

# Tree resilience efforts boosted as funds to improve forestry innovation reopen

Innovative approaches to tackling the greatest threats facing our trees and forests are set to be boosted by new Government funding, with applications for the Forestry Commission-delivered Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds and the Tree Production Innovation Fund reopening today (Tuesday 8 March).

This year, almost £4.5 million will be allocated to successful applicants across both funds, which together will boost nature regeneration efforts, promote biodiversity, and support innovative approaches to tree health, resilience and production amidst a changing climate. Investing in the long-term welfare of our forests will underpin wider efforts to treble tree planting rates by the end of this Parliament and plant 30,000 hectares of trees across the UK per year by 2025.

**Chair of the Forestry Commission, Sir William Worsley said:**

As we enter an unprecedented era of tree planting, fostering resilient tree growth and management will be essential to realise the health, economic and ecological benefits that trees offer – now and in the future.

Both funds will drive innovation across the forestry and associated sectors to ensure our much loved trees and forests continue to thrive for generations to come in the face of a changing climate.

## **Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds**

Approximately 40% of England's woodlands are not actively managed, which can be detrimental to biodiversity and leave neglected woodlands vulnerable to pests and disease. Projects which successfully apply for funding through the second round of the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds will receive a share of £3 million, as the Forestry Commission aims to bring an additional 20,000 hectares of existing woodland in England into active management by 2024/25.

Under the umbrella of the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds, the new Timber in Construction Innovation Fund will support projects which increase and facilitate the use of English timber from sustainably managed woods and forests in construction. Other funds will support new business models and supply chains for ash timber to help restore woodlands damaged by ash dieback, as well as for initiatives using temporary infrastructure to access neglected or degraded woodlands. Moreover, a series of regional funds will support forward-thinking projects that enable the active management of

woodlands where previously not possible. Applicants in the forestry and associated sectors, as well as local authorities, will be invited to submit multi-year proposals spanning up to three financial years (ending March 2025), with individual projects valued at up to £100,000 per year.

### **Tree Production Innovation Fund**

Also reopening today, the Tree Production Innovation Fund will make over £1.4 million available to projects striving to enhance the quantity, quality, and diversity of tree planting stock available for planting in England. The Fund will support the research and development of new technologies and ways of working which will supply young trees in the quantities required to realise ambitious tree planting plans across the country. Projects previously supported with this fund include collaborations from researchers, nurseries, seed suppliers and industry, including the Future Trees Trust, the University of Oxford and Maelor Forest Nurseries. Applicants will be invited to submit multi-year proposals spanning up to three financial years (ending March 2025), with projects valued at up to £300,000 per year.

The second rounds of the Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds and the Tree Production Innovation Fund are now open. For more information and to apply:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/woods-into-management-forestry-innovation-funds> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-production-innovation-fund>

### **Case study: Woods into Management Forestry Innovation Funds**

- Routes to market for ash timber Innovation Fund

A collaborative effort between Grown in Britain and Axminster Tools, the 'Ash Bounceback: Homegrown hardwood into tool handles' project has secured a new supply chain for ash through the development of ash tool handles. This helps to reduce imports and utilise more UK timber. This project aims to see ash more widely viewed as high value, bringing more ash into active management.

- Regional woodland restoration Innovation Funds

Supported as part of the South East and London Innovation Fund, the myForest Woodland Assessor from the Sylva Foundation is an online UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) Evaluator Tool which supports woodland management activity. It will enable woodland owners and agents to critique their woodland management practices against the UKFS and be used to deliver advice to 50 owners of undermanaged woodlands, raising awareness to support the delivery of the UKFS.

