

## Collection: Forestry Commission operations notes (England)

*Updated:* The following operations notes have been added:

- Assessment of potential wildfire risk resulting from planned deforestation to open habitat: operations note 40
- Managing ash in woodlands in light of ash dieback: operations note 46
- High Speed 2 (HS2) rail – impacts on woodland management activity: operations note 47

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## Transparency data: 2018 Government Purchasing Card (GPC) spend for transactions over £500

As part of the government's commitment to transparency in expenditure, the Forestry Commission publishes GPC spend for transactions of over £500.

[View the monthly list of all GPC transactions over £500 made by the Forestry Commission.](#)

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## Detailed guide: Consultation and the public registers

There are 2 public registers:

- The [Register of Grant Schemes and Felling](#) provides details of all woodland creation and tree felling proposals, other than those for thinning
- The [Register of Environmental Impact Assessment](#) provides details of all Environmental Impact Assessment decisions on forestry projects

# Public Register of Grant Schemes and Felling

This register shows all applications for grant-aided woodland creation proposals and all applications for tree felling in England (excluding those only containing thinning). Most applications are for forestry work on private land.

Proposals are published on the public register for 28 days.

There are 2 lists within the Register of Grant Schemes and Felling: the G&L Online Register and the Register of New Planting and Felling.

## G&L Online Register list

This register shows tree felling and woodland creation grant applications under the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS). This scheme has now closed and no new cases will be published.

## Register of New Planting and Felling list

Applications on this public register have a 'status' of either FPR or CNT, indicating the stage of the proposal and whether you can comment on the case or not.

- FPR: this denotes a firm proposal. You can send us comments on how the proposals may affect you during this stage, which lasts for 28 days. We consider any comments and review them with the applicant. If appropriate, the application may be amended or rejected. If you are a consultee with whom we regularly confer (such as a local authority or statutory body) then we will write to you with details of the forestry proposal and to invite you to comment via letter, email or through the public register.
- CNT: if we approve the application then the details of the approved application are displayed for information for 28 days. Proposals at this stage are not open to comment.

## How to get information or submit a comment on an application on the Register of New Planting and Felling

- Click on the case reference in the 'Ref' column.
- You will be presented with a map of the forestry project location. There's a help facility denoted by a question mark that provides guidance on how to use the map controls.
- Click on the 'i' icon and then click on the relevant area on the map for basic details of the forestry project.
- Contact your local [Forestry Commission Admin Hub](#) if you require more

information on the proposal. You will need to quote the case reference number (shown in the 'Ref' column). Note that personal information contained in the application (such as the applicant's name and contact details) will not be included when we provide copies of information. If the copy is large or requested regularly then we may charge a fee for this service.

Comments on applications must be submitted in writing, by email or by letter to the appropriate FC Area office clearly quoting the case reference number. They should relate to the proposal's compliance with the [UK Forestry Standard](#). The Register of New Planting and Felling is updated weekly, usually on a Monday, and you have 28 days from when the case first appears on the register to submit your comments. Comments received after the closing date will not be considered.

## **How we consult about grant and felling applications**

Before deciding whether to approve applications for woodland planting or tree felling, the Forestry Commission may consult with local authorities and other organisations with statutory powers over land use and land use change. We will write to these bodies to seek their views on the appropriateness of the proposals, and their advice may result in proposals being amended or rejected.

The Forestry Commission will also use this consultation phase to determine if any other consents or permissions are required to enable the project to proceed, and will liaise with the applicant and the statutory body in order to seek agreement on the works required.

## **Public register of Environmental Impact Assessment**

The Forestry Commission assesses the environmental impact of proposals that fall under any of the 4 EIA (Forestry) Regulations: afforestation (new planting), deforestation, forest roads and forest quarries. The Register of Environmental Impact Assessment shows decisions that the Forestry Commission has made during the assessment process.

The register shows details of individual cases in 3 following stages: opinion, consultation on Environmental Statement and Determination.

