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CENTRAL-EAST AND SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN  
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# Forest Land Ownership Change in United Kingdom

COST Action FP1201 FACESMAP Country Report



**COST Action FP1201**  
Forest Land Ownership Change in Europe:  
Significance for Management and Policy  
(FACESMAP)



# Forest Land Ownership Change in United Kingdom

COST Action FP1201 FACESMAP Country Report

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## Background of the project

Forest ownership is changing across Europe. In some areas a growing number of so-called “new” forest owners hold only small parcels, have no agricultural or forestry knowledge and no capacity or interest to manage their forests, while in others new community and private owners are bringing fresh interest and new objectives to woodland management. This is the outcome of various societal and political developments, including structural changes to agriculture, changes in lifestyles, as well as restitution, privatization and decentralization policies. The interactions between ownership type, actual or appropriate forest management approaches, and policy, are of fundamental importance in understanding and shaping forestry, but represent an often neglected research area.

The European COST Action FP1201 FOREST LAND OWNERSHIP CHANGES IN EUROPE: SIGNIFICANCE FOR MANAGEMENT AND POLICY (FACESMAP) aims to bring together the state-of-knowledge in this field across Europe and can build on expertise from 30 participating countries. Drawing on an evidence review across these countries, the objectives of the Action are as follows:

- (1) To analyse attitudes and constraints of different forest owner types in Europe and the ongoing changes (outputs: literature survey, meta-analyses and maps).
- (2) To explore innovative management approaches for new forest owner types (outputs: case studies, critical assessment).
- (3) To study effective policy instruments with a comparative analysis approach (outputs: literature survey, case studies, policy analyses).
- (4) To draw conclusions and recommendations for forest-related policies, forest management practice, further education and future research.

Part of the work of the COST Action is the collection of data into country reports. These are written following prepared guidelines and to a common structure in order to allow comparisons across the countries. They also stand by themselves, giving a comprehensive account on the state of knowledge on forest ownership changes in each country.

The common work in all countries comprises of a collection of quantitative data as well as qualitative description of relevant issues. The COUNTRY REPORTS of the COST Action serve the following purposes:

- Give an overview of forest ownership structures and respective changes in each country and insight on specific issues in the countries;
- Provide data for some of the central outputs that are planned in the Action, including the literature reviews;
- Provide information for further work in the Action, including sub-groups on specific topics.

A specific focus of the COST Action is on new forest owner types. It is not so much about “new forest owners” in the sense of owners who have only recently acquired their forest, but the interest is rather on new types of ownership – owners with non-traditional goals of ownership and methods of management. For the purpose of the Action, a broad definition of “new forest owner types” was chosen. In a broad understanding of new or non-traditional forest ownership we include several characteristics as possible determinants of new forest owners. The following groups may all be determined to be new forest owners:

- (1) individuals or organizations that previously have not owned forest land,
- (2) traditional forest owner categories who have changed motives, or introduced new goals and/or management practices for their forests,
- (3) transformed public ownership categories (e.g., through privatisation, contracting out forest management, transfer to municipalities, etc.), and
- (4) new legal forms of ownership in the countries (e.g. new common property regimes, community ownership), both for private and state land.

This embraces all relevant phenomena of changing forest ownership, including urban, absentee, and non-traditional or non-farm owners as well as investments of forest funds or ownership by new community initiatives, etc. Although the COST Action wants to grasp all kinds of ownership changes it has to be noted that the special interest lies on non-state forms of ownership.



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## Acronyms and abbreviations

DARDNI	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland
DEFRA	Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (mainly England but has some jurisdiction over UK)
FC	Forestry Commission – agency responsible for oversight of forestry in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales)
FC Wales	Forestry Commission in Wales – since April 2013 this organisation no longer exists and its functions have been transferred to Natural Resources Wales
FC England	Forestry Commission in England – an agency of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
FC Scotland	Forestry Commission in Scotland – an agency of the Scottish Government
GB	Great Britain – the island comprising Scotland, England and Wales
NFI	National forest inventory
NI	Northern Ireland
NIWT	National inventory of woodland and trees
NRW	Natural Resources Wales – agency sponsored by Welsh Government since April 2013, incorporating the former functions of FC Wales
UK	United Kingdom – the country comprising GB, Northern Ireland and Crown dependencies e.g. Channel Islands, Isle of Man etc.

## 1. Introduction

The United Kingdom (UK) is one of the least forested countries in Europe with 13% of the land area covered with forests larger than 2 ha in size. Within the UK, Scotland has 18% forest cover, Wales has 15% forest cover, England has 10% forest cover, and Northern Ireland has the least with only 8% forest cover.

Forest type and ownership are inextricably linked, with commercial forestry dominated by large plantations, mostly of non-native conifers mainly owned by the public sector, business and individuals. In contrast, smaller forests (woodlands<sup>1</sup>) are more varied, often native broadleaves in England and Wales, or shelterbelts of conifers in Scotland, and

owned by a large number of diverse owners including farmers, local authorities, environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and institutions such as the church and colleges.

There are no restrictions on who can own forest and there is a small, but active market for forest land which creates a fertile environment for change in ownership and innovation in forest management. At the same time, in some areas there is a growing movement for greater involvement of local communities in the ownership and management of forest assets and there have been periods of intense civil society interest in the management of the national forest estate.

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<sup>1</sup> Lay discourses and many researchers would distinguish between forests which are normally seen as extensive areas of normally productive trees and woodlands which are more varied, more likely to be broadleaved and less likely to be managed formally for timber.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1. General approach**

The country report aims to give a comprehensive overview of forest ownership issues in the country, based on a mix of methods. These include a review of literature and secondary data and the expert knowledge of the authors.

Data include quantitative data (from official statistics and scientific studies) as well as qualitative data (own expert knowledge, expert interviews and results from studies). A literature review describes the state-of-knowledge in the constituent countries of the UK and contributes to a European scale state-of-art report. Case examples are used for illustration and to gain a better understanding of mechanisms of change and of new forest owner types. The data and case study analyses provided in the country reports will be analysed in subsequent stages of the COST Action.

### **2.2. Methods used**

The preparation of this report was a team effort led by Anna Lawrence with Jenny Wong acting as the overall editor.

The first step was the collation of academic and grey literature known to each member of the team supplemented by a search for literature on topics relevant to FACESMAP. This resulted in a list of over 145 publications ranging from short case studies to extensive reports.

Each section was assigned to the member of the team with most experience of the topic and drafts were reviewed by all other members of the team. The information presented was derived from the collated literature supplemented by the personal knowledge and experience of the authors. No expert interviews were undertaken.

### 3. Literature review on forest ownership in change

The COST Action national representatives undertook a review and compiled information on changes in forest ownership in their countries based on peer reviewed and grey academic literature, including reports and articles in national languages and official statistics, formal guidance or advisory notes from official websites, etc.

The scope of the literature review was as follows:

- Forest ownership change (with a specific focus on new forest ownership types), private forest owners' motives and behaviour, management approaches for new forest owner types, and related policies and policy instruments.

The ten most relevant publications were selected from the collected literature and described according to a pre-determined format and included as the Annex to this report. All available literature was reviewed for this report but only those which are referenced in the text are listed in section 7.

The literature review considers the following questions:

- Which research frameworks and research approaches are used by researchers?
- What forms of new forest ownership types have been identified?
- Do any of these have specific forest management approaches?
- Which policies possibly influence ownership changes in the country and which policy instruments are directed at the needs of new forest owner types?

#### 3.1. Research framework and research approaches

There are four distinct sets of studies that are available for the UK which can be considered relevant to FACESMAP:

- academic (peer reviewed) papers;
- policy orientated commissioned studies, associated reports and policy briefs;
- independent monitoring and reports; and

- peer-to-peer sharing of experience and case studies.

The literature therefore covers a wide range of approaches on the spectrum from etic (commissioned, dispassionate external studies) to emic (reflection by owners) perspectives. Within the body of UK literature there is one literature review (Lawrence & Dandy 2014) which focuses on 'Private landowners' approaches to planting and managing forests in the UK: what's the evidence?', which identifies 42 relevant studies. There are a few academic studies and peer reviewed papers (e.g. Urquhart 2006, Lawrence & Ambrose-Oji 2014). The majority of the available reports are grey literature and arise from studies commissioned to inform policy (e.g. Glynne et al. 2012, Evans 2010, Marsh 2013, Woodland Expansion Advisory Group 2012). In addition to this, there is a small set of private studies, some of which represent independent monitoring (notably Nicholls et al. 2013 and UPM & Savills 2013) or material prepared by NGOs (e.g. Woodland Trust 2011) and a series of reflective case studies and reports prepared by forest owners (notably community woodland groups) for peer to peer dissemination (e.g. Williams undated, Callander 1999).

Despite the disparities in the nature of the studies it is possible to discern some common themes as outlined below. Some themes are well studied and have a copious associated literature while others are represented by a small number of longitudinal studies.

##### 3.1.1. Research themes

By grouping similar studies together it is possible to discern five main 'themes' which represent the preoccupations of the past decades. Each theme to a great extent stands alone and there is little cross-over as evidenced by low levels of literature cross-referencing between themes. Possibly the only study which bridges across these themes is that by the Independent Panel on Forestry (2012) and this was mainly concerned with the situation in England. There are, however, strong policy (and conceptual) linkages between these themes



which remain unexplored as forest ownership has not attracted much academic research in the UK. Pooling the literature arising from these studies facilitates the appreciation of a great many, but not all facets of forest ownership of interest to FACESMAP.

***Theme 1: Disposal, management and use of public forest***

Notwithstanding the occasional academic study (e.g. Milbourne et al. 2008) this theme has been dominated by reactive studies in response to civil society opposition to proposed disposal (sale or lease) of the public forest estate by the government. The most recent of these was the proposed sale of the public forest estate managed by FC England. This culminated in the publication of the report by the Independent Panel on Forestry (2012) which synthesised 42,000 responses to the ‘Call for views’ by the Panel and several specially commissioned reviews on specific topics including private forest ownership (Glynne et al. 2012), community forest governance (Lawrence & Molteno 2012) and woodland management (Quine et al. 2012). A proposal to lease the Scottish public forest estate a few years earlier aroused similarly high levels of controversy (Buttoud et al. 2010).