### **Case study: Tree Production Innovation Fund**

- Intelligent Growth Solutions Ltd and Maelor Forest Nurseries are investigating the feasibility and optimisation of Total Controlled Environment Agriculture (TCEA) systems to produce year-round forestry seedlings.
- David Farquhar, CEO of IGS, said: "Projects such as this offer

opportunities to undertake impactful climate-positive innovation. Our TCEA systems promise the highest quality seedling production, minimising wastage, reducing imports and accelerating reforestation. The forestry sector is evolving rapidly and is at the heart of the hugely exciting drive to tackle climate change, so we are excited about the positive role our systems could play in driving what we all know could be the right outcome.”

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## [International Women’s Day: a message from SIA Chair Heather Bailly](#)

News story

A message to the UK’s private security industry on International Women’s Day, 2022.



Security Industry Authority

In these challenging times we take a moment today, International Women’s Day to celebrate the contribution of women in the security industry.

Since taking up my role as Chair of the SIA in 2021, I’ve been privileged to work with a fabulous team of people who include many amazing women. My team is headed by our Chief Executive Michelle Russell and along with her Executive Team and with our Authority members, we’ve been focussed on making sure that the SIA makes the best possible contribution to public safety. This includes some aspects of public space safety, whether that’s from the perspective of counter terrorism, the safety of everyone working in the night-time economy, or just those members of our families and friends going about their everyday lives. A real concern for us at the moment, is the safety of women and girls outside of their homes and we’re playing our part in creating longer-term solutions to improve women’s safety especially when they are in social settings, such as pubs and clubs.

We also want members of the private security industry to be safe and feel safe. That’s also our contribution to this bigger agenda, and women add a

unique and valuable perspective to this. So to all the talented and creative women working in the private security industry today, I say a massive thank you... know you're part of a great team! Together we're creative, understanding, innovative, talented, and kind – amongst a whole host of other personal skills I know you bring in your working lives. Today we celebrate you!! Continue to be fabulous and know that here at the SIA, we recognise your contribution and we're grateful. To those who are thinking of a career in the private security industry, I feel sure you have something to add to this important and increasingly vital sector.

Today and throughout March we will be shining a light on [the stories of women working across the industry](#). Their stories show the depth and breadth of security, and the positive, active and strong roles women have in it; on the front line, in management, in leadership, in customer service, technology. Each of [their stories](#) showcases the richness and positive benefits diversity brings.

So, join us in #CelebratingHerStory. Happy International Women's Day!

Published 8 March 2022

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## [Pro-Direct pays charity after 9 years of waste packaging errors](#)

The Environment Agency accepted an Enforcement Undertaking (EU) from the Newton Abbot-based firm for failure to register as a packaging producer and not taking steps to recover and recycle its packaging waste under the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007.

Pro-Direct Group Ltd has made a financial contribution of £19,906.21 to Devon Wildlife Trust and introduced new measures to make sure it is compliant by registering with a compliance scheme, training staff, and using a new weighing process.

Jake Richardson, Senior Technical Officer for the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow businesses to address historical non-compliance under the Packaging Regulations. A suitable environmental project benefits from a financial contribution and we are assured steps have been taken to ensure compliance with the regulations.

But if we encounter producers deliberately taking advantage of the system, we will pursue other enforcement options in line with our

Enforcement and Sanctions policy, which includes prosecution.

Steve Hussey of Devon Wildlife Trust said:

We'll be using this funding to support the work of our Wembury Marine Centre, near Plymouth. Each year the centre welcomes thousands of visitors along with dozens of school groups through its Wildlife Champions project.

Each visitor gets to experience and learn about the rich marine environments that exist around our shores. Each person leaves with a better understanding of the marine creatures that live there and how they can help conserve them for the future.

Packaging Regulations reduce the amount of packaging waste entering landfill sites by requiring obligated businesses (producers) to contribute financially towards the recovery and recycling of packaging waste.

### **The regulation/s the company did not meet:**

The aim of the Packaging Regulations is to achieve a more sustainable approach to dealing with packaging materials by ensuring that businesses take responsibility for the packaging used in their operations. This in turn reduces the amount of packaging produced and the material going to landfill.

