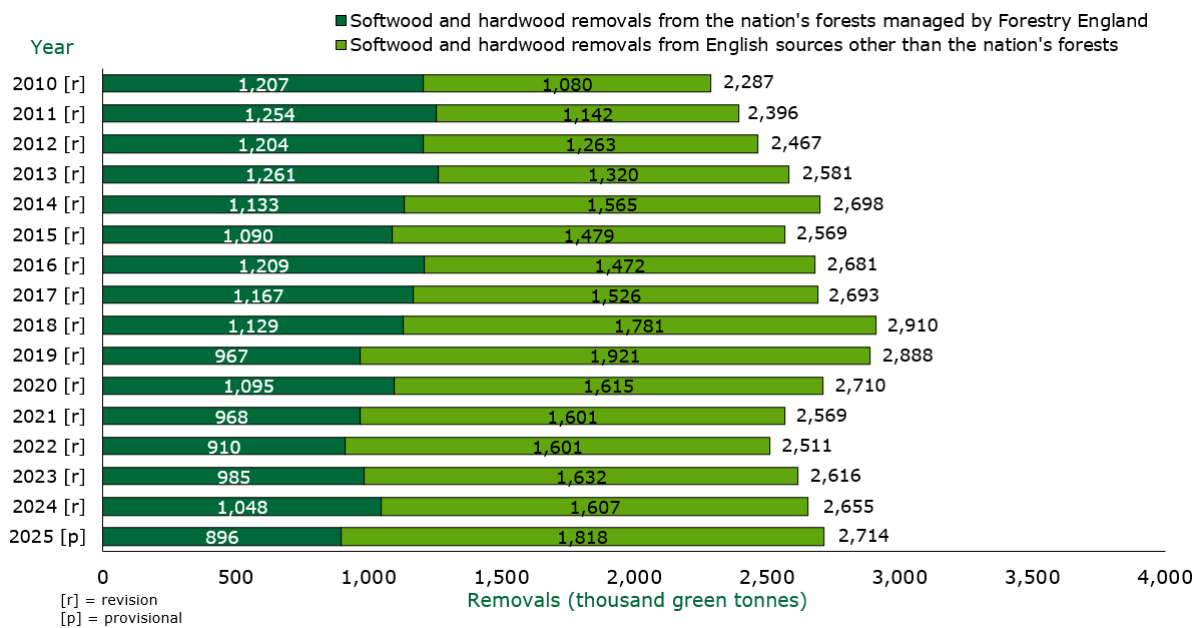
Five-year trend, 2025 compared to 2020 (hardwood and softwood part)

Deteriorating

Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources

30. Summary: Some 2,714 thousand green tonnes of softwood and hardwood were brought to market from English sources in 2025, composed of 896 thousand green tonnes from the nation's forests managed by Forestry England, and 1,818 thousand green tonnes from other English sources (Figure 35).

Figure 35: Volume of timber brought to market per annum from English sources, 2010 to 2025



Source: [UK Wood Production and Trade: 2026 Provisional Figures](#) (Forest Research, 2026).

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)

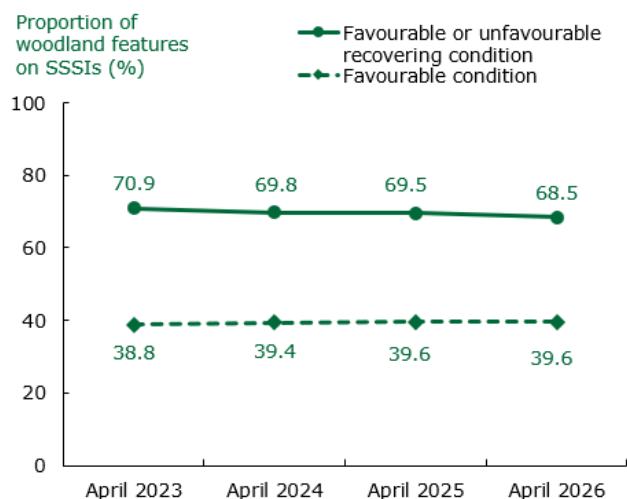
Five-year trend, 2025 compared to 2020

Little or no overall change

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

31. Summary: Some 68.5% of woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest were in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition in England at April 2026 (Figure 36).