There has been a proliferation of case study material related to public engagement in forestry, especially experience related to peri-urban forests and the development of community woodlands (e.g. Lawrence et al. 2009) and the use of public forest by communities (e.g. Evans 2010 for Scotland). Present directions are for increasing interest in release of public forest for community use by sale or lease in Scotland (through the National Forest Land Scheme), through lease and community management agreements in Wales (through Woodlands and You programme). Local authorities (UK municipalities), for example, Swade et al. (2013, 2014), are also looking to engage local communities in woodland management both as a resource for community development and also to reduce management costs (Lawrence et al. 2014).

***Theme 2: Perceptions and motives of private forest owners***

There have been a number of studies focusing on the perceptions and motivations of private forest owners. A few of these are more academic in nature and are concerned with the provision of public goods by private forest owners (e.g. Urquhart 2009) or the development of typologies of private woodland owners (e.g. Urquhart & Courtney 2011 and Urquhart et al. 2011). Others have been commissioned by the government (through the FC) to enhance understanding of motivations of forest owners to inform the design of grant schemes to encourage greater uptake (e.g. Lawrence & Edwards 2013, Lawrence & Dandy 2014, Wavehill 2009, Blackstock & Binggeli 2000, Quick et al. 2013).

There have also been a number of studies commissioned by forest owner associations (notably Sylva Foundation). The objectives for these vary from monitoring change in forest management (e.g. Carter 1994, Nichols & Young 2005, Nichols et al. 2013) to a description of motivations within a group of people who purchased land from the same seller (Jeremy Leach Research 2011).

Work within this theme spans an interesting range of perspectives from top down to bottom up. There is evidence of some tension between these with the policy-orientated papers concluding that many private woodlands are largely ‘unmanaged’ while the majority of owners report managing their woodlands (Lawrence & Dandy 2014). The former opinion may derive from a presumption that management means active silviculture to favour timber while the owners themselves consider their woodland managed if they get what they want from it (which may be amenity, wildlife conservation, hunting etc). The former view is most evident in official statistics of active management produced by the National Forest Inventory which derive from visual inspection of the site for signs of thinning and tree cutting. The NFI concludes that 20% of private woodland in England and 23% in Wales have ‘no obvious management’ (Lawrence & Dandy 2014).



Furthermore, another commonly used official indicator of active management is receipt of government grants or application for felling licences. Using these indicators, Yeomans & Hemery (2010) estimate that 71% of private woodlands in England are not managed. There is obviously a need for indicators for woodland management which can account for owners' objectives which may not result in tree cutting or applications to agri-environment schemes. This is not just an academic point as the desire to address the perceived problem of 'under-managed' woods lies behind the design of many of the forest policy instruments including those now embedded in agri-environment schemes.

### ***Theme 3: Development of community woodland groups***

Community-owned and -managed woodlands have come to prominence as a new forest owner type in the UK over the past 20 years. These "woodland community groups" are very diverse and deliver a mix of desirable social as well as environmental public benefits which has attracted the interest of policy makers. This in turn has spawned a number of academic reviews of community woodland experience from an etic perspective (e.g. Owen et al. 2008, Evans 2010, Lawrence et al. 2011, Lawrence and Molteno, 2012, Marsh 2013). The most recent of these have gone beyond the description of the general phenomenon and case studies to a framework to describe community woodland experience (Lawrence & Ambrose-Oji 2013), impact analysis (Lawrence & Ambrose-Oji 2014) and a typology of community woodland social enterprises (Ambrose-Oji et al. 2015). Forestry NGOs such as Reforesting Scotland have been important influences on and supporters of community woodland development and a transfer of ideas from community forestry in developing countries to the UK setting has figured significantly in the development of thinking (Inglis and Guy 1996; Slee and Snowden 1999).

Other studies have been commissioned by policy makers with the intention of establishing baselines for monitoring activity levels in the community woodland sector (e.g. Wavehill 2010).

In the meantime, the community groups themselves have prepared advisory notes

(e.g. Ellis undated), reports (e.g. Wilmot & Harris 2009) and case studies for peer-to-peer sharing of experience (e.g. the series of case studies (Williams undated) prepared by Llais y Goedwig for its' members) and the case studies prepared by the Community Woodland Association in Scotland (e.g. CWA 2012).

### ***Theme 4: Attitudes to woodland creation***

This theme is very closely linked to Theme 2 and several reports deal with both the creation and management of woodland (e.g. Lawrence et al. 2010). However, for FACESMAP, the creation of new forest owners through tree planting (so both the woodland and owners are new) should be distinguished from the consideration of existing forest owners. Forest policy in the UK has long supported forest expansion backed by various policy instruments (currently funded through the Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) of each country). Studies of the attitudes of land owners to tree planting have explored the impact of such instruments, and even since the 1980s these have tended to differentiate between geographical regions e.g. Scambler (1989) for Scotland and Bell (1999) for England. Since devolution, each administration has undertaken its own studies, e.g. Woodland Expansion Advisory Group (2012) and Lawrence & Edwards (2013) looked at Scotland, Loblely et al. (2012) surveyed attitudes in England while Wavehill (2009) did the same for Wales.

Unlike the other four themes these studies have all tended to be government- or researcher-led, focusing as they do on the perceived lack of owner initiative.

### ***Theme 5: Private forest land sales and management***

This theme is apparently the preserve of the private sector as there are very few academic or indeed economic studies of forest land values and markets. The only academic study is Loblely et al. (2012), which focuses on land availability for afforestation, and even this study is located in the grey literature.

The majority of the reports available on forest land prices and trends in private sales (and hence the creation of new owners by purchase) come from the private sector

companies which act as sales (and management) agents for forest land. These studies take the form of annual market reports and the one prepared by UPM & Savills covering forests over 20 ha in size started in 1998 and thus contains data on 15 years of forest land sales. This report is mostly concerned with larger commercial (conifer timber production) properties. Smaller forest properties are a distinct sector and have a quite different pricing structure, purchasers and motives for seeking forest ownership. For a few years in the early 2000s UPM & Savills also reported on this market (Tilhill & FPD Savills 2003, 2004, 2005) but this ceased when they withdrew in the face of an influx of competitors specialising in this

market sector. These reporting structures emphasise the dualistic nature of the market between larger commercial woodlands and smaller non-commercial woodlands.

### 3.1.2. Organisations and funding

As shown in Table 1 the distinctive nature and plethora of studies in each theme have resulted in a complex array of active organisations with an interest in research on forest ownership. There are no organisations which work in every region of the UK and there is only one organisation (Forest Research) which works across Great Britain. There are no organisations which work on all themes even within a region.

Table 1: Organisations undertaking research studies by theme

Theme	Active organisations driving or undertaking research			
	Great Britain			Northern Ireland
	England	Wales	Scotland	
Disposal, management and use of state and local authority forest	Forest Research			No research undertaken
	DEFRA FC England Independent Panel on Forestry Environmental and land-owning NGOs Civil society (38 degrees, press etc.)	FC Wales Llais y Goedwig Shared Assets	Scottish Government FC Scotland Forestry and land reform NGOs	
Perceptions and motives of private forest owners	Forest Research			Ulster Agricultural Organisation Society
	DEFRA FC England Sylva Foundation Cambridge University University of Exeter CCRI	FC Wales / NRW Wales Forest Business Partnership	FC Scotland James Hutton Institute Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society	
Development of community woodland groups	Forest Research			None
	Small Woods Association Woodland Trust FC England Mersey Forest Shared Assets	Llais y Goedwig Welsh Government Wavehill Consulting	Community Woodland Association Reforestation Scotland Scottish Government FC Scotland	
Attitudes to woodland creation	Forest Research			None
	DEFRA De Montfort University	FC Wales	Woodland Expansion Advisory Group	
Private forest land values and sales	Private companies			None
	University of Exeter			

Table 2 reveals that funding for these studies is equally diverse. Some themes are the preserve of the private or public sector while others have very diverse funding including in-kind contributions from civil society. The

active engagement of the private and third sectors in this work is striking, as is the lack of any significant use of EU funding. The upshot of all of this means that until the preparation of the UK country report for

FACESMAP there has previously been no related to trends in forest ownership. critical review of the entirety of the issues

Table 2: Funding sources by theme

Theme	Private	Public	European
Disposal, management and use of state and local authority forest	NGOs In kind Private donations	Scotland, England and Wales government through FC, NRW and other government sponsored bodies and procured from private sector	Not used with the exception of one paper arising from a COST action (COST E51) (Buttoud et al. 2010)
Perceptions and motives of private forest owners	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Research Trust Owners associations Sylva Foundation Woodland Trust?	DEFRA FC NRW ESRC	Currently funding SIMWOOD, previously funding for ForeStClim
Development of community woodland groups	Associations: e.g. Llais y Goedwig (in kind) Woodland Trust	Scotland, Wales & England government through FC, NRW, Forest Research and other government sponsored bodies and procured from private sector	Not used
Attitudes to woodland creation		Scotland, Wales & England government through DEFRA, FC, NRW, Forest Research and other government sponsored bodies and procured from private sector Economic and Social Research Council	Not used
Private forest land values and sales	Companies specialising in land and forest sales and management services	Not used	Not used

### 3.1.3. Theoretical and methodological approaches used

Table 3 presents an overview (not an exhaustive list) of theoretical approaches and methods used. Most studies are not strongly theoretically informed and are designed to answer policy or other practical questions. Most original studies are based on relatively straightforward synthesis of questionnaire - or case study-based data and few studies use quantitative sampling techniques (Quick et al. 2013 is an exception). There are a number of meta-analyses of existing studies (e.g.

Lawrence and Dandy 2014; Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji 2014) and a few evidence reviews.

There are a small number of longitudinal studies all managed by private organisations (e.g. the UPM & Savills market reports and the Cambridge traditional estates surveys (Nicholls et al. 2013) funded by RICS). A small number of baseline surveys have been done for community woodland groups (e.g. Wavehill 2012), with the intention that these will be repeated in the future but with no general commitment to monitoring of the number or motives of forest owners.