### **Opinion**

The Forestry Commission's opinion on whether the project is likely to have a significant impact on the environment and therefore requires our consent. Opinions are displayed on the EIA Register for 28 days. Case details are for information only, and there is no opportunity to comment.

Where a project is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, the applicant is required to apply for EIA consent if they wish to proceed with the project. To do so, they must submit an Environmental Statement that analyses the impact of the project on the environment. The proposed work cannot proceed without consent from the Forestry Commission. Where an

applicant does apply for consent, 2 further stages will be shown on the EIA register:

## **Consultation on Environmental Statement**

As part of determining whether consent for the project will be granted or refused, a 30-day period of consultation takes place on the Environmental Statement. Comments on environmental statements must be submitted in writing, by email or by letter to the appropriate FC Area office, clearly quoting the case reference number shown on the Public Register. They should relate to the proposal's compliance with the UK Forestry Standard and how you will be affected by the proposal.

## **Determination**

The final decision stage is when the Forestry Commission decides whether to grant or refuse consent for the project, after reviewing the Environmental Statement and the feedback collected through the consultation. Information at this stage is presented for information only to show the Forestry Commission's decision and will be displayed for 28 days.

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## **[Detailed guide: Urban forestry](#)**

Find out how to protect and manage trees and woodlands in urban areas from information provided by both Forestry Commission and urban forestry partners.

The Forestry Commission works in partnership with national and local urban forestry partners. Our partners lead the management of trees and woodlands within urban and peri-urban areas across England. The Forestry Commission's work demonstrates how protecting, expanding and improving woodland can help deliver the Government's priorities in urban areas.

## **Understand what the urban forest is**

The urban forest is made up of all trees in towns and cities including:

- along linear transport routes and waterways – eg canals and rivers
- in amenity areas
- in urban woodlands
- in parks and informal open spaces
- along streets
- in domestic gardens
- on institutional land

[urban forest](#)

(PDF, 486KB, 2 pages)

is a big element of urban green infrastructure and contributes to all the wider benefits provided by these varied land use types.

## **Understand what benefits the urban forest brings to our towns and cities**

The urban forest brings many benefits to our towns and cities. The Urban Forest and Woodland Advisory Committee Network (UFWACN) advises the Forestry Commission on urban forestry. Find out more about the work of the Urban FWAC Network. Their

[Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee \(FWAC\) vision for urban forestry](#)

(PDF, 2.9MB, 26 pages)

sets out how a resilient urban forest can deliver these benefits:

- strategic planning and infrastructure
- climate change
- natural environment
- human health and quality of life
- planning and development
- economy and growth
- value and resources
- risks and resilience

Look at

[The case for trees](#)

(PDF, 1.97MB, 28 pages)

to see great pictures of how trees improve our urban areas and to understand the benefits and evidence for the positive role that trees play as part of green infrastructure.

You can maximise the benefits of the urban forest by considering 3 principles set out in the Urban FWAC vision:

- do you know the scale and value of your urban forest?
- how well do you support the care of your existing urban forest?
- do you have a target to increase canopy cover in your town or city?

You also need to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place.

The Trees and Design Action Group have set out [12 principles](#) to help decision makers incorporate trees in the urban area.

## **Understand the scale and value of the urban forest**

To understand how you can value the urban forest, read

[Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee \(FWAC\) – introduction to England's urban forests](#)

(PDF, 5.76MB, 15 pages)

. The Urban FWAC Network has also published a [guide to using tree canopy cover data](#) (PDF, 922KB, 6 pages)

as an indicator of the extent, and to secure the benefits of the urban forest, using [i-Tree Canopy](#). It demonstrates [the variability in tree canopy cover across England's towns and cities](#).

To more fully assess the value of the urban forest in your area, you can support or participate with i-Tree Eco surveys. In the UK this started with [Torbay](#) in 2011 and is still happening, the most current survey being in [Bristol](#). Forestry Commission led the development of iTree London, which estimated that the city's 8.4 million trees provide more than £133 million worth of benefits annually. i-Tree Eco assesses the value of certain ecosystem services delivered by trees. Read their final report, [Valuing London's urban forest](#) (PDF, 5.59MB, 84 pages)

[Find out where iTree Eco surveys have happened.](#)

Find out more on iTree Eco direct from [i-Tree](#), from [Forest Research](#), or the social enterprise [Treeconomics](#).