Figure 36: Percentage of woodland features on Sites of Special Scientific Interest in desired condition in England, 2023 to 2026



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 2026, 68.5% 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

Three-year trend, Apr-26 compared to Apr-23, favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	Deteriorating
Three-year trend, Apr-26 compared to Apr-23, 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

32. Summary: There was 1,320 hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), and 151 hectares restoration of open habitat from woodland in England in 2025-26 (Figures 37 and 38).

Figure 37: Hectares of restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) in England, 2010-11 to 2025-26

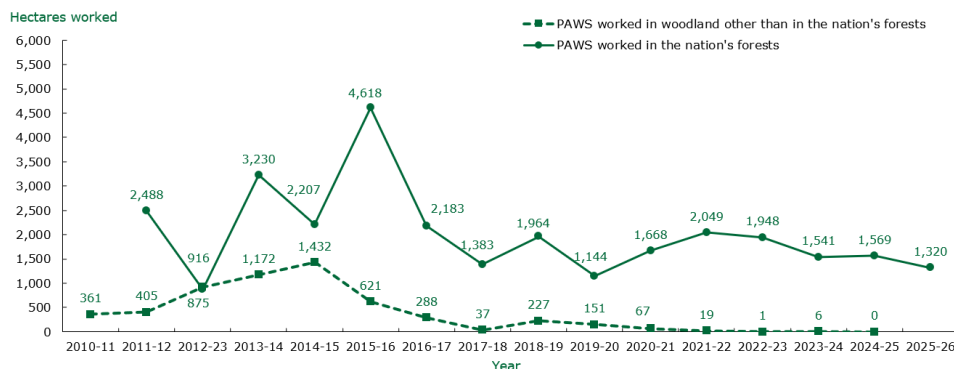
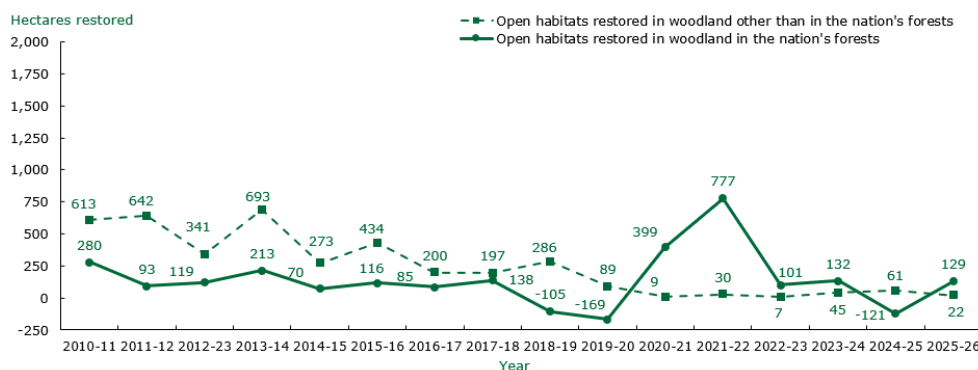


Figure 38: Hectares of open habitat from woodland in England, 2010-11 to 2025-26



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 metrics: i) the area of land where trees are being removed to gradually restore ancient semi-natural woodland (on both private land and public land in the nation's forests, managed by Forestry England), and ii) the area of land where trees are being removed to restore open semi-natural habitat such as heathland or grassland on private land and on public land within the nation's forests any change in the extent of open semi-natural habitat.

The restoration of these 'wildlife-rich' habitats is a Government priority. The document, *Keepers of Time*, commits government 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 500,000ha of wildlife rich habitat outside protected sites, in England by 2042. [The Environmental Targets \(Biodiversity\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#). Ancient woodland restoration and open habitat creation contributes to these targets.

Restoration of planted ancient woodland

The indicator 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 1,320 hectares of Planted Ancient Woodland worked by Forestry England in 2025-26 in the nation’s forests, broadly maintaining previous levels of effort. Forestry England provide a separate report, as part of their natural capital assessment, on progress with restoration targets. The latest report in 2024-25 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 16,177 hectares in 2024-25, an increase of 78% [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. The Forestry Commission is updating its felling licence management systems, which has resulted in a temporary loss of data capture 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 22 hectares worked or restored on private land and 129 hectares gained inside the nation’s forests.