Table 3: Theoretical and methodological approaches used

Theme	Theoretical approaches	Methods used	Regional scope
Disposal, management and use of state forest	Policy evaluation	Public consultation: free form and structured responses from institutions and individuals. Content analysis used to consolidate large numbers of responses. In some cases, quantitative analysis Questionnaire surveys and semi-structured interviews with local authorities.	Largest, most recent study for England. Work related to National Community Land Scheme a few years ago in Scotland. No published reports for Wales or Northern Ireland.
Perceptions and motives of private forest owners	Political science Policy evaluation	Quantitative attitude surveys Economic surveys Qualitative interviews Case studies Q method	Most studies at GB level though most work done in England.
Development of community woodland groups	Policy evaluation Common property regime	Quantitative attitude surveys Evaluations Qualitative interviews Case studies (including participatory)	Most work in Scotland and Wales, less in England, recent spate of work at GB level. Little evidence of similar work in NI.
Attitudes to woodland creation	Social science Classification	Questionnaire surveys Q method	All regions Typologies mostly for England
Private forest land values and sales	Market intelligence	Collation and analysis of private forest land transactions Questionnaire survey	GB

The principal gaps in research on forest ownership in the UK are, in our view:

- Management practices specific to ‘new owners’
- Advisory systems and their efficacy and impact
- Holistic approaches leading to an understanding of the combined effect of grants and advice (and any other incentives) on forest owners
- Northern Ireland
- Forest management by community groups (literature on motives and benefits but not on silviculture)
- Impacts of forest management on different ecosystem services (although explored by Slee, Urquhart and Taylor (2006))
- Business models which might support revitalisation of small woodlands for productive purposes.

Looking ahead, future research might focus on:

- Number and motives of distant (urban) woodland owners
- Impact of firewood demand on ownership and management of woodlands

- Evolution of innovative forms of management agreement between private and community-based groups on state and local authority forest land or between private owners and intermediaries such as machinery rings.

## 3.2. New forest ownership types

### 3.2.1. Contribution of the literature

In reflecting on what constitutes a new owner, we have considered both new owners within existing ownership types (such as farmers who establish new woodlands, thereby becoming woodland owners without changing ownership of the land), and new ownership categories (such as community woodland groups) which acquire the land for the first time. The literature covers those who are new owners but not new *types* of owners e.g. the objectives of those who have newly acquired land for the purposes of investment forestry (Lawrence and Edwards 2013); and those who are traditional landowners but have newly planted forestry (many studies of farmers’ attitudes, synthesised in Lawrence and Dandy 2014). We find little attention has been given to *new types* of woodland ownership. The following are the exceptions which we have identified in the course of

writing this report:

- Leach et al. (2012) on new owners of small woodlands.
- Lawrence and Edwards (2013) on new 'hands-on' owners.
- Lawrence and Molteno (2012) on community woodland groups, only a small proportion of which are owners rather than working in partnership with existing owners
- Lawrence et al. (2014) for leasehold arrangements with local authorities.

Over the past 30 years financial returns, incentives related to public policy, land reform and changing public attitudes and appreciation of forests have resulted in the emergence of several 'new' forms of land ownership. Many of these are based on pre-existing legal forms but these have been used in new ways or by new groups of people to serve non-traditional purposes.

When considering forest ownership change we therefore need to consider how we will define a new forest owner. This could be based on: the legal form of tenure; whether owners are absentee or not; prior ownership and management experience of forests; motives for ownership; nature of the forest; delivery of public benefits etc.. There is probably no ideal or 'right' way of creating a typology of forest owners, let alone new forest owners. The best that we can do is perhaps to think of designing a synthetic classification that can be adapted to particular research questions – which is itself a topic for further research.

### 3.2.2. UK team's working list of types of new forest owner

For the purposes of this report for FACESMAP we have defined nine types of owners, many categories of which are experiencing change – either as an emerging new type of owner or a type of owner which is experiencing change. Note that this is not a complete classification of forest owner types in the UK but a listing of types of ownership where from our experience and the available literature we have discerned change. Our list is based on examination of the literature, reflection on experience, discussion and iteration amongst ourselves.

1. Existing land owners, especially farmers, who have planted new woodland for multiple reasons
2. Private trusts<sup>2</sup> holding traditional estates on behalf of a family
3. Individuals and companies primarily seeking financial benefit or commercial advantage (e.g. by tax-efficient financial services (investment and inter-generational capital transfer, or carbon or biodiversity offsets etc.)
4. Community woodland groups (under a plethora of legal forms and tenurial arrangements)
5. Individuals (or families) purchasing small woodlands for household amenity and use (amenity, recreation, firewood etc.)
6. New woodlanders - individuals or groups acquiring woodlands as a basis for (part) of their livelihood
7. Environmental NGOs (usually in the form of charitable institutions with a focus on biodiversity or heritage conservation)
8. Devolved national governments
9. Local government.

### 3.2.3. 'Traditional owners'

In the literature referring to the UK, the term 'traditional owner' is not used. However, James (1981) distinguishes 'old' from 'modern' forestry with the change apparently occurring in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The old, i.e. traditional forestry, took the form of woodlands on rather large and often aristocratic estates which were used both for hunting and as a source of timber in the context of an extensive holding in which farmland, parkland and forest were managed as a single enterprise. This interpretation is supported by the use of the term 'traditional estates' by Nicholls et al. (2013), Nicholls & Young (2005) and Wightman (2012) who describe them as large (average 600 ha),

<sup>2</sup> The legal form for these is "interest in possession" trusts. These are trusts which control capital but pass on income to named beneficiary of the income from the capital (see [www.hmrc.gov.uk/trusts/types/IIP.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/trusts/types/IIP.htm)). So the Trust holds the land on behalf of future generations of the family, while the present incumbent enjoys the income from the estate. This form of arrangement means the inheritor is not liable for capital gains tax but also often forfeits their right to determine the management of the estate which passes to the trustees. This is an established form of tenure but is increasingly being adopted by large private estates.



owned by a single individual (usually via primogeniture inheritance) or a private trust. Generally, such estates have between 15-45% of their area as woodland which is usually managed according to long-standing traditions. Many are ancient holdings and have remained in the ownership of the same family for many hundreds of years – 80% of the estates in Nicholls et al. (2013) survey had been in the same family ownership since before 1900, three had been owned by the same patrilineage for more than 700 years and one for nearly a millennium. As shown by Cahill (2001) large proportions of land in the UK remain in the hands of the heirs of aristocratic families and thus in ‘traditional’ ownership. Agricultural land on these estates was usually tenanted but the management of the woodlands was retained ‘in hand’ and therefore the responsibility of the landlord rather than the tenant and managed “partly as a source of profit, partly as one of the amenities of their estates” emphasising the multiple objectives for woodland and landscape management (Stamp 1962). In

opposition to this, non-traditional owners would be any owner who has recently acquired or created a forest (including the state) or any owner who is not a private individual (or family trust). Taking this longer view of forest ownership change, it is not possible to determine accurately the balance of forest ownership between traditional and non-traditional.

### 3.3. Forest management approaches

In the United Kingdom, there are no restrictions on who can own and/or manage a forest and there are many managers who have no formal forestry qualifications. Professional foresters are employed directly by owners of large forest properties (including the state forest management agencies) or can be contracted through private forest management companies and as self-employed forest agents. The alignment of forest management entities and forest types is indicated in Table 4

Table 4: Managers of forests in the UK

Management entity	Professional	Scale	Forest type	Main objective
FCE, FCS, NRW, DARDNI	Yes	National (NUTS1)	Public	Commercial + amenity
Local authorities	Yes	Unitary authority / Council etc. (NUTS3)	Public	Amenity
Forest management companies	Yes	Large forest holdings Traditional estates	Private	Commercial + hunting
Forestry agents	Yes	A wide range of clients including traditional estates, and farm woodlands	Private	Commercial/ private recreation (hunting)
Forestry contractors	Both	Local relationships between contractors and clients	Private	Mostly work under direction but may also be given quite a lot of discretion and will advise owners
Forest owners	No	Smaller holdings and farm woodlands	Private	Varied, often multi-purpose
NGO	Both	Very small to large (national holdings)	Private (Third sector)	Amenity, biodiversity conservation
Community woodland groups	Both *	Very small to large	Private (Third sector)	Amenity, recreation, productive, occasionally commercial

\* often including professionals on a voluntary basis within the group

Several studies focus on forest owners’ objectives but they do not generally distinguish between “old” and “new” owners. A review of peer reviewed and grey literature

found little difference between the objectives of woodland owners and woodland creators (Lawrence and Dandy 2014), and that, in order of declining popularity, they are:

1. Conservation, biodiversity and wildlife,
  2. Maintaining woodlands as landscape features,
  3. Providing shelter for stock or crops,
  4. Habitat for sporting activities such as shooting,
  5. Personal amenity and leisure activities,
  6. Non-commercial fuel production and
  7. Timber production and the provision of public access.
2. Community group providing contracted services on woodland belong to others
  3. Forestry enterprise owned by community group which does not have its own land
  4. Collaboration with business on community owned woodland
  5. Subsistence trading with income only to meet immediate management needs

Agents are most often contracted to prepare management plans and apply for grants. Interestingly, harvesting is the second most common entry point for forest management contracts (Lawrence & Edwards, 2013). Small woodlands are seldom managed for timber, but Urquhart et al. (2010) report that owners often say they would like to manage their woodland if they had more time and money.

Most new forest owners do not have previous forestry experience and are often confused about where to find advice and management services. Urquhart (2006) found that new owners (individuals/families) get advice from a range of sources including FC, consultants and contractors; they also take courses on forest management, talk to other owners, read books, spend time in the woods, or search the internet and get advice from support organisations such as the Small Woods Association. Community woodland groups are one of the few types of new owner who always prepare structured forest management plans. In both Scotland and Wales, community woodland associations provide advice and signpost training opportunities for these groups.

