Forestry Commission

Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators

Headline Performance Update
30 September 2026

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 Headline Performance Update at 30 September 2026

Key findings

In the first half of 2026-27, 1 April to 30 September 2026, 1,846 hectares of new tree planting was reported as undertaken in England (2.6 million trees).

Of this, 1,758 hectares (2.5 million trees) were in the form of woodland creation, and 59,000 trees (88 hectares equivalent) as trees outside woodland.

At 30 September 2026, 56% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed.

In the year to 30 September 2026, 99.90% of known tree felling in England was carried out with Forestry Commission approval.

An estimated 30% of adults in England visited a forest or woodland in 2025-26 (monthly average).

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

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

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. 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 (Forestry Commission, 2023)[1].

2. This Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) report contains our mid-year interim update report on our corporate performance in the first half of 2026-27, providing updates on the FC's ten headline indicators.

3. The most recent update on our full set of KPIs were most recently reported in the Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2025-26[2], published in June 2026. That includes annual reports for the FC's ten headline indicators, Forestry England's six headline indicators and 24 further indicators for Forest Services.

4. 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 in spreadsheet format.

5. The reports include information from the data providers with narratives from policy colleagues and are compiled with a view to adhering to the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value of the standards of the Code of Practice for Statistics.

6. Further information is on the gov.uk webpages of the Forestry Commission key performance indicators.

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

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

12 November 2026

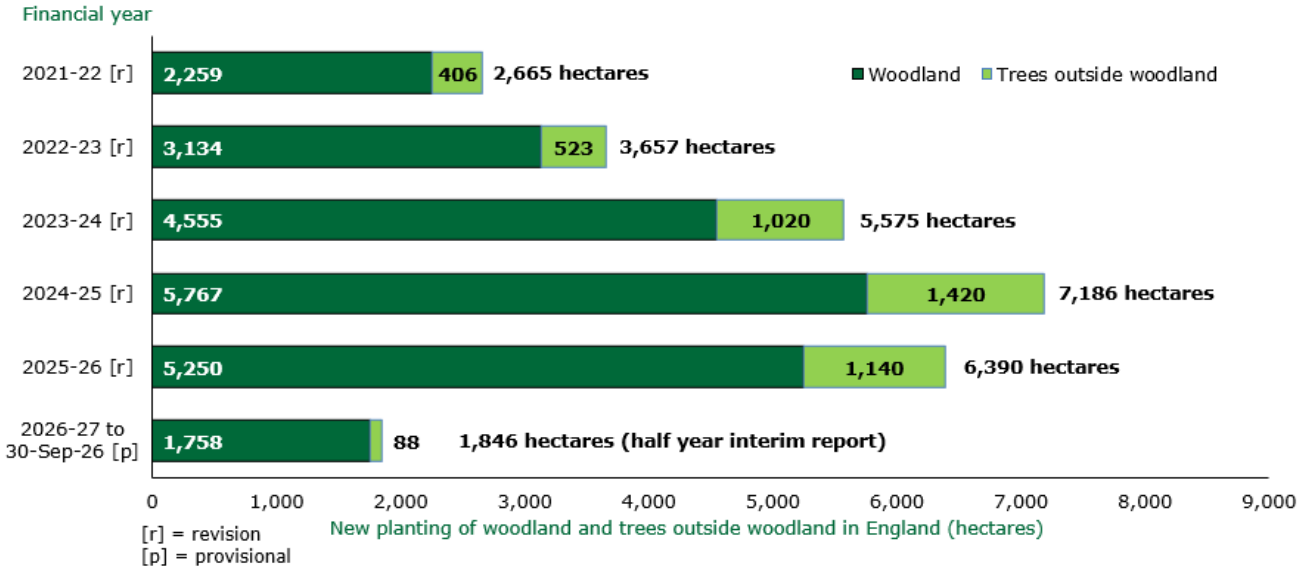
[1] Forestry Commission (2023) Thriving for the Future: Forestry Commission Strategy 2023-28, Bristol: Forestry Commission, 44 pages. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/forestry-commission-strategy-2023-2028.
[2] Forestry Commission (2026) Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators: Report for 2025-26. Bristol: Forestry Commission. 60 pages. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forestry-commission-key-performance-indicators-report-for-2025-26

Forestry Commission headline key performance indicators

New planting of woodland and trees in England

7. Summary: An area of 1,758 hectares of new woodland creation in England was reported in the first six months of 2026-27. In addition, Government supported the planting of 59,000 trees outside woodland (approximately 88 hectares). Total new creation of woodland and planting of trees in England in the first half of 2026-27 was 1,846 hectares (approximately 2,580,000 trees).

