

Press release: 'Forgotten lands' to receive forestry boost

A new project to help landowners create vital new woodland and unlock the economic benefits of forestry has been launched in Cumbria's 'forgotten lands'.

The government's Tree Champion Sir William Worsley today visited forestry project Snowdon Close in the area to launch the pilot Forestry Investment Zone.

With Cumbria's 'forgotten lands' not traditionally seen as ripe for tree planting, the government will trial a new approach and work to encourage investment in the zone through measures such as the existing Countryside Stewardship and Woodland Carbon Fund grant schemes. A Forestry Investment Zone officer will also offer tailored support to businesses.

Government will also work with the forestry and timber processing industry to accelerate planting as new approaches to rural funding and payment for public goods are developed.

The pilot launch comes during Green GB Week, an annual week dedicated to highlighting the opportunities clean growth offers the UK – and raise understanding of how business and the public can contribute to tackling climate change.

Forestry Minister David Rutley said:

Planting more trees is central to our ambition to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.

This innovative new pilot project will not only help landowners realise the benefits of woodland creation, but also drive forward our commitment to plant 11 million trees.

The Cumbria pilot is the first of its kind, with the 'forgotten lands' being the perfect place to establish large-scale forestry projects in order to bring economic and environmental benefits to the area. The project will focus on productive forestry, landscape enhancement, farming and local employment.

During his visit to the north east, Tree Champion Sir William Worsley said:

It is wonderful to be in Cumbria today to see this exciting new pilot kick off and to witness what will hopefully be the beginning of widespread investment in the forestry sector.

By making it easier for this area to be used for woodland creation we are not only helping the environment, but also giving the region a valuable economic boost.

The Cumbria Forestry Investment Zone pilot is scheduled to run for two years, and will be used as a test-case for rolling out the initiative more widely around the country.

Press release: Recreational angling puts £1.4bn into English economy

This is according to an Environment Agency study published today, the first time since 2005 that a major study of angling activity and expenditure has taken place.

The Environment Agency study, [A Survey of Freshwater Angling in England](#) examined the spending patterns and behaviour of 10,000 surveyed fishing licence holders to build a picture of the market value of freshwater angling in England.

The study found that angling for coarse fish was the most popular activity for the nation's anglers, accounting for 19 million days of fishing with carp the most sought after species with an estimated 7 million days fishing time. Game anglers spent 1.6 million days fishing for salmon and trout.

Other findings included:

- Across all types of angling, almost 70% of all angling days were on lakes, ponds, reservoirs.
- Most coarse angling trips took place between 5 and 25 miles from the angler's home. Anglers travelled significantly further for game fishing, with most salmon anglers travelling at least 50 miles from home to fish.
- Anglers each spent an average of over £400 on tackle and around £110 on club or syndicate fees
- A clean and attractive environment with minimal disturbance was more highly valued by anglers than the size and abundance of fish.

Kevin Austin, Deputy Director for Agriculture, Fisheries and the Natural Environment at the Environment Agency said:

This study highlights the money anglers put into their sport and its importance to some of England's regional economies.

All income from fishing licence sales is used to fund our work to protect and improve fish stocks and fisheries. This includes

improving habitats for fish, facilities for anglers and tackling illegal fishing. We also work with partners such as the Angling Trust, Get Hooked on Fishing, the Canal and River Trust and the Angling Trade Association to encourage people to give fishing a go.

Mark Lloyd, Chief Executive of the Angling Trust, said:

These figures confirm that angling makes a huge contribution to the economy, alongside the many benefits it brings to the health and wellbeing of millions of people each year. The Angling Trust, working with the Environment Agency, are focused on protecting and growing angling not only as an important contributor to our economy, but also to our society as a whole. Over the last three years we have worked with the Environment Agency to reinvest millions of pounds of rod licence income in improving facilities for anglers, providing information about how and where to fish, together we have helped over 77,000 people try fishing for the first time.

The study assessed legal angling activity, preferences and expenditure patterns in 2015 and compared them with activity in 2005.

[Press release: Environment Agency commits to fight against modern slavery](#)

- Over 100 EA officers trained to spot signs of exploitation
- Two thirds of victims reported to have worked in waste industry
- Anti-Slavery Day raising awareness of need to eradicate modern slavery

The Environment Agency (EA) has committed to working with police and enforcement agencies to eradicate modern day slavery from the waste and recycling industry by training officers to spot signs of exploitation during site inspections.

Latest figures from anti-slavery charity, Hope for Justice, show that two-thirds of victims are reported to have worked within the waste industry. In response, the EA has worked with the charity to train over 100 waste and regulation EA officers to recognise exploitative work practices.

Today (Thursday 18 October) is Anti-Slavery Day across England and Wales, a day introduced in 2010 to raise awareness of the need to eradicate modern day slavery in all its forms.

The training for officers precedes the government's organised waste crime review, due out later this year, which recognises an emerging criminal subset within the waste management industry. Earlier this year, the EA introduced the use of body worn cameras for waste enforcement officers following a growing number of abusive incidents during site inspections.

Marie Fallon, Director of Regulated Industry at the Environment Agency said:

Modern slavery is an abhorrent crime that often goes unseen. Whilst the majority of the waste businesses we regulate are well run, there are a concerning number of operators who delve into criminal practices which harm the environment, local communities and their own work force.

Our work with Help for Justice has given our officers the skills to understand the signs of modern slavery which can add value to the work of the police, partners and local authorities who collectively are working to stamp it out.

Sara Squires, UK Training Manager at anti-slavery charity Hope for Justice, said:

It is fantastic to see such strong backing for these efforts from the Environment Agency. I know from first-hand experience that good-quality training leads to an improved response. More than half of referrals to Hope for Justice of potential victims of modern slavery come from organisations we have trained, and many of those referrals lead directly to rescues.

I have sat with rescued victims as they realise they are now safe and free, and as they begin to understand that they can finally start making their own decisions in an atmosphere of care and support, which is so important.

Better understanding among frontline agencies of the indicators of exploitation and the best ways to respond will change the landscape of anti-slavery efforts in the UK, by increasing prosecutions, deterring traffickers and supporting survivors.

EA officers have been instructed to look for common signs of exploitation including an extreme fear of authorities, signs of physical or psychological trauma including anxiety or malnourishment, and evidence suggesting workers may be living on site.

Anyone with suspicions of contemporary slavery can report it to Hope for Justice on 0300 008 8000 or email info.uk@hopeforjustice.org

To report waste crime, please contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

ENDS

Note to editors

EA announces new powers to tackle waste crime:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-powers-to-crack-down-on-waste-crime>

Press release: Recreational angling puts £1.4bn into English economy

Freshwater anglers contribute an estimated £1.4 billion annually to the English economy, supporting up to 27,000 full-time equivalent jobs, through their spending on the sport.

Press release: Environment Agency commits to fight against modern slavery

The Environment Agency commits to tackling modern day slavery