Innovation has also taken place in the development of new business models for woodland management, particularly in the community and voluntary sector. There is much confusion in the language of 'social enterprise', with little consistency in the use of the terminology (Stewart, 2011). New work which seeks to disentangle the range of business models from the focus of the enterprises presented by Ambrose-Oji et al. (2015) and identifies five types of business model used by social and community woodland enterprises:

1. Trading of products from a community owned woodland by the community

Though there are several drivers of change (climate change, tree health, social and cultural benefits, community engagement), the sparse existing evidence points to a reluctance to change current practice, and / or a trust in nature to do the adapting (Lawrence and Marzano 2013). Nevertheless, changing forest ownership and introduction of new objectives bring the possibility of change in woodland management approaches. The growing woodfuel market is also likely to result in changes in silvicultural systems towards coppice or shortened rotations. Machinery rings have undertaken initiatives in Scotland to group manage large numbers of private woodlands primarily for the woodfuel market. There is evidence that changes in policy favouring broadleaf species is leading to diversification of species choice.

No research has been yet conducted to identify obstacles to innovative forest management approaches as current research tends to focus on constraints to implementation of pro-active forest management and woodland creation.

### 3.4. Policy change / policy instruments

Forest policy has been a key driver for change in forest ownership in the UK over the past 100 years. The main considerations are:

- 1) Nationalisation: The Forestry Commission (FC) was established in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) in 1919. The main objective was to develop and maintain a strategic timber reserve for Britain. This involved extensive afforestation programmes on state-purchased and leased land, alongside the provision of financial incentives to encourage private landowners to plant trees; today small amounts of land acquisition by the FC continue through normal land markets.

- 2) Devolution: Since 2002 forest policy and institutions in the UK have been devolved. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each has its own forest strategy, which set objectives for state and private forests and frame policies within their RDPs;
- 3) Privatisation: there are extant policies for small scale disposal of public / national forest land to take place, with the proceeds to be used to purchase land for afforestation. Recent (in last five years) larger-scale proposals to sell or lease public forest land have met with public opposition and been retracted.
- 4) Inheritance tax relief: on forest land facilitates the retention of forests by land owning families and acts as an incentive for purchase of forest land as a means for inheritance tax free intergenerational transfer of capital. According to UPM Tilhill & Savills (2013) inheritance tax relief has been and remains a significant incentive for woodland ownership.
- 5) Land reform: in Scotland this gives tenants (and in some parts of Scotland resident communities) the ability to acquire land whether or not the owner wishes to sell. In practice, it has not been used to acquire forests, but the FCS National Forest Land Scheme which was developed in support of the Land Reform Act has supported a significant number of such opportunities, though most relate to quite small areas (See Section 4.3.1 for more details).
- 6) Woodland creation and management incentives: RDP-funded agri-environment schemes are expressions of policies aimed at landowners targeted at the creation of new woodland or enhancement of the provision of public benefits from existing woodland. These policies are now differentiated across the devolved RDPs. Evidence suggests that different types of woodland owner respond differently to these policy instruments (Urquhart et al., 2011).



## 4. Forest ownership

The aim of this chapter is to give a detailed overview of forest ownership in the UK. The most detailed information at national level is often structured in different ways in different countries. In order to show the most accurate information, it was decided to use the national data sets in the country reports. To make this information more comparable still, the information is also collected in an international format that is used in the Forest Resources Assessments (FRA) by FAO. The transfer from national data sets to international definitions is, however, not always easy. This report therefore critically assesses how far the national categories and definitions may be transformed into the international FRA data structure and the extent to which there are inconsistencies between them.

### 4.1. Forest ownership structure

A forest is made up of the land and the trees which grow on it. To be able to confidently assert who owns a forest we have to be able to determine who owns the land and trees. However, in the UK this information can be exceedingly difficult to obtain for historic reasons.

In the UK there is no current complete record of land ownership and there are only two historical records. The 1086 *Domesday Book* (covering England) and the 1872 *Return of Owners of Land* known as the 'second' or 'new' Domesday. Until the 1925 Land Registration Act<sup>3</sup> the only official record of land ownership other than the deeds themselves were the Tithe maps administered and kept at Parish level (the smallest unit of administration centred around the church) and these are no longer maintained and many are lost. The 1925 Act created the Land Registry and required that any ownership of land is registered by the purchasers of land. Registration of land not offered for sale is voluntary and is not required for land acquired by inheritance. By

2001 the Land Registry covered about 65% of land in England and Wales (Cahill 2001). The large proportion of unregistered land arises from the fact that there are still very large family estates which have not been sold and are inherited and therefore do not need to be registered. Furthermore, the Registry only requires the submission of a cadastral map of the registered land and contains no information of land use so it is not possible to use this source alone to identify forest ownership. Thus it can be problematic determining the freeholder of the land.

Trees on freehold land undisputedly belong to the freeholder. However, rights to trees on tenanted land are vested in the landlord under the Waste Act 1267<sup>4</sup>. This act makes it an offence for a tenant to 'make waste, sale or exile of ... woods' i.e. fell or sell trees without the express written permission of the landowner. This permission can be written into the terms of the lease agreement or may need to be obtained on a case by case basis. Proof of the landlord's agreement is a requirement for granting a felling licence across the UK (Highland Birchwoods, undated). The express permission of the landlord is also required to plant new woodland though more because the change in use to woodland may change the valuation of the landlord's property (DEFRA 2004).

The reservation of the rights to own and manage trees by the landlord compounds the problem of determining who owns forest land as an estimated 40% of farmland in England and Wales is tenanted (Tenant Farmers Association 2010) and information on who farms the land in a significant number of cases will not indicate who owns the land and thus the right to cut the trees. In Scotland there are relatively good statistics with the form of farm tenancy reported on an annual basis (Scottish Government 2014) but other forms of tenure such as contract farmed land

<sup>3</sup> UK (Land Registration Act 1925), registry devolved to Northern Ireland in 1970. Remaining Act amended in 1971 and registry devolved to Scotland in 1979 and amended in 2012. Amendments to residual Act now covering only England and Wales in 1986 and 2002.

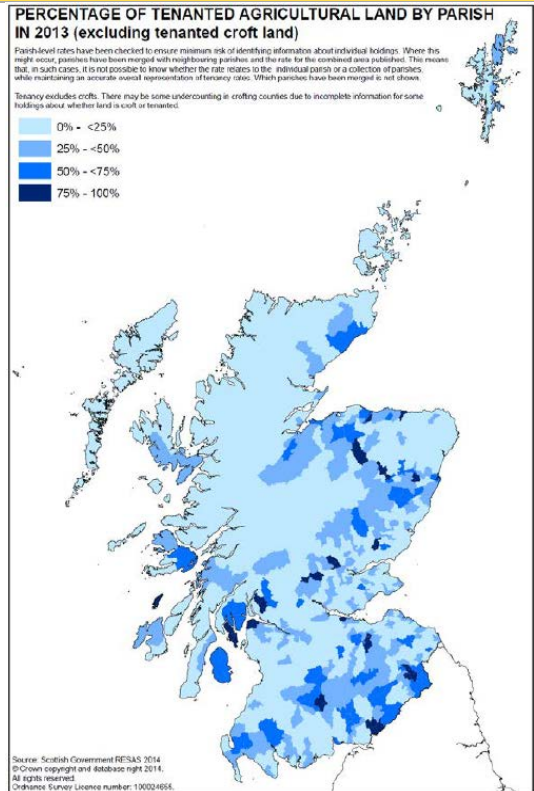
<sup>4</sup> "Also Fermors, during their Terms, shall not make Waste, Sale, nor Exile of House, Woods, Men, nor of any Thing belonging to the Tenements that they have to ferm, without special Licence had by Writing of Covenant, making mention that they may do it; which thing if they do, and thereof be convict, they shall yield full Damage, and shall be punished by Amerciament grievously." Agreed translation of Waste Act 1267, Statute of Marlborough (this is the oldest active piece of legislation in the UK).

are not indicated in official data. There are no tenancy figures for Northern Ireland as, in common with the Republic of Ireland, farm rentals are rare (in Ireland only 3% of farms are rented) (Cahill 2001). The alienation of tenants from the farm woodlands on their land is such that the policy document prepared by

the Tenant Farmers Association does not even mention trees or woodland (However, a significant proportion of tenancies arise where a family member is tenant to a family trust. In such circumstances, there may be stronger engagement of the ‘tenant’ with trees as a crop).

**CASE STUDY 1: AGRICULTURAL LAND TENANCY IN SCOTLAND**

In Scotland in 2013 24% of agricultural land (1.37 million ha) was rented on a full tenancy or croft with a further 14% seasonally let (0.8 million ha). The distribution of tenanted land in Scotland (below) shows a concentration in the Southern Uplands, Deeside and Speyside but tends to be lower in the areas of highest quality farmland. The impact of farm tenancies on forest ownership statistics is relatively small as most tenanted farms do not contain forest in the sense of an extensive area of wooded land but will have a significant impact on the ability of farmers to manage and extend woodlands on their farms (Scottish Government 2014).



Source: Scottish Government 2014

**4.1.1. National data set**

As a consequence of the situation regarding land registration, the UK does not have wholly reliable statistics on forest ownership. Researchers / policy advisers must therefore rely on sample data from surveys and forest inventory.

The Forestry Commission undertook periodic inventories at 10-15 years intervals from 1924 to 1999. The latest National Forest Inventory (NFI) (formerly known as the National Inventory of Woods and Trees, NIWT) commenced in 2009 as a continuous inventory and is due to complete a first cycle of data in 2015. These sample-based inventories include a voluntary question on the type of ownership. It is from this data source that more nuanced GB ownership data is derived, as shown in Table 5. Although the Forest Service in Northern

Ireland maintains a woodland register in which ownership is reported as ‘Forest Service’ or ‘Not Forest Service’, no disaggregated forest ownership data is apparently readily available to the public. Nevertheless, these inventories provide very high quality data of the types of forest in the UK (i.e. woodland type by age class and species).