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 30,500 ha of priority grassland, heathland and bog: [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 2025-26 compared to totals for 2020-21	Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data
Open habitat restored or created in England Five-year trend, totals for 2025-26 compared to totals for 2020-21	Deteriorating

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

33. Summary: In 2024 the woodland bird index was 64.1 for all woodland birds, 86.4 for woodland generalist birds, and 53.8 for woodland specialist birds (Figures 39, 40 and 41).

Figure 39: Woodland bird index for all woodland birds, 1970 to 2024

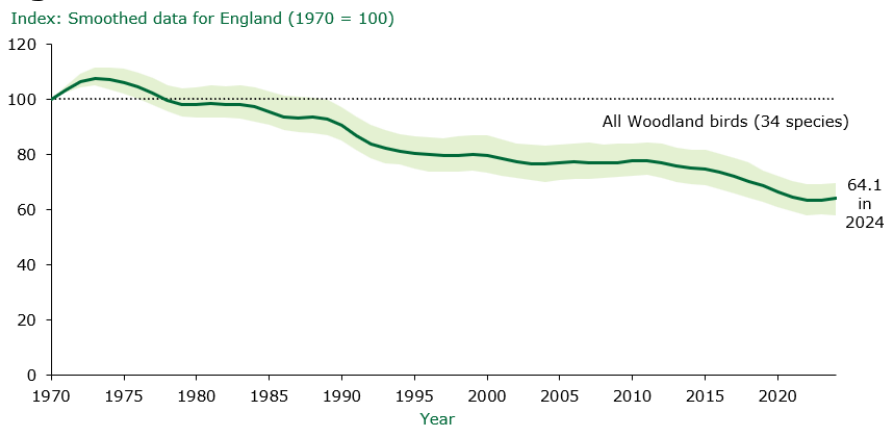


Figure 40: Woodland bird index for woodland generalist birds, 1970 to 2024

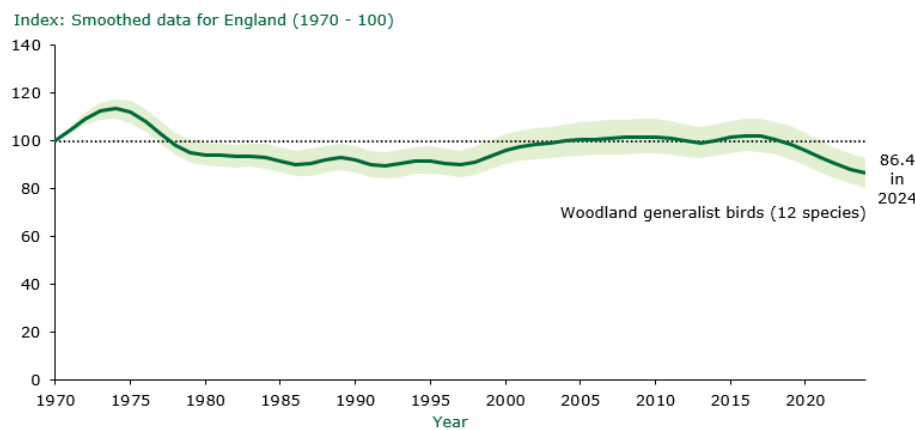
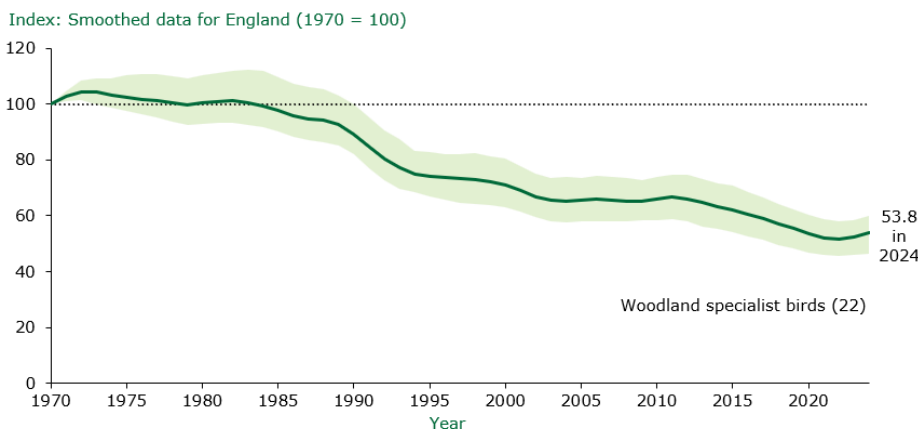