Figure 1: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 2019-20 to 30 September 2026



Note: Statistics for 2021-22 to 2025-26 have been revised to include The Conservation Trust's new planting.

Source: Forestry Statistics 2026 (Forest Research)[3] and Forestry Commission Key Performance Indicators.

8. In the first half of 2026-27, 1 April to 30 September 2026, 1,846 hectares of new tree planting was reported as undertaken in England (2.6 million trees). Of this, 1,758 hectares (2.5 million trees) were in the form of woodland creation, and 59,000 trees (88 hectares equivalent) as trees outside woodland (Figure 1). The outturn for the first half of 2026-27 is slightly greater than the same period in 2025-26 when 1,574 hectares of woodland and 30,000 trees outside woodland (38 hectares equivalent) were established. As was the case in previous years, the report reflects a partial return for a period outside the main tree-planting season.

[3] Forest Research (2026) Forestry Statistics 2026. Edinburgh: Forest Research. At: https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/statistics/publications/forestry-statistics/

Table 1: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026

New planting of woodland by type of support[1]	Area of woodland newly planted, 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026 (hectares)	Area of woodland newly planted, 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026 (equivalent in number of trees)
Woodland[2,3,4]		
Government-supported		
England Woodland Creation Offer[5]	1,194	1,805,000
Countryside Stewardship woodland	2	4,000
High Speed 2 Woodland Fund	23	27,000
Forestry England	50	85,000
Countryside Stewardship: other tree planting options	32	52,000
Environment Agency	0	0
Northern Forest	0	0
National Forest Company	0	0
Community Forests[5]	458	548,000
Forest for Cornwall	x	x
Great Northumberland Forest	x	x
National Heritage Lottery Fund	x	x
Sub-total Government-supported	**1,758**	**2,519,000**
Of that woodland agroforestry	50	39,000
Other support and non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Trust	0	0
Sub-total	**0**	**0**
Of that woodland agroforestry	0	0
Total woodland	**1,758 hectares of woodland**	**2,519,000 trees within woodland**
Of that woodland agroforestry	50 hectares	39,000 trees

Table 1 continued: New planting of woodland and trees in England, 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026

New planting of trees outside woodland by type of support	Approximate area equivalent, 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026 (hectares)	Number of individual trees newly planted, 1 April 2026 to 30 September 2026 (number)
Trees outside woodland[5,6,7]		
Government-supported		
England Woodland Creation Offer[a,b]	3	2,000
Countryside Stewardship single trees[b]	16	13,000
Environment Agency	x	x
Northern Forest	0	0
National Forest Company	0	0
Community Forests[b]	69	44,000
Forest for Cornwall	x	x
Great Northumberland Forest	x	x
Local Authority Treescapes Fund	x	x
Urban Trees Challenge Fund	x	x
National Health Service	x	x
National Heritage Lottery Fund	x	x
The Tree Council	x	x
Sub-total Government-supported	**88**	**59,000**
Of that trees outside woodland agroforestry	0	0
Other support and non-governmental organisations		
Woodland Trust	0	0
Sub-total	**0**	**0**
Of that trees outside woodland agroforestry	0	0
Total trees outside woodland	**Approx. 88 hectares**	**59,000 trees outside woodland**
Of that trees outside woodland agroforestry	0 hectares	0 trees
Total woodland and trees outside woodland[8]	**Approx. 1,846 hectares within and outside woodland**	**2,578,000 trees within and outside woodland**
Of that woodland agroforestry and trees outside woodland agroforestry	50 hectares	39,000 trees

Notes to Table 1:

1. The statistics are best available estimates for the first half of 2026-27 where data available at mid-year. They may include some new planting that took place in winter 2025-26 and that has been verified since then. 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.

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 new 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 new planting by Forestry England include contributions from corporate sponsors.

5. New planting of woodland reported for 2026-27, funded through the England Woodland Creation Offer or by the Community Forests, does not currently include woodland that is expected to establish through natural colonisation.

6. 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.

7. 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.