A sample survey of ownership was included in for the first time in the latest NFI although the data are not yet available. This includes a voluntary question on type of ownership and it is from this data source that national ownership data derives. The previous NIWT collected ownership data at a much broader resolution. Because the NIWT only collected data on woods larger than 2 ha, much local authority and community woodland was omitted, and data on these categories of

ownership are likely to be unreliable. Among others, Wightman (2012) has been critical of this weak information and in a study of a

number of sample squares in Scotland has indicated just how difficult it is to ascertain forest ownership.

Table 5: GB forest ownership structure c 2000

Type of ownership	Percentage of forest land			
	England	Wales	Scotland	GB
Personal	47.1	42.6	35.4	43.6
Other private business	14.3	8.0	9.7	1.6
Private forestry or timber business	0.7	2.2	2.2	1.6
Charitable organisation	6.7	1.1	2.9	3.5
Local authority	6.0	0.9	2.9	3.0
Other public (not FC)	2.7	1.1	1.7	1.7
Forestry Commission	21.8	43.1	44.4	34.7
Community ownership or common land	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.2
Unidentified	0.4	1.0	0.5	0.7
Total area (ha) in woodland >= 2 ha	1,021,822	270,035	1,252,774	2,544,631
Total area of small woods < 2 ha	75,063	16,734	28,697	120,494

Definition of ownership categories:

Personal- types of private occupation e.g. individuals, private family trusts and family partnerships

Other private business- occupiers, e.g. companies, partnerships, syndicates and pension funds.

Private forestry or timber business- owned by wood processing industry. This category does not include forest management companies.

Charitable organisation-Organisations funded by voluntary public subscriptions, e.g. National Trust, churches and colleges

Local authority- region, county, district or other council

Other public (not FC)-Government department/agency, nationalised industry, etc.

Forestry Commission- land owned or leased to the Forestry Commission (or its successor)

Community ownership or common land- the common property of all members of the community

Source: UK National Inventory of Woodland and Trees (FC 2001 Scotland, FC 2001 England, FC 2002 Wales, FC 2003 Great Britain)

There are some large differences in the extent of forest cover in different parts of the UK. The UK as a whole has about 13% forest cover. England has about 9.9 % forest cover. Scotland has nearly 18% forest cover and Wales has around 14.3%. The north and west of the UK, characterised by hills and uplands and a wetter climate, are generally more heavily afforested. However, the NFI also shows some heavily forested counties (municipalities) in the south and south east of England.

The mix of forest type is summarised in Table 6.

The Forestry Commission estate is composed primarily of commercial conifers, but in England the Forestry Commission also acquired (at the time of their formation in 1919) a number of ancient state owned forests such as the Forest of Dean with a significant deciduous component. In contrast, almost 90% of private and other woodland in England comprises broadleaved species. The Welsh and Scottish forests are predominantly coniferous, but there are pockets of native species including birch, ash, oak and Scots pine of high conservation value within the forest mix in the north and west of the UK.

Table 6: Area of woodland > 2 ha by forest type and ownership for GB c. 2000

Forest type	England (ha)		Wales (ha)		Scotland (ha)	
	FC	Other	FC	Other	FC	Other
Conifer	133,867	139,400	88,287	45,957	437,696	441,780
Broadleaved	42,644	470,124	10,365	83,603	19,866	145,132
Mixed	21,225	106,752	8,089	13,416	10,059	36,435
Coppice	1,010	10,664	0	489	76	477
Coppice with standards	50	10,129	0	0	42	587
Windblow*	569	571	0	48	3,099	1,220
Felled	10,043	5,056	6,305	2,656	12,139	10,841
Open space	13,255	56,434	6,933	3,888	55,176	78,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>222,694</b>	<b>799,128</b>	<b>119,979</b>	<b>150,056</b>	<b>538,154</b>	<b>714,621</b>

\* Areas where trees have been blown down in storms.

Source: UK National Inventory of Woodland and Trees (FC 2001 Scotland, FC 2001 England, FC 2002 Wales)

There have been other attempts to classify woodland owners in the UK using categories very different to those of the FAO approach. Such classifications indicate the legal status or some kind of loose socio-economic descriptor of the forest owner but they tell us very little about the style of management of the owner. In the last two years, Defra has been funding a research project conducted by URS and partners to explore the different types of private woodland owner in the UK. Using segmentation approaches, they (Quick et al. 2013) have identified five categories of farmer in relation to their likelihood to plant trees. These are: Pragmatic planters; Willing woodland owners; Casual farmers; Business-oriented farmers; and Farmers first. In order to encourage different types of owner to plant more trees, it was seen as important that each segment should be targeted with relevant support and advice that was connected to their motivations.

Other research work, notably by Urquhart et al. (2012) (and based on the Q method<sup>5</sup>) has identified four groups of woodland owners including multifunctional forest owners, individualists, hobby conservationists and custodians. What both the Defra study and

Urquhart's work reveal is the complex and heterogeneous set of motivations of different types of private owners. It is their values and motivations that will frame both whether they plant more trees, the type of trees they choose and the style of management they undertake. A legalistic categorisation of forest ownership structures is thus far from illuminating when considering the types and styles of management of privately owned forest and woodland in the UK.

#### 4.1.2. Critical comparison with national data in FRA reporting

Given the situation where the Forestry Commission has to rely on public records and voluntary submissions, there are significant weaknesses in UK data on forest ownership. The same dataset as that used in Table 5 is transcribed into the FAO categories by the FC and hedged with cautions regarding its accuracy. As shown in Table 7, there are minor difficulties in collapsing larger categories of UK data into the categories used in the FRA but these are not deemed significant.

Table 7: Comparison of publically available statistics and FRA 2005 return for UK

FRA 2010 categories	Forest area (1000 ha)			
	FRA 2005	FC figures for GB c 2000	FS figures for NI c 2013	Total UK
Public ownership	983	927	62	989
Private ownership	1 862	1 519	49	1 578
...of which owned by individuals	1 416	1 109	-	1 109
...of which owned by private business entities and institutions	441	405	-	
...of which owned by local communities	5	5	-	5
...of which owned by indigenous / tribal communities	0	0	-	0
Other types of ownership	0	0	-	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 845</b>	<b>2 446</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>2 567</b>

<sup>5</sup> The Q Method is a research method used in social sciences and psychology to study people's perspectives, meanings and opinions. In Q Method participants are asked to rank a pool of qualitative statements onto a ranked grid indicating their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements. The sorted responses are factor analysed to reveal the underlying discourses.



## 4.2. Unclear or disputed forest ownership

There are few active disputes of forest ownership with a rare example being that between a community woodland activist and landowners in the Forest of Birse, Aberdeenshire (Callander 1999). The legal basis for the re-establishment of the common (community in Scotland) dated back to the 17th century. In essence, the former common rights had apparently never been annulled but the land had been expropriated by and absorbed into large private estates. As a result of Callander's work, a community group was able to reassert effective ownership over several thousand hectares of forest (see CASE STUDY 9 below). It is not at all improbable that this process of illegal privatisation of commons was much more widespread. Most communities lack the level of expertise to pursue the issue.

Where land is tenanted (i.e. rented), trees are the landlord's property. However, there are unresolved ambiguities in small hedgerow trees and saplings. When do these become trees? On common land there were historic rights to woodland products such as firewood but the trees belong to the landowner which leaves the commoner unable to manage the resource that they have the rights to use.

## 4.3. Legal provisions on buying or inheriting forests

There are no legal restrictions as to who can buy forest land in the UK, there are, however, some restrictions on the sale of forest land.

### 4.3.1. Legal restrictions for buying or selling forests

Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act of 2003, rural communities in Scotland have the opportunity to register an interest in buying land which arises for sale locally, under the 'community right to buy' legislation. In practice, Crossgates Community Woodland is the only exclusively forested site bought under these provisions although other land purchased also contains some woodland. The National Forest Land Scheme is a programme offered by the Forestry Commission Scotland, which extends the framework of this legislation to provide

opportunities for community groups to purchase or lease public forest land, whether or not it is for sale. Currently around 40 schemes have been approved, covering around 4000 hectares, including many approvals for very small areas of land for release for housing. There are only 5 schemes covering more than 500 hectares and 23 (of 40) are less than ten hectares in extent (<http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/NFLS-applications-status.pdf>).

In the UK there are several non-governmental organisations which own significant amounts of woodland. There are restrictions on the sale of assets owned by many of these organisations which arise from specific statute (e.g. National Trust), the constitution of the organisation (e.g. Woodland Trust) or are governed by the Charities Act for registered Charities.

The recommendation from the Independent Panel on Forests is that state forest in England should become inalienable (Independent Panel on Forests 2012).

There are restrictions on the sale of state forest as explained in Chapter 4.4.2.

### 4.3.2. Specific inheritance (or marriage) rules applied to forests

There are no specific inheritance laws applying to forests. However, until 2000 when entail was abolished in Scotland, it was possible to ensure that an estate always passed intact to the next generation. A similar law has existed in England (which with Wales has an entirely different legal system to Scotland) but this was abolished in the 1920s.

For the traditional estates and other long term land owners in the UK the customary practice is male-preference cognatic primogeniture inheritance. However, the rules of intestate inheritance make no gender distinctions. Nevertheless, owners are free to make whatever inheritance arrangements they wish in the form of a will. This often means the eldest male is still more likely to inherit than younger sons or daughters. In the special case of the Crown, the Succession to the Crown Act (2013) has eliminated male-preference for inheritance of the Crown and this presumably applies to associated land holdings.

## 4.4. Changes of the forest ownership structure in last three decades

There have been a number of changes in ownership of forests, resulting from both change of owner, and also change of land use. The most significant contribution to new forest ownership both by the state and the private sector is the increase in forest cover from 5% to 13% over the last century, meaning that existing landowners also become woodland owners or have become owners of newly planted forests. The most significant change in woodland ownership is on farms, where the area of woodland has tripled since 1981 (Forest Statistics 2014). Most new farm woodland has been planted since 1987 when advantageous new grants were introduced.