Figure 41: Woodland bird index for woodland specialist birds, 1970 to 2024



Source: Wild bird populations in the UK and England, 1970 to 2024 (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 in England during the breeding season for 34 bird species that are strongly associated and regularly found in woodland habitats. Separate trends are calculated for all 34 species, and separately 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 2024 - GOV.UK](#).

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

In 2024 the all-species woodland bird index for England was almost 36% lower than in 1970 and has declined by about 4% between 2019 and 2024. The largest average declines have been in the 22 specialist species, though the trend for generalist species has also declined 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 declines outweigh the increases, and some species, such as the spotted flycatcher or willow tit have fallen by over 90 percent since 1970.

The causes of bird decline are many and complex. The loss of structure and appropriate management in woodland is a known cause, 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

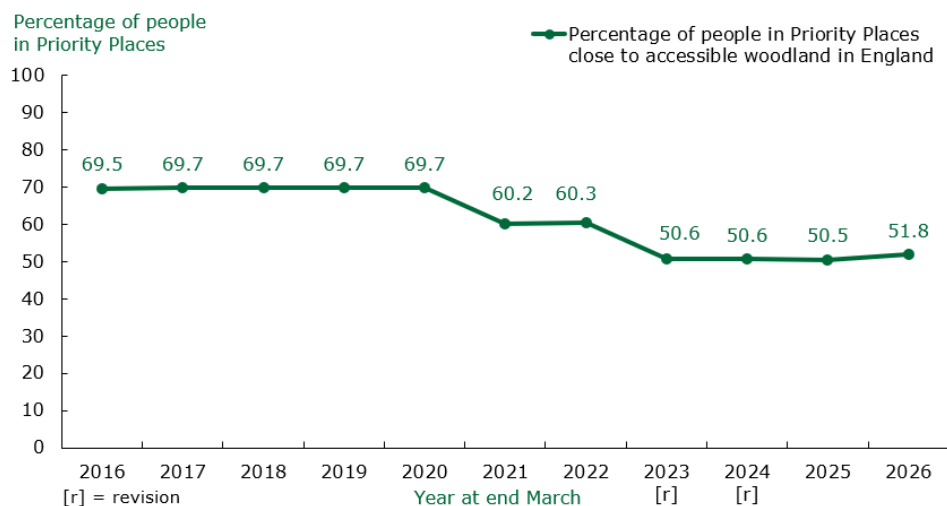
All woodland birds index (England),
fifteen year trend, 2024 compared to 2009

Deteriorating

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

34. Summary: Some 51.8% of people in Priority Places lived close to accessible woodland in England at 31 March 2026 (Figure 42).

Figure 42: Percentage of people in Priority Places close to accessible woodland in England, 2016 to 2026



Source: Forestry Commission based on Woods for All (Forestry Commission), the National Forest Inventory woodland map (Forest Research), the Index of Multiple Deprivation (Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government), and Built-up Areas and Population estimates (Office for National Statistics).

After refreshing the methodology in 2023, the indicator statistic remained stable to 2025. Following updates to most of the evaluated data, the statistic has increased slightly from 50.5% in 2025 to 51.8% in 2026.