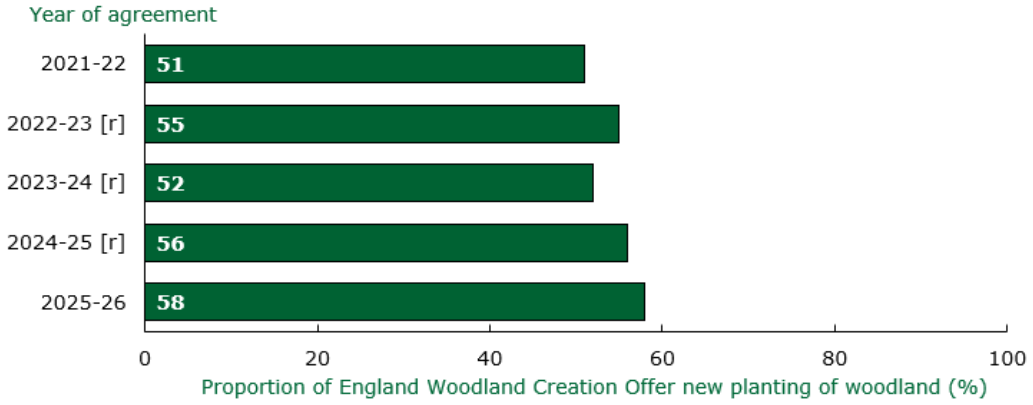
8. [x]= data not available.

9. 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.

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

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

Figure 2: 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.

10. In 2025-26, 58% 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 56% in 2024-25, although no obvious trend is evident over the five years that we have data for this new indicator. The 2025-26 figure of 58% is 3.4% above the average of the five years for which data are available.

Table 2: Principal tree species in England included as core species in this indicator

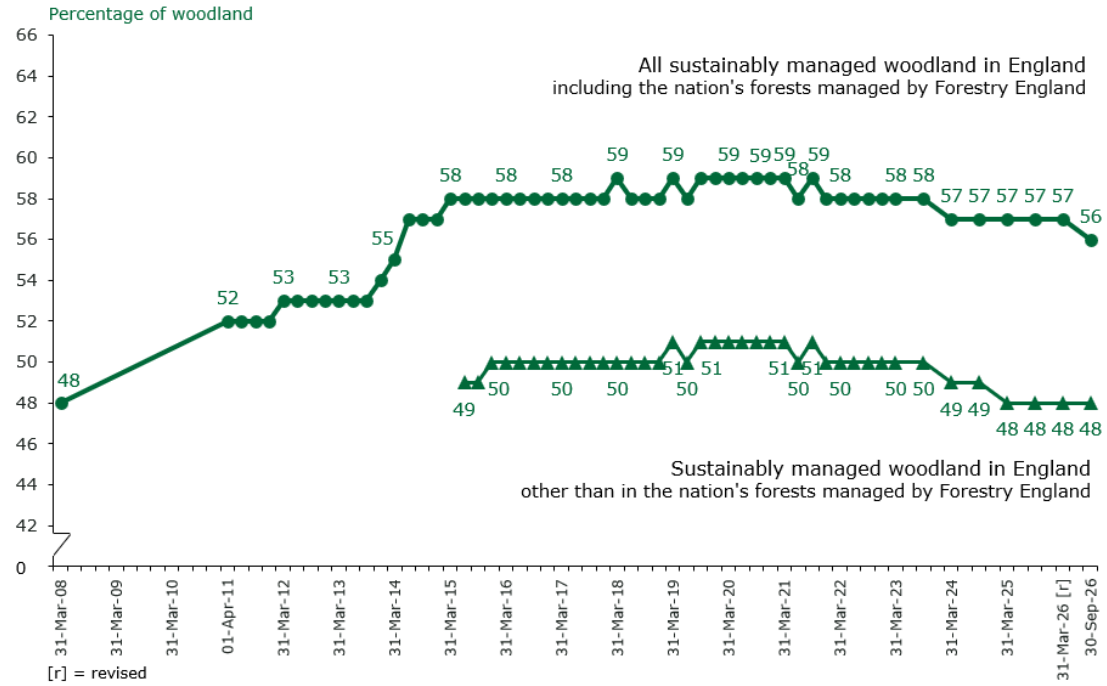
Broadleaf	Conifer
Oak – sessile and pedunculate only	Sitka spruce
Birch – downy and silver only	Corsican pine
Beech – only European beech *Fagus sylvatica*	Scots pine
Ash – only common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)	Douglas fir
	Larches (all)
	Norway Spruce
	Lodgepole Pine

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 2025-26 and previous years may change as a larger proportion of agreements are planted.

Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed

11. Summary: At 30 September 2026, 56% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed; totaling 757,000 hectares of woodland in management (at this date, when rounded) (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Proportion of woodland in England sustainably managed, March 2008 to September 2026



Source: Forestry Commission administrative data and the National Forest Inventory (Forest Research)[4].

12. As at 30 September 2026, 56% of all woodland in England was considered sustainably managed. This indicates that the indicator has seen a slight decrease since the last reporting period.