### 4.4.1. New owners through woodland creation

The Forestry Commission was established in 1919 to promote afforestation at a time when woodland cover in the UK was less than 5%, due to the decline in interest in forestry (to a large degree because of timber imports) accompanied by clearance of woodland for agriculture in the previous century and the deprivations of the First World War. The new

Forestry Commission purchased freehold and leasehold of private land using Treasury Funds and set about an intensive programme of afforestation and (later) grant aid for private afforestation. The growth in forest cover over the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Table 8) was primarily driven by the state, with plantings of exotic conifers for commercial forestry on mostly upland ground, with some low-lying and infertile areas also planted. From the 1970s the increased awareness of tax regimes dating from the 1950s (see Chapter 6) acted as an incentive for commercial private planting (managed by private forestry companies such as Fountain Forestry and Tilhill) which, to some extent, compensated for the reduction in planting by the state. State planting slowed down considerably during the 1980s, as major cuts were made in public expenditure that affected the Forestry Commission while the loss of favourable fiscal arrangements in the late 1980s meant that private planting also slowed (Figure 1).

However, farm woodland planting received a boost from 1987 when new EU arrangements made it possible to compensate farmers for loss of income on planted land (Figure 2). Since that time what had been separate forestry planting grants managed by the Forestry Commission have now been wrapped into the suite of measures in RRP.

Table 8: Woodland area in the United Kingdom

Year	England		Wales		Scotland		Northern Ireland		UK	
	Area (000 ha)	%	Area (000 ha)	%	Area (000 ha)	%	Area (000 ha)	%	Area (000 ha)	%
1905	681	5.2	88	4.2	351	4.5	15	1.1	1 140	4.7
1924	660	5.1	103	5.0	435	5.6	13	1.0	1 211	5.0
1947	755	5.8	128	6.2	513	6.6	23	1.7	1 419	5.9
1965	886	6.8	201	9.7	656	8.4	42	3.1	1 784	7.4
1980	948	7.3	241	11.6	920	11.8	67	4.9	2 175	9.0
1995-99	1 097	8.4	287	13.8	1 281	16.4	81	6.0	2 746	11.3
2013	1 300	10.0	305	14.7	1 410	18.1	111	8.2	3 127	12.9

Source: Forest Statistics 2013, Forestry Commission, Forest Service. [www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics)

The relatively recent changes incentivised a significant proportion of farmers to plant up some of their poorer ground with trees, but overall aggregate planting rates continued to decline from the high levels of the 1970s and

1980s. Nevertheless, much of this planting is now on farms as the area of farm woodland continues to increase, at least in Scotland (Figure 2).

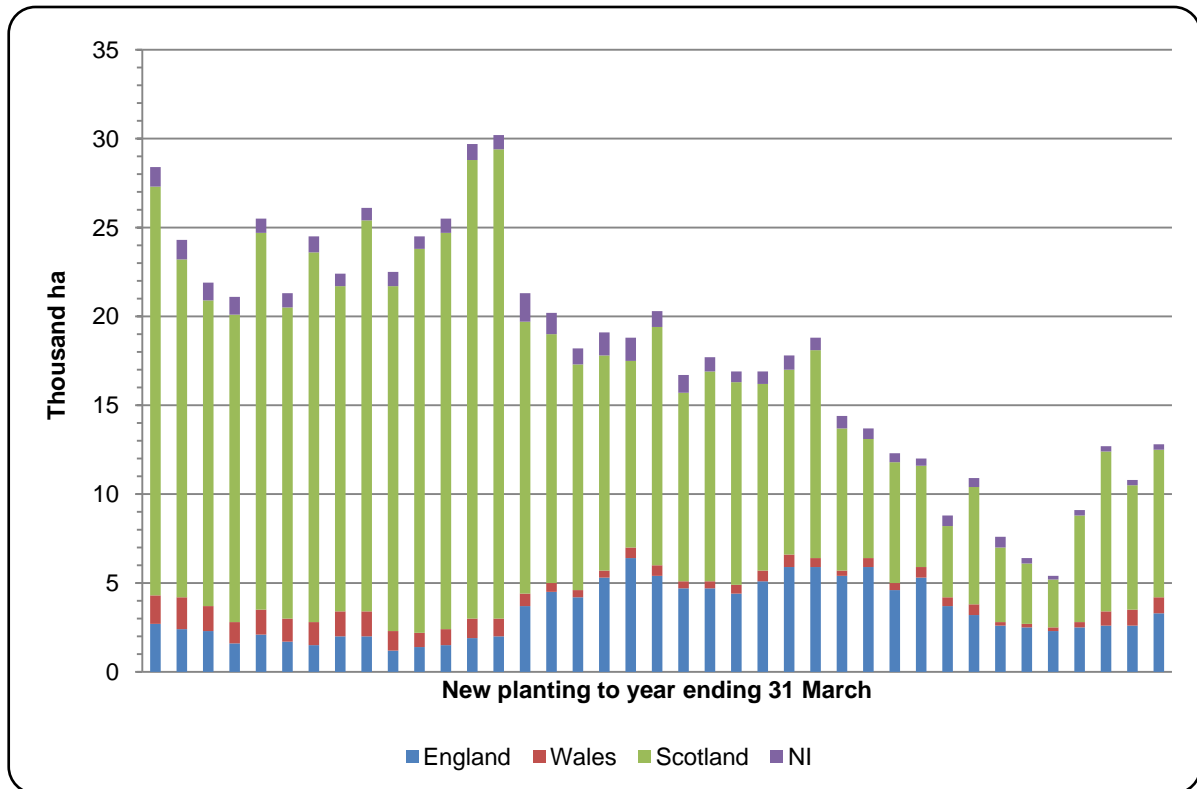


Figure 1: Rates of new forest planting in UK 1976 to 2014

Source: Forestry Commission woodland statistics 2014  
 (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8W3LV3)

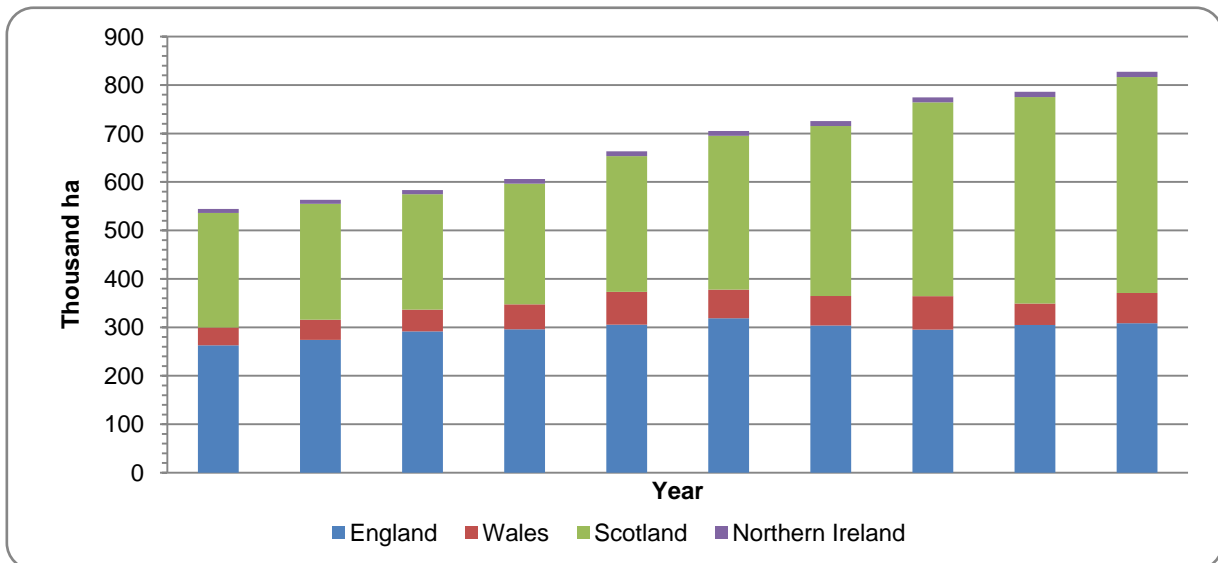


Figure 2: Area of farm woodland in UK since 2003

Source: Forestry statistics 2013 (www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8W3LV3)

**CASE STUDY 2: FARM FORESTRY: ROGER POLSON: ABERDEENSHIRE FARMER**

Roger Polson has farmed Knock Farm Aberdeenshire for more than 20 years. The farm had some amenity woodland and some production woodland but since the late 1990s about 30 hectares of farmland has been planted with commercial conifers and another area of wetland planted with broadleaved native species. Under a regional challenge scheme, the planting of woodland proved commercially very attractive and the grant paid for the forestry. In addition under the farm forestry grants the farmer received annual payments for 10-15 years. The proposal fits in well with a change in farm strategy to organic farming, lower stocking rates, carbon neutrality and the development of an equestrian enterprise.

Most new plantings are small in size and mainly composed of broadleaved species (Table 9). This manifests itself in the creation of new farm woodlands and also in new urban and peri-urban woodlands and forests. Much of the land planted in these urban forestry projects belongs to local authorities but there are also private and some corporate owners (e.g. United Utilities). Although the schemes are mostly operated through provision of publicly funded incentives they have also drawn in private funding (e.g. through the Community Forest Trust<sup>6</sup> as well as direct funding of projects and in-kind contributions). Although the planting in these schemes is often relatively small scale<sup>7</sup> they can deliver very significant public benefits and represent co-operation between multiple land owners.

Table 9: New planting by forest type in the UK 2008-2013

Year ending 31 March	New planting (000 ha)		
	Conifers	Broadleaves	Total
2008-09	1.2	5.2	6.4
2009-10	0.5	4.9	5.4
2010-11	1.5	6.6	8.2
2011-12	3.5	9.2	12.7
2012-13	1.9	8.9	10.8

Source: Forest Statistics 2013, Forestry Commission, Forest Service

A shift to broadleaved planting started in the late 1980s as grants to private individuals to plant trees shifted decisively in favour of broadleaves compared to the previous support regime which placed greater emphasis on supporting productive timber, which in the UK meant primarily coniferous trees. The emphasis shifted to environmental forestry from production forestry. Industrial commercial conifer production had been heavily criticised in the 1980s for habitat destruction (particularly of semi-natural moorland habitats) and other forms of environmental damage (such as drainage of deep peat). These criticisms were directed primarily against the private forestry companies that had exploited the tax loophole

to give tax relief to the super-rich. A powerful and effective environmental campaign led to policy changes.