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

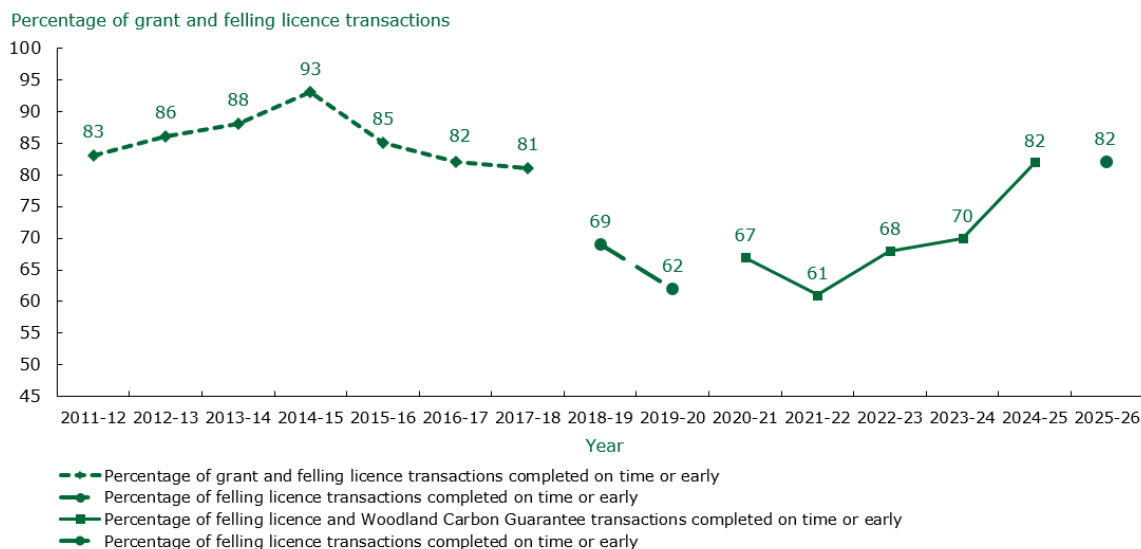
Three-year trend only, Mar-26 compared to Mar-23

Little or no overall change

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

35. Summary: Some 82% of grant and felling licence transactions were completed on time or early in 2025-26 (Figure 43).

Figure 43: Percentage of grant and felling licence transactions completed on time or early, 2011-12 to 2025-26



Note: The number types of grant, such as the Woodland Carbon Guarantee, included in the indicator has changed over time. At present it includes only felling licence transactions that have throughout always been included.

Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Felling licence transactions continue to make progress towards meeting the Charter target of 85%. We are maintaining a steady service level (82% in 2024-25) supporting the forestry sector with legal felling operations whilst also processing applications for an increasingly diverse range of incentives.

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

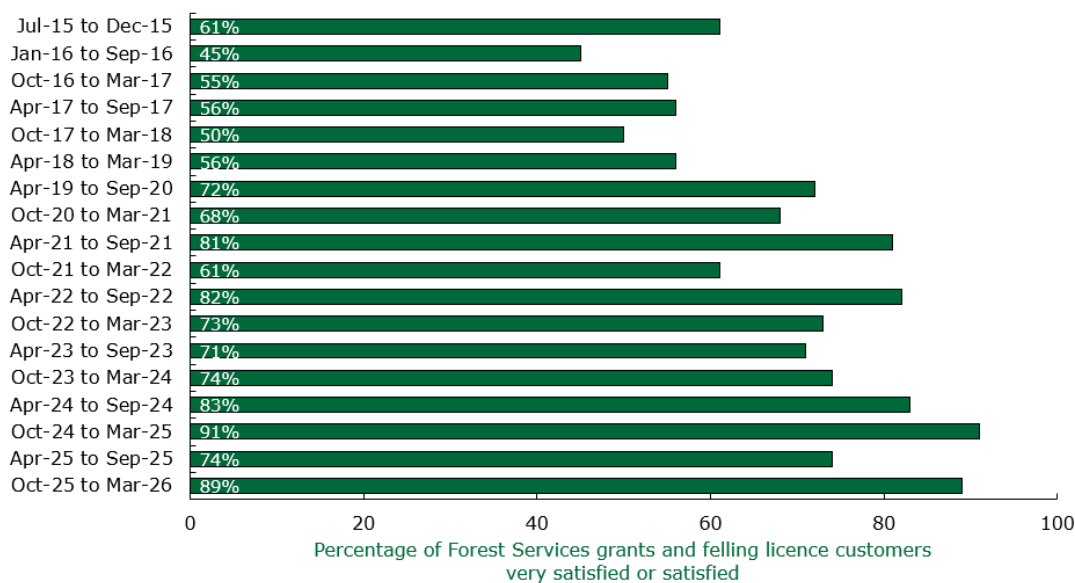
Five-year trend, 2025-26 compared to 2020-21

Improving

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

36. Summary: Some 89% of Forest Services grants and felling licence customers reported their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied between October 2025 and March 2026 (Figure 44).