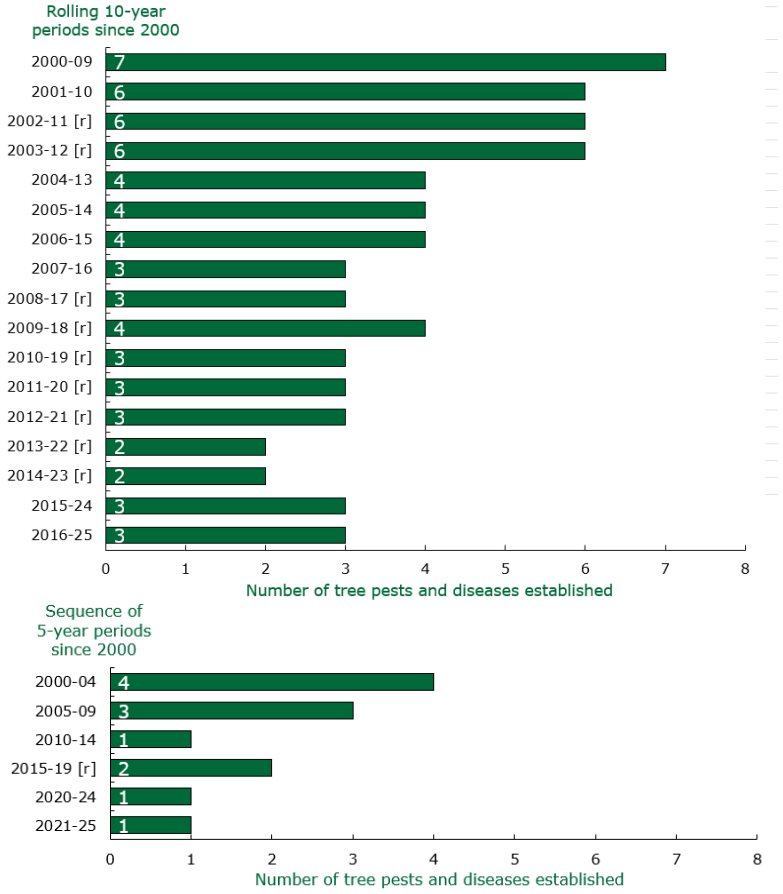
13. Our definition of 'sustainably managed' is woodland managed to the UK Forestry Standard that has a Woodland Management Plan, or for which we have made a grant or felling licence approval in the last 15 years. It also includes all woodland in the nation's forests managed by Forestry England, and all woodland on Defence Infrastructure Organisation training areas.

[4] Forest Research (2026) National Forest Inventory webpages. https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/national-forest-inventory/

Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England

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

Figure 4: Number of additional tree pests and diseases becoming established in England, 2000-09 to 2016-25



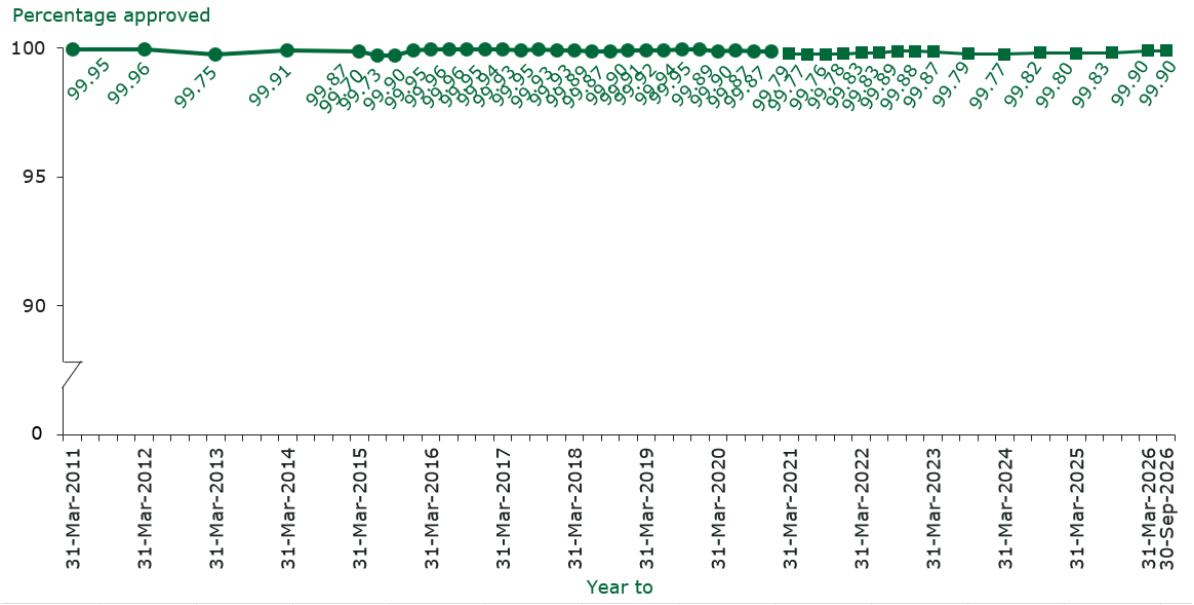
Source: Forestry Commission administrative data.