You can use [Treezilla](#) to help generate a 'monster map' of urban trees.

For London, you can access data on the status of woodland management with [Making London's woodlands work: summary](#). (PDF, 3.59MB, 4 pages)

It outlines the proportion of London's woodlands in sustainable management and opportunities / barriers to management. Read the [full report](#). (PDF, 5.94MB, 56 pages)

## Ensure resilience of the urban forest

Data on the urban forest individual towns and cities enables effective management of the urban forest in those locations. This data can be the basis of a Tree and Woodland Strategy, which can outline objectives, management and monitoring approaches for a local authority area. Find out [how to develop a Tree and Woodland Strategy](#) (based on work in London).

The [Right Trees for a Changing Climate](#) database helps you decide what trees are suitable to plant in urban areas in face of a changing climate. TDAG have set out [species selection for green infrastructure](#).

Large trees bring particular value to the urban environment. The Forestry Commission assisted [the Construction Industry Research and Information Association](#) (CIRIA) and partners to produce [The benefits of large species trees in urban landscapes: a costing, design and management guide](#), which you

can buy. It highlights how to integrate large species trees into new and existing developments.

[Tree Preservation Orders](#) help to protect the urban forest, as a key part of green infrastructure. They are issued by local authorities.

Further guidelines, produced in London, can help in managing the urban forest:

- [woodland management](#)  
(PDF, 2.41MB, 12 pages)
- [woodland management for bats](#)  
(PDF, 2.67MB, 24 pages)
- [woodfuel](#)  
(PDF, 2.63MB, 28 pages)
- [social dynamics of trees](#)  
(PDF, 3.26MB, 24 pages)

## **Manage the risks, including tree health, in the urban forest**

Find out about [tree pests and diseases](#) and make sure your [biosecurity measures](#) are appropriate.

The [National Tree Safety Group \(NTSG\)](#) brings together organisations with expertise in tree risk management who offer [free guidance for you to download](#).

The [Joint Mitigation Protocol](#) (JMP) sets out best practice in investigating building damage where trees are implicated as being the cause of building movement. Find out more from the [London Tree Officers Association](#).

## **Support people to enjoy and care for their local urban forest**

These partners work in different locations across England to engage local communities with their urban trees and woodlands:

- [England's Community Forests](#) – the economic impact of community forests has been measured in a number of localities, including for the [Mersey](#)

[Forest](#) and the [Forest of Marston Vale](#).

- [The Woodland Trust](#)
- [Tree Council](#)
- [Trees for Cities](#)

The [Northern Forest](#) will include tree planting in urban areas.

## Evidence to help you manage the urban forest

Forest Research is the research agency of the Forestry Commission. They develop evidence on the benefits and value of [urban forestry](#), eg:

- planning green networks for urban communities
  - exploring urban health inequalities
  - identifying the social and economic value of street trees
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## Detailed guide: Create a woodland management plan

A woodland management plan gives land managers a structured way to plan and organise the sustainable management of woodland to a common industry standard.

The [UK Forestry Standard](#) sets out the UK governments' approach to sustainable forestry and woodland management, including standards and requirements, regulations and monitoring, and reporting. It applies to all woodland and woodland operations, regardless of who owns or manages it.

### Why create a management plan?

1. Creating a woodland management plan can demonstrate sustainable forest management and it supports the planning and implementation of work proposals and their long term monitoring.
2. Some grant schemes ask land managers to have an approved management plan in place prior to making an application.
3. The plan of operations which makes up part of the management plan means it is possible for land managers to plan for and be issued with a felling licence for up to 10 years of felling.

If you want to create a woodland plan, you should include all woodland on your property.

### How to produce your plan

For woodland holdings over 3ha, you can develop a plan using the Forestry



Commission's full Woodland Plan template, the Plan of Operations template, and your own maps. A grant is available to help fund the production of a woodland plan (Countryside Stewardship option PA3), where the full Forestry Commission template is used.