Figure 44: Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling licence customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied, 2015 to 2026



Source: Forestry Commission customer survey.

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

The 5% decrease in overall satisfaction rates (83% in 2025-26 compared with 88% for the full 2024-25 financial year) is associated with an increased Forestry Commission incentives delivery portfolio. We have supported and promoted the introduction of a new and improved Countryside Stewardship Woodland Improvement and Agroforestry offer, at the same time receiving an unprecedented number of applications to create new woodland in England. This, coupled with our long-standing grants and regulations commitments, has resulted in some reduced turnaround times. To respond to customer demand we are making changes faster, utilising our upskilled and flexible workforce, which is evident in the improved responses of the latest wave.

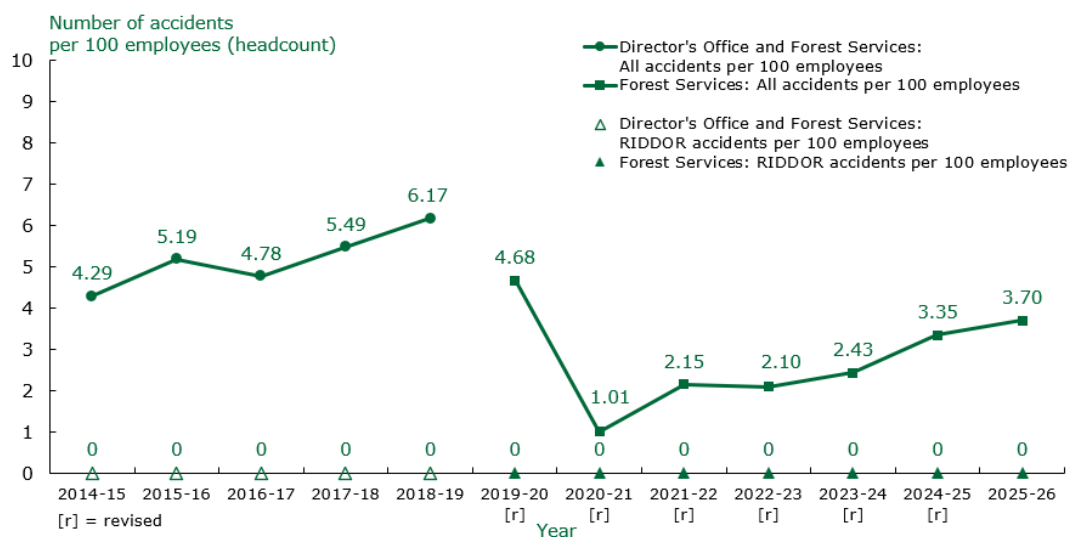
Assessment of change in: Percentage of Forest Services grants and felling licence customers who report their customer satisfaction as either very satisfied or satisfied.

Trend for five years: Estimate for Oct-25/Mar-26 compared to that of Oct-20/Mar-21	Not assessed due to insufficient comparable data
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Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forest Services

37. Summary: In 2025-26 overall there were 3.70 work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forest Services, and zero RIDDOR accidents (Figure 45).

Figure 45: Number of work-related accidents per 100 employees in Forest Services, 2014-15 to 2025-26



Notes:

1. Statistics for 2019-20 onwards have been revised providing for Forest Services a separate report.
2. 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.

Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

Injury incidents have increased slightly this reporting year to 22 from 21 in the previous period, with 0 RIDDOR cases recorded. The accident rate per 100 employees has risen from 3.35 to 3.52 non-RIDDOR incidents. While this represents a marginal upward movement, the overall position remains relatively stable and continues to sit below historic levels. The increase is consistent with improved awareness and reporting of health and safety incidents across the organisation rather than a deterioration in underlying safety performance. Health and Safety continues to be treated as a core organisational priority, with ongoing emphasis on training, reporting culture, and manager engagement.

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

Five-year trend: 2025-26 compared to 2020-21 (all accidents part) Deteriorating