15. 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.

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

16. Summary: In the year to 30 September 2026, 99.90% of known tree felling in England was carried with Forestry Commission approval (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Proportion of known tree felling in England carried out with Forestry Commission approval, March 2011 to September 2026



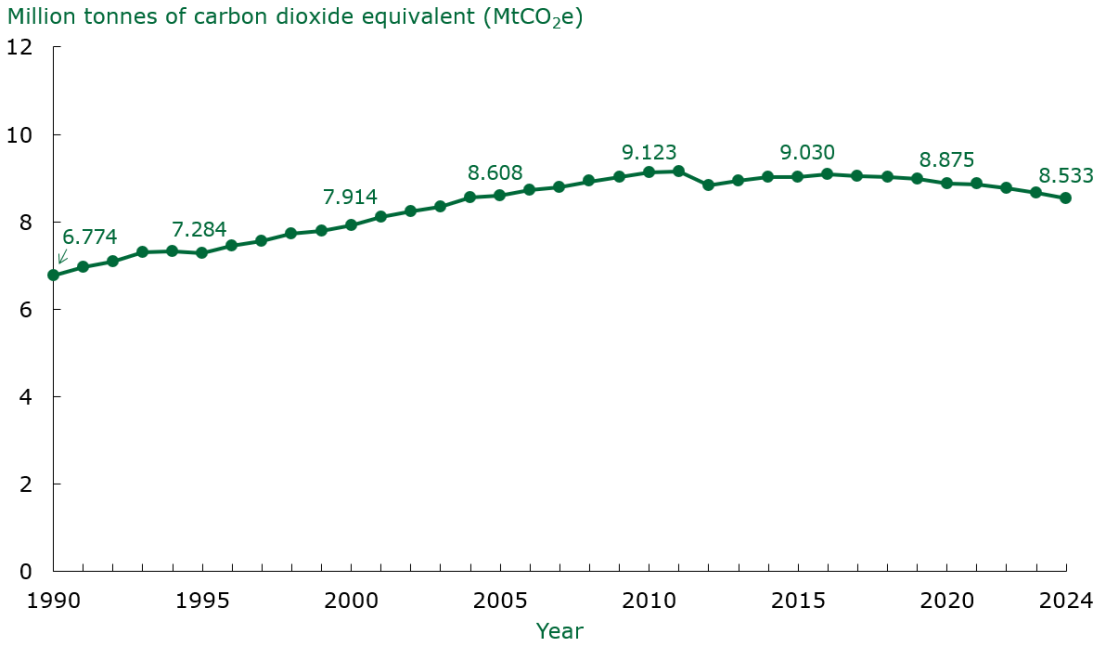
Source: Forestry Commission administrative data currently from Felling Licence Online as new reporting is developed.

17. The Forestry Commission (FC) is the government regulator for forestry. Overall, compliance remains very good: our FC headline key performance indicator shows that 99.9% of woodland with known tree felling other than in the Nation's Forests was carried out with a FC granted felling licence in the year to 30 Sept 2026. The target is 95%. Forestry England tree felling is exempt from the need for a felling licence and is approved by Forest Services through the Forest Plans process.

Carbon sequestered by England's woodland

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

Figure 6: 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 (2026)[5].