Use the

[small woodland plan template \(macro enabled\)](#)

(MS Word Document, 560KB)

template for woodland of an area less than 10 hectares – this is to apply for a felling licence, but is not eligible for funding to prepare a woodland management plan through Countryside Stewardship.

For non-FC woodland plan templates that don't match the Forestry Commission's woodland plan template in structure or composition, use this

[cover sheet](#)

(MS Word Document, 36.5KB)

that states the UKFS criteria being assessed and provides a consistent framework for the Forestry Commission to review the plan. Non-FC woodland plan templates are not eligible for funding to prepare a woodland management plan through Countryside Stewardship.

Download and complete the

[full woodland management plan template \(macro disabled file\)](#)

(MS Word Document, 1MB)

(for any size of woodland) using information about the woodland, its history, its previous management, structure and composition, risks and issues and how they will be addressed, and the proposed work you intend to undertake.

Download and complete the inventory and plan of operations. It sets out your woodland inventory and must relate directly to compartments and sub compartments shown on your map(s). The Plan of Operations also gathers information relating to felling and restocking and is necessary for issuing a felling licence. Use this

[version with various formulas](#)

(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 1.19MB)

, which highlights where data entry errors exist on the worksheets so you can make corrections. Alternatively, you can use the

[version with no formulas](#)

(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 341KB)

– it enables you to enter data more freely, but it has no error checking and we may have to return it to you for corrections.

Produce a map – they're an excellent way to communicate information to support your management plan. Use several maps to show a variety of topics or themes affecting your woodland. You must ensure that each compartment you show on the map is reflected in the Inventory of the Plan of Operations. You can create a map using the [myForest service](#) or your own Geographic

Information Systems.

You can use our guidance on [how to create a plan using the FC plan template](#) (PDF, 386KB, 27 pages)

. This guidance will help you complete a woodland management plan successfully, using the FC plan template, the Inventory and Plan of Operations worksheet and your associated maps. Read this guidance thoroughly and refer to it regularly.

Submit your draft woodland management plan to the administrative hub covering your area. Make sure you include:

- a completed woodland management plan template
- an inventory and plan of operations
- a map
- a

[plan submission proforma](#)

(MS Word Document, 16.3KB)

if you're receiving funding from the Countryside Stewardship scheme

## **Administrative hub contact details**

Contact the [administrate hub](#), which covers your area, for more information.

## **Map request service**

To create an appropriate map to support your woodland plan or a grant application you can [submit a map request](#) to the Forestry Commission.

## **Check if your woodland is designated or has special features**

Designated areas or features should be indicated on one of the annotated maps within your plan. If a designation applies, please provide details.

### **Magic Map**

[Use Natural England's 'MAGIC' map](#) to check if your woodland is designated, for example, as an SSSI. You can also search for other features – such as scheduled monuments, priority habitats and species – and information such as Countryside Stewardship scheme details in your area.

### **The Land Information Service**

The Forestry Commission's [Land Information Search \(LIS\)](#) is another map-based tool that allows you to search for information about land designations or features that might already apply to your woodland. Examples of these features include:

- previous felling schemes
- grant schemes

Find out [how the Forestry Commission then supports you if you do own woodland on an SSSI.](#)

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) are protected by law to conserve their wildlife or geology so you must declare designations, as some require consent before you begin work on your proposed plans. If you fail to disclose any designations or features you may be acting illegally.

## **Authorise an agent to act on your behalf**

If you choose to appoint an agent to develop your woodland management plan you must sign a form to give an agent authority to act for you when dealing with the Forestry Commission. You can [submit this Forestry Commission agent authority form](#) as part of your application for funding.

You'll also need to set agent permission levels using the [Rural Payments service](#) to appoint an agent to act on your behalf if you're applying for Countryside Stewardship funding.

## **Contact the Forestry Commission**

[Contact your local Woodland Officer](#) for advice and guidance on completing a woodland plan, and potentially having a pre-draft site visit.