Pro-Direct Group Ltd has acknowledged that by not following the regulations they avoided paying the Environment Agency's annual registration fees, and they did not fund the recovery and recycling of packaging waste:

- In the years 2009 – 2017: Regulation 40(1)(a) – a failure to register under the Producer of Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007.
- In the years 2009 – 2017: Regulation 40(1)(b) – a failure to recover/recycle under the Producer of Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007.

If a business or organisation produces or uses packaging, or sells packaged goods, they may be classed as an obligated packaging producer.

Companies are an 'obligated' packaging producer' if they (or the UK group of companies they are part of) meet both of the following criteria:

- handled 50 tonnes of packaging materials or packaging in the previous calendar year
- have a turnover of more than £2 million a year (based on the last financial year's accounts)

### **What is an Enforcement Undertaking?**

An Enforcement Undertaking is a Civil Sanction available to the Environment

Agency (EA) as an alternative sanction to prosecution or monetary penalty for dealing with certain environmental offences. It is a legally binding voluntary agreement proposed by a business (or an individual) when the EA has reasonable grounds to suspect that an environmental offence has occurred.

Enforcement Undertakings for environmental offences were introduced under the Environmental Civil Sanctions (England) Order 2010 and the Environmental Civil Sanctions (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2010.

Accepting an Enforcement Undertaking is always at the discretion of the EA but if accepted enables firms and individuals who have damaged the environment or operated outside of legislative requirements to offer to complete actions which will address the cause and effect of their offending, including making a payment to a suitable environmental project.

EUs can be offered for offences including polluting rivers, breaching permit conditions designed to protect communities, or not registering and follow recycling/recovery obligations. The Environment Agency then carefully considers whether the actions offered by the offender are acceptable.

### **Why use Enforcement Undertakings?**

- Businesses will voluntarily secure compliance now and in the future, without attracting a criminal record
- The environment, local community and those directly affected by the offending can benefit through actions being offered in an EU
- They allow the EA to deal with the less intentional and polluting offending in a more proportionate way than prosecution through the criminal courts

The Environment Agency reserves the right to prosecute, where offenders do not follow the terms of an Enforcement Undertaking offer.

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## **[CNC Chief backs calls to #BreakTheBias on International Women's Day 2022](#)**

More than 60% of the CNC's 300-strong police staff are female, with over 30% in senior management positions.

The CNC also boasts one of the highest numbers of female Authorised Firearms Officers (AFO) in the country, with 14%, while over 70 women are trained in specialist roles, such as: firearms commander, police medic, enhanced carbine, launcher and interdiction team.

Chief Constable Simon Chesterman aims to do even more to #BreakTheBias by attracting women to the force while increasing the number in senior

positions.

He said: "It's important that we take time to celebrate IWD because the CNC is built on equality, fairness and inclusivity – it is, rightly, the heart of everything we do.

"I am proud that the CNC has a higher number of female AFOs than the national average, but there is always more we can do.

"The CNC is a diverse, inclusive force, and we will continue to push for gender equality. It is reassuring, however, to know we are on the right path as reading the stories and hearing from our female colleagues on International Women's Day 2022 attest to."

DCC Harrison is CNC's most senior female and is responsible only to Chief Constable Chesterman.

Her role is to develop and maintain CNC's ability to deliver its mission.

She said: "IWD gives me the opportunity to reflect on the brilliant work that has been achieved by our female staff and officers over the last 12 months.

"IWD is a time to celebrate the great women we have at CNC, the innovation, determination, courage and hard work they put in.

"It also allows us to shine a spotlight on the men, women, family and friends who power and facilitate our women to be brilliant.

"As the most senior female officer in CNC, I realise we are incredibly lucky to have such great representation across the organisation, but we can't be complacent. We still have some way to go ensure parity is seen and felt across the organisation.

IWD is celebrated annually on 8 March, and has been since 1911. It celebrates women's achievements and increasing visibility, while calling out inequality.

To hear a female perspective about life at CNC, visit the force's social media channels today. Search @NuclearPolice on both Twitter and Instagram, while searching for Civil Nuclear Constabulary on Facebook and LinkedIn.