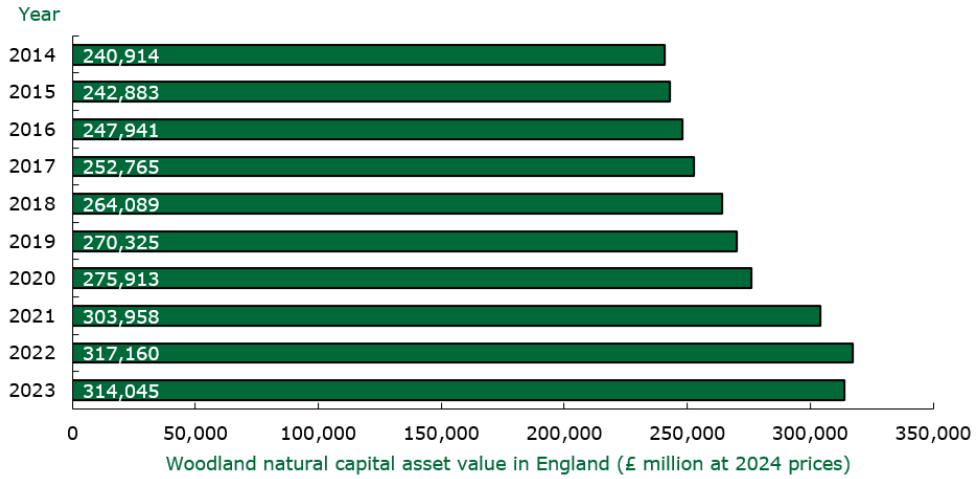
19. The net greenhouse gas sink strength of England's woodlands has decreased slightly from 8.665 MtCO2e in 2023 to 8.533 MtCO2e in 2024 (based on the updated time-series), but remained broadly stable; it is expected to continue to decline in the medium term as the greenhouse gas sink strength is dominated 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.

[5] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2026) Final UK greenhouse gas emissions statistics: 1990 to 2024. https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/final-uk-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics-1990-to-2024

Natural Capital Value of England's forests and woodlands

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

Figure 7: Natural Capital Value of England's forests and woodlands, 2014 to 2023



Source: Woodland natural capital accounts, UK: 2025 (Office for National Statistics, 2025)[6].

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.

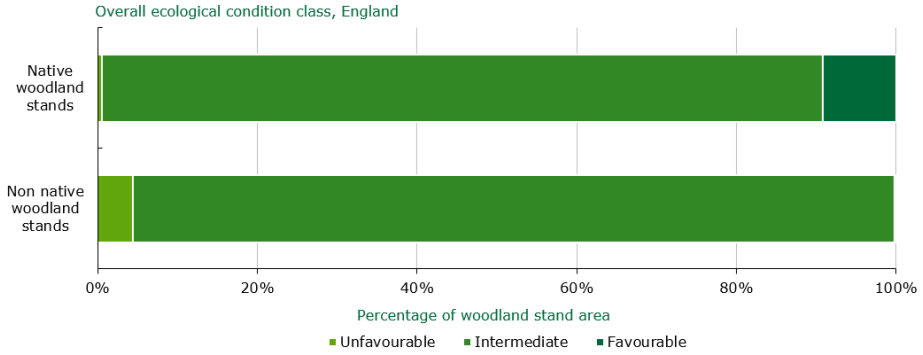
21. The Office for National Statistics' "woodland natural capital accounts 2026" provide the financial and societal value of the woodland natural resource in England, from the range of ecosystem services that they provide. These include timber production, greenhouse gas regulation and the value from 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%).

[6] Office for National Statistics (2025) Woodland natural capital accounts, UK: 2025. https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/woodlandnaturalcapitalaccountsuk2025

Ecological condition of woodland in England

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

Figure 8: 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[7].

23. 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.

24. 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.

[7] Forest Research (2020) National Forest Inventory woodland ecological condition in Great Britain. At: https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/national-forest-inventory/what-our-woodlands-and-tree-cover-outside-woodlands-are-like-today-nfi-inventory-reports-and-woodland-map-reports/nfi-woodland-ecological-condition/

Figure 9: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in native woodland stands in England