#### 4.4.2. Changes between public and private ownership

There is an active programme of “re-positioning” of state forest land in Scotland. This is a “rolling land acquisitions fund, financed by the sale of parts of the estate which have relatively low public benefits, in order to raise the social and environmental value of its estate”<sup>8</sup>. After public consultation in 2003 the policy was implemented in 2004. The disposals mostly take the form of sales of difficult-to-manage forests and smaller areas of woodland that are sold to a range of buyers from commercial forestry companies, to private individuals, to community groups. Sometimes the threat of sale has led to a period of active animation of communities, such as at Laggan, Inverness-shire, and Abriachan near Inverness (see CASE STUDY 3). The income from disposals is placed into a fund which is used to purchase land for afforestation and some regional offices of Forestry Commission Scotland have been looking to buy farms and afforest these. Table 10 gives the status of sales and purchases under the Re-positioning policy. Note that acquisitions are at a much higher cost per ha than disposals, mostly because sales are of remote, low value forest/land while purchases are in peri-urban areas where there is perceived to be a deficit of woodland (as identified by the Woods In and Around Towns – WIAT initiative) and where land values are much higher. A modest number of purchases of upland farms have taken place, which has alarmed farmers who fear that they may not be able to compete with public sector buyers; and who have a collective memory of significant land acquisition from the farm sector after the Second World War. FC Scotland is also offering to lease land from farmers and other landowners for afforestation<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.cf-trust.org/>

<sup>7</sup> Though the Mersey Forest alone planted more than 8 million trees in the last 30 years over the project area of 500 square miles.

<sup>8</sup> [www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8F8EL5](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8F8EL5)

<sup>9</sup> <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/grants-and-regulations/land-leasing>



Table 10: Sales and purchases of land by Forestry Commission Scotland from 1999

Year (April – March)	Acquisitions (ha)		Disposals (ha)	
	Forest	Bare land	Plantations	Other land
1999-2000	1,066	0	2,945	258
2000-2001	0	0	2,126	990
2001-2002	0	271	1,751	305
2002-2003	0	792	1,005	511
2003-2004	311	98	1,493	19
2004-2005	402	248	734	171
2005-2006	0	9,745	1,598	9
2006-2007	246	1,218	1,076	47
2007-2008	32	2,847	2,955	67
2008-2009	0	2,112	2,917	32
2009-2010	219	202	5,321	66
2010-2011	65	3,034	6,877	297
2011-2012	73	1,972	5,912	40
2012-2013	304	2,500	3,574	36
Total area	27,779		43,890	
Total value	£61,491,421		£94,709,317	

Source: [www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/AcquisitionsAndDisposals.pdf/\\$FILE/AcquisitionsAndDisposals.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/AcquisitionsAndDisposals.pdf/$FILE/AcquisitionsAndDisposals.pdf)

### CASE STUDY 3: ABRIACHAN COMMUNITY WOODLAND

Abriachan near Inverness was a Forestry Commission Scotland disposal sale. The small rural community of Abriachan a mixture of traditional rural households and incomers was alarmed at the prospect of sales of production forest to a private buyer and animated by two key local residents. They acquired the forest with support from public funds and established Abriachan Forest Trust ([www.abriachan.org.uk](http://www.abriachan.org.uk)). Their website notes: In 1998 the community purchased 534 hectares of forest and open hill ground from Forest Enterprise. Since then, as a social enterprise, the Abriachan Forest Trust has managed this land to create local employment, improve the environment and encourage it's enjoyment by the public through a network of spectacular paths, family suited mountain bike trails and innovative education opportunities.

In England, a similar policy saw sales of 7,800 ha of the public forest estate and purchase of 5,400 ha between 1997 and 2009. Over half of the purchased land (3,000 ha) were former coalfield sites and peri-urban areas for tree planting to create more green space (FC England 2009).

In Wales there is a similar policy (FC Wales National Committee 2006). However, with one exception (a sale to a community woodland group) no forest land has been offered for sale for several years. Under the Woodlands and You programme leases of state forestland in Wales are available and there are several social enterprises which currently hold management agreements who are considering taking out leases. Lease of state forest land to community groups is possible in Scotland but at the present time is not available in England. The lack of any information on disposal or leases on the DARNI website would suggest that neither is it possible in NI.

### 4.4.3. Changes within public ownership categories (devolution)

Devolution (See Chapter 6) represents the single biggest change in the past 30 years with the creation of three new state forest owners each of which developed independent policies, instruments and modes of working despite the Forestry Commission retaining some oversight at GB level. In 2013 the Welsh Government used its powers under the Public Bodies Act (2012) to amalgamate Forestry Commission Wales, the Environment Agency Wales and the Countryside Council for Wales into Natural Resources Wales, a new government sponsored body with responsibility for managing the Welsh Government forest estate and implementation of the Woodlands for Wales strategy. This again is a significant change which represents the emergence of a new forest owner. It is likely that the gradual, break-up of the Forestry Commission will continue and that Scotland and England will also have completely independent state forest agencies within the next few years.

#### 4.4.4. Changes in private ownership categories

##### Large scale forest land owners

It is estimated that around 3% of forests are sold on the open market every year. These sales are conducted by a small number of specialist land and woodland agents and is sub-divided (UPM Tilhill & Savills 2005) into two fairly distinct sectors – a small woodland sector roughly comprising properties under 20 ha and a commercial forestry sector which are mainly planted with conifers in blocks of more than 20 ha of stocked land (non-forest land being considered incidental to the commercial planting).

For the past 15 years UPM Tilhill & Savills (two of the larger forest agents) have produced an annual evaluation of their own and other public sales of forest. Figure 3 shows the number of properties and area of land sold on the open market since 1998. This reveals a small but stable market with around 100 properties and a cumulative area of 12,000 ha per year changing hands. The report also indicates a growth in the IPD UK Forestry Index of 17.7% over the past five

years and 16.3% over the past decade. This was initially driven by investors looking for a secure asset in a time of economic crisis in which to shelter cash with interest maintained by tax relief and long term optimism for timber prices buoyed by interest in renewable energy opportunities (as sites for wind turbines or hydro-electricity production). The properties were mostly purchased by existing investors looking to increase their forest holding, new investors and large forestry investment funds acting for pools of investors. However, the liquidity of this market is such that UPM Tilhill & Savills anticipate investors leaving forestry (selling their property) now that there is some financial recovery in favour of better short term returns than can be delivered by forestry. The prominence of fiscal incentives for forest ownership is highlighted in the report which concludes “significant tax advantages derived from commercial forestry, including the potential to benefit from significant IHT savings and Capital Gains Tax exemption, continues to point to a bright long term future for forestry” (UPM Tilhill & Savills 2013).



Figure 3: Sales of commercial (conifer) forest properties greater than 20 ha in size  
 Source: (UPM Tilhill & Savills 2013)

Interestingly, agents report that the average duration of ownership of these commercial forests is between 12-15 years (UPM Tilhill & Savills 2007) which further supports the use

of forest as a financial asset. In common with house ownership, there are significant capital gains to be made in forest speculation.

**CASE STUDY 4: THE CASE FOR FOREST AS AN INVESTMENT**

In the introduction to the market report for 2008 the value of forest in an investment portfolio was touted as having the following benefits:

“Forestry remains robust amongst the turmoil of the investment markets of the last year. Land based assets have outperformed alternative assets over the past five years and have been comparable to alternative assets over the past 15 years. In contrast, the performance of equities and commercial property has been negative over the past three years and relatively muted over the past five to ten years.

The investment performance of forestry has recorded an annualised total return of almost 20% over the past three years and has outperformed investment farmland which recorded an annualised total return of just under 15%. Forestry is an important element of an investment portfolio.

Forestry is a real alternative to investing in traditional assets and can be used to spread the mix in an investment portfolio. In addition to having performed well in recent years, owning forestry has tax benefits. There is potentially 100% relief on inheritance tax, no income tax on the income derived from timber and gains attributable to standing or felled timber are exempt from capital gains tax.

We expect forestry to remain an important alternative to other assets due to its significance in capturing carbon to offset emissions and also as the focus on biomass fuels and timber, as a sustainable building material, intensifies.” UPM Tihill & Savills (2009)

**Small scale forest land owners**

A further strand in the development of forest ownership throughout the UK has been the tendency for small areas of woodland and forest to be acquired by individuals seeking amenity woodlands. These individuals are primarily interested in the environmental qualities of woodland. In Scotland these owners are required by law to allow access, but elsewhere, some, but by no means all of this type of owner, are willing to allow public access. Many actively manage their woods to minimise public access.

Demand for small woodlands is strongly associated with proximity to centres of

population and this is most easily seen as variation in per hectare forest land prices across the country (Table 11). Small amenity woodlands sell at a much higher price per hectare than larger woods because they are valued by the purchaser for intangible, personal reasons rather than the timber production potential of the land, which explains how one property fetched £28,800 per ha in 2003 and also the volatility of price. As shown in Table 11 location is the biggest determinant of price followed by the attractiveness of the woodland and affordability – i.e. the overall price for the property.

Table 11: Price for small forest blocks (< 25 ha) in England and Wales for 2002 to 2004

Location	Average price per ha (£)		
	2002	2003	2004
South East England	6,674	8,670	10,300
Central England	5,584	5,791	11,300
South West England	4,698	4,783	13,900
East Anglia	2,847	3,068	15,300
South Wales	2,327	2,220	8,200
North Wales	2,946	2,529	
Northern England	3,128	3,246	7,600
Average price for woodland over 25 ha	N/A	1,400	1,817

Source: Tihill & FPD Savills Small market report

Tihill & FPD Savills report that the reasons given for the purchases included in their market report were:

- Quiet recreation, with amenity and conservation
- Investment performance and, possibly, tax benefits
- Sporting rights benefits
- “I have always wanted to own woodland“
- For the extras – water and, very occasionally, building and/or camping
- Ownership of a nearby property.