Anyone interested in joining this unique force can also find out more on our new-look jobs website at CNC Jobs.

There you will find information about the CNC, find our locations, and are able to read our diversity and inclusion policies. There's also first-hand account about life at CNC as well as the recruitment process steps you will follow when applying for a role.

Editor notes:

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) is a specialist police force, whose mission is to deter and defend against any attack on the UK's nuclear sector.

Primarily funded by the site licence companies which operate the UK's nuclear sites, CNC is governed by the Civil Nuclear Police Authority, and regulated by the Office for Nuclear Regulation.

The CNC is subject to the same College of Policing licensing process as Home Office police forces, but comes under Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

The CNC as a counter terrorism policing organisation is proud to deploy as a core component of the UK Strategic Armed Policing Reserve to support other police forces as part of the Protect element of the Government's Contest strategy.

Its authorised firearms officers are sworn officers of the Crown, and our overarching responsibility is to protect the public.

As a unique police force, the CNC employs around 1,600 officers and staff across the UK's 10 nuclear sites, with headquarters in Culham, Oxfordshire; and training facilities in Bisley, Surrey; Griffin Park, Cumbria; and Dounreay, Caithness County.

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## **HMRC urges caution as fraudsters seek to hijack personal tax accounts**

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is today warning customers not to share sensitive personal information online to avoid their identities being used to commit tax fraud.

HMRC is aware that criminals are attempting to obtain customers' Government Gateway logins and other personal details, enabling them to register for Income Tax Self Assessment and submit bogus tax refund claims before pocketing the repayment.

Individuals, ranging from teenagers to pensioners, are being targeted on social media platforms by fraudsters seeking to 'borrow' their identities. In return, the individual is promised a cut of the tax refund 'risk-free'.

Handing over sensitive personal information to criminals like this, even inadvertently, risks individuals involving themselves in tax fraud, and having to pay back the full value of the fraudulent claim.

Customers should therefore only deal with HMRC directly or through their tax advisor in relation to their Self Assessment tax refunds.

Simon Cubitt, Head of Cybercrime, HMRC said:

People need to think extremely carefully before they involve themselves in an arrangement like this, because if something looks too good to be true, then it almost certainly is.

Those who get involved risk becoming the victim of blackmail, threats of violence and wider abuse of their personal information, as criminals seek to exploit them further.

I urge anyone who may be aware of these dishonest attempts to recruit individuals into criminality, to report it us by searching 'Report Fraud HMRC' on GOV.UK and completing our online form.

In addition to their Government Gateway credentials, customers may also be asked to provide details of their bank account, passport, driving licence, address, date of birth, and National Insurance number.

HMRC is working with other law enforcement agencies and social media companies to tackle criminality on online platforms.

Last month (10 February), HMRC made coordinated arrests of four individuals aged between 16 and 33 in Hertfordshire, Bristol, Derbyshire and Buckinghamshire as part of an investigation into suspected Self Assessment repayment fraud and money laundering offences. Investigations are ongoing.

The [National Cyber Security Centre](#) has helpful guides on how to stay secure online and protect yourself or your business against cybercrime.

Contact your bank immediately if you think you've shared personal information online, and report it to Action Fraud (in Scotland, contact the police on 101). If you have been approached by someone asking for tax information, [you can report it to HMRC](#).

Details of the arrests:

- a man aged 16 from Hertfordshire
- a man aged 22 from Buckinghamshire
- a man aged 26 from Derbyshire
- a man aged 33 from Bristol

The deadline for 2020 to 2021 Self Assessment tax returns was 31 January. Earlier this year, HMRC waived late penalties for one month to give customers extra time to meet their obligations without facing a penalty. More than 11.3 million customers filed their tax return by 28 February. Any customers who are yet to pay their tax in full, or set up a time to pay arrangement, have until 1 April to do so to avoid a late payment penalty.