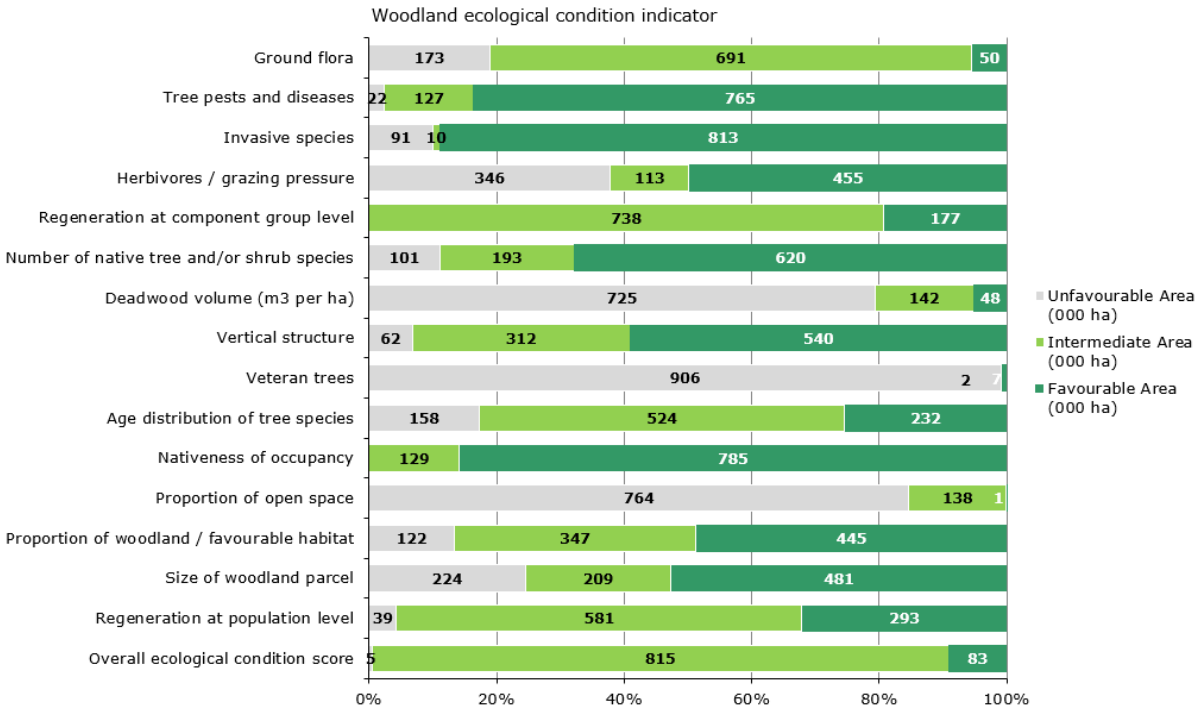
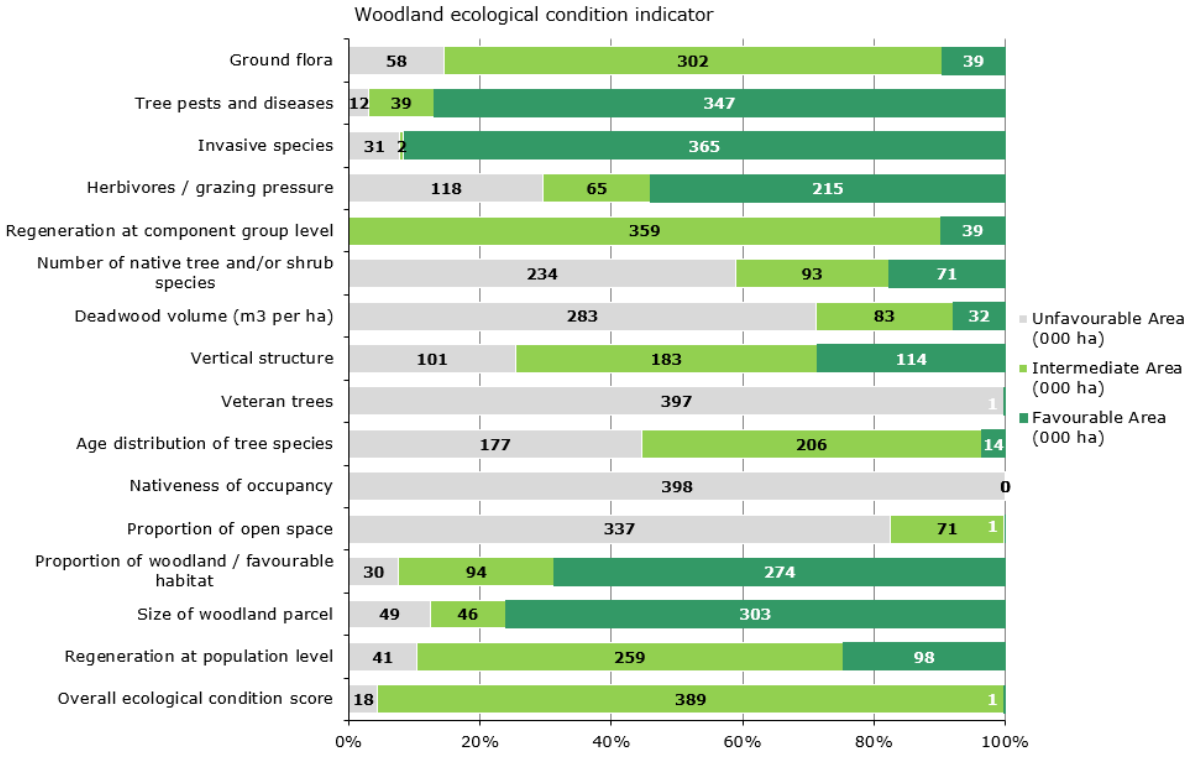


Figure 10: The proportion of each woodland ecological condition (WEC) class, for each WEC indicator type in non-native woodland stands in England



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.

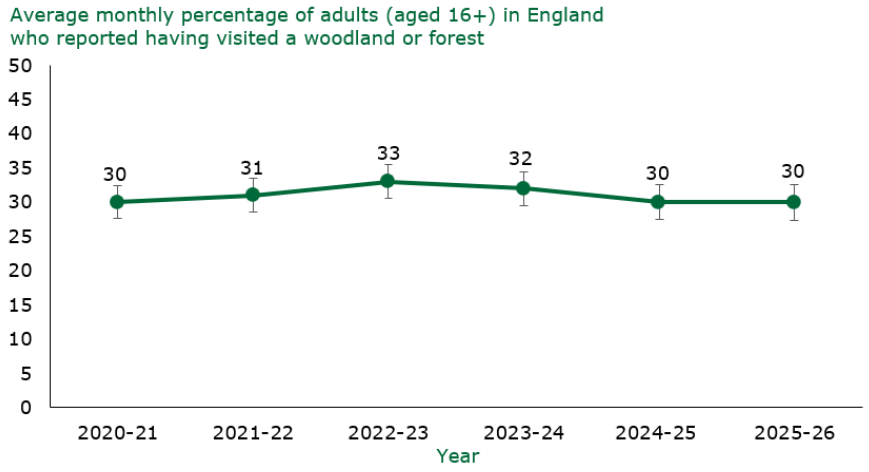
Note 4: Classifications for each indicator and overall scoring

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.

Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland

25. Summary: An estimated 30% of adults in England visited a forest or woodland in 2025-26 (monthly average) (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Proportion of adults in England who visited a forest or woodland, 2020-21 to 2025-26



Source: People and Nature Survey for England (Natural England)[8].

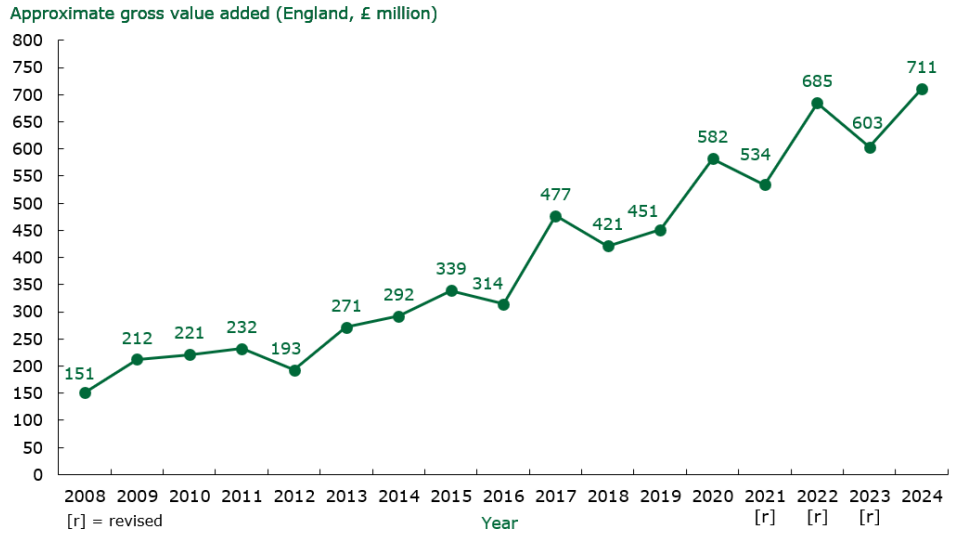
26. The indicator based on the People and Nature Survey reports on the proportion of respondents who visited a woodland or forest during the last month as a monthly average. The estimated percentage of respondents visiting has remained steady at 30%. This compares with the most recent Forest Research Public Opinion of Forestry Survey report that has a different methodology such as asking respondents about their visits in the last few years. This shows a slight but statistically significant decrease in the percentage of respondents who had visited woodlands in the last few years from 74% in 2023 to 69% in 2025 after a number of years of increases (62% in 2017).

[8] Natural England (2026) The People and Nature Surveys for England. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/the-people-and-nature-surveys-for-england

Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England

27. Summary: An estimated £711 million was the Gross Valued Added of the forestry sector for the economy in England in 2024 (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Gross Value Added of forestry sector for the economy in England, 2008 to 2024



Source: Annual Business Survey 2024 (Office for National Statistics, 2026)[9]. No further update is available.

28. 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.

[9] Office for National Statistics (2026) Non-financial business economy, regional (Annual Business Survey): 2024 results. https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/businessservices/bulletins/nonfinancialbusinesseconomyukandregionalannualbusinesssurvey/2024results

Forestry Commission

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