**CASE STUDY 5: NEW SMALL SCALE WOODLAND OWNERS, MOSTLY 'URBAN'**

Leach et al (2012) analysed data from 200 questionnaires completed by buyers of small woodlands; in depth interviews with 10 buyers; and 150 questionnaires with existing owners of small woodlands. They concluded that the 'new breed of owner' differs from [presumably foresters'] preconceptions. They found that in general these new owners spend a lot of time visiting their woodlands, are not looking for profit from timber, and do most of the management themselves. They are motivated and knowledgeable about recreation and wildlife, and keen to learn and keep fit.

**Peri-urban forest initiatives**

A new model of forestry was launched in the UK in 1990 to create green infrastructure and environmental enhancement focussing on damaged and blighted landscapes, usually close to large urban centres. In England these are collectively known as "Community Forests" and are state-sponsored initiatives mostly operating on Council land (see CASE STUDY 7). After an initial period of public sector support, these state-funded projects

were transformed into charitable trusts or drawn into partnership arrangement with municipal authorities and the most successful have thrived and continue to pursue tree planting and pro-active woodland management by mobilising individual, municipal and corporate landowners to plant and manage trees. Funding is increasingly a mix of EU, national, municipal, corporate and in kind contributions ([www.cf-trust.org/](http://www.cf-trust.org/)).

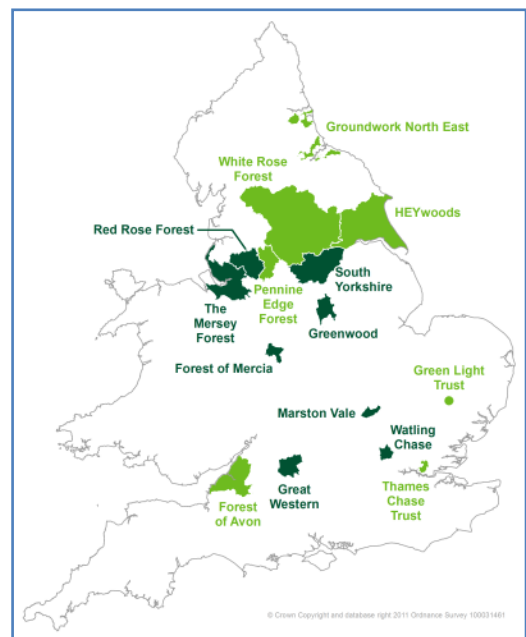
**CASE STUDY 6: COMMUNITY FORESTS IN ENGLAND**

This peri-urban regeneration programme represents the largest environmental regeneration initiative in England covering extensive tracts of the country and collectively has:

- Planted 10,000 ha of new woodland
- Brought more than 27,000 ha of existing woodland under management
- Created or improved 1,200 ha of other habitats
- Planted or restored 1,200 km of hedgerows
- Opened up 16,000 ha of woods and green-space for recreation and leisure
- Restored or created more than 4,000 kilometres of footpaths and cycle routes
- Engaged and involved hundreds of thousands of people in finding out about and improving their local areas
- Secured investment of over £175 million to improve people's quality of life

[www.communityforest.org.uk/aboutenglandsforests.htm](http://www.communityforest.org.uk/aboutenglandsforests.htm)

**Community Forests**  
 Similar local authority sponsored 'community forestry' initiatives



Working on a different business model the National Forest initiative was established in 1995 in the East Midlands of England ([www.nationalforest.org](http://www.nationalforest.org)). This initiative is administered by The National Forest Company which was established by Government as a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to deliver the government-approved National Forest Strategy. It is therefore more directly

an instrument of national policy than the Community Forests which operate at the level of amalgamations of adjacent municipalities. The motivation for the National Forest was similar to that of the community forests but more focused on afforestation and with grant aid has planted 6,700 ha of new woodland in an area of the North Midlands. Most of the woodland created remains privately owned, with locational supplements used to enhance the normal financial incentives for planting.

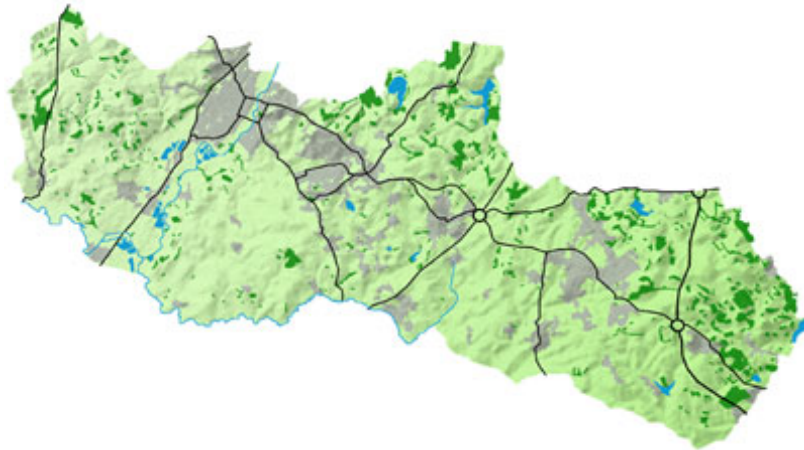


**CASE STUDY 7: THE NATIONAL FOREST**

Located in an area with modest woodland cover and significant regional socio-economic decline the National Forest project was set up as a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Its website notes that: 'The National Forest Company: Attracts and uses resources for ambitious and imaginative Forest creation that is sensitive to the landscape and environment.

Provides the setting for new businesses, recreation, tourism and an improved quality of life  
 Enhances wildlife and biodiversity.

Over the past 20 years the National Forest Company has facilitated planting of 6,931 ha of new woodland which has increased woodland cover in the National Forest from 6% to 19.8%. Of this 1,040 ha have been purchased by the Company with the remainder being grant aided planting on private land.



Woodland cover 1995



Woodland cover 2014

The National Forest Company uses a mix of incentives and leads through working partnerships with landowners, businesses, public, private and voluntary organisations and local communities to fulfil the shared vision for the Forest. Funding is also shared and includes:

- Since 1995 – ~ £ 170.5 million invested in Forest-related and regeneration projects and programmes
- Since 1997 – 28,000 volunteer work days by The Conservation Volunteers
- Since 2003 – £ 1.2 million of corporate and individual donations

[www.nationalforest.org/about\\_us/](http://www.nationalforest.org/about_us/)

There have been a number of peri-urban regeneration projects in the other countries. The first was in Northern Ireland in the shape of the Forest of Belfast scheme established in 1992 along similar lines to the Community Forests of England but using EU funding for Peace and Reconciliation with the additional

objective of promoting post-conflict reconciliation and focusing on urban rather than peri-urban regeneration<sup>10</sup>. In Scotland a partnership-based initiative was launched in

<sup>10</sup><http://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/sites/birmingham.live.wt.precedenthost.co.uk/files/CS%2018%20-%20City%20Wide%20partners.pdf>

1994 as the Central Scotland Forest<sup>11</sup> which has been equally successful and was recently subsumed into the Central Scotland Green Network Trust<sup>12</sup>.

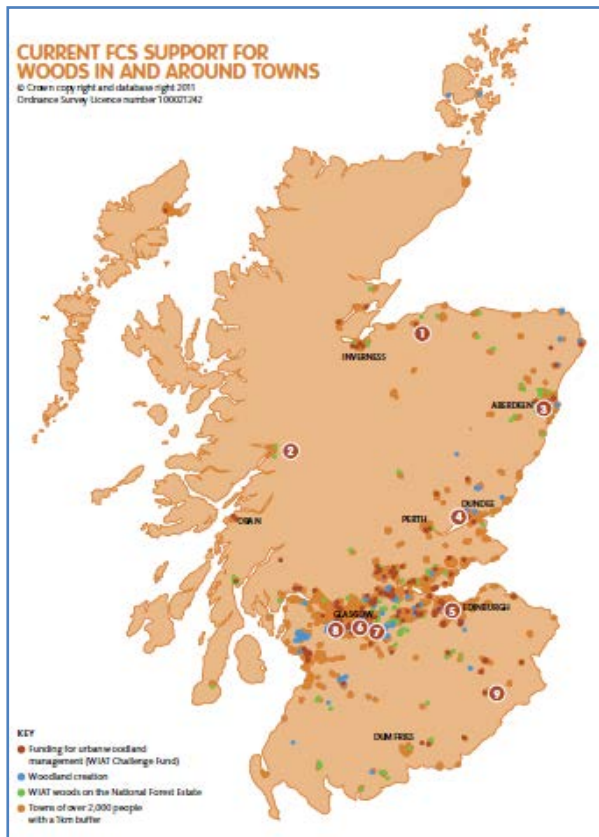


Figure 4: Woods In and Around Towns project areas in Scotland

Source: <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/WIATProgressReportstorysofar.pdf>

There are also peri-urban afforestation initiatives led by the Forestry Commission in the form of the Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT)<sup>13</sup> initiative in Scotland and the Heads of the Valleys Woodland Plan<sup>14</sup> in Wales. WIAT was launched in 2005 and is mostly funded through FC Scotland who invested £50 million in the project in the first six years with the acquisition of 4,000 ha through partnership agreements for existing woods and by purchasing land for the creation of new urban woods through the re-positioning programme. In total 1,400 of new woodland has been planted and 11,000 ha of existing

woodland brought into management<sup>15</sup> (see Figure 4).

The equivalent scheme to WIAT in Wales is by contrast severely under-funded and has made relatively little progress with objectives which include the creation of 2,500 ha of woodland as the pro rata contribution to Welsh government's target to create 100,000 ha of new woodland before 2025<sup>16</sup>.

### Charitable trusts

The UK has a long history of charitable trusts with bodies such as the National Trust and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds being formed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. New charitable trusts, in particular the Woodland Trust have acquired a substantial area of woodland, especially in England. The extent of woodland ownership by charitable trusts has moved upwards in recent decades.

A significant trend since the late 1990s has been the emergence of regional partnerships to promote forestry activity amongst private owners. Often primed with regional and Forestry Commission support, such bodies have become influential in supporting woodland management and in developing wood energy initiatives. Cumbria Woodlands has been in existence for 21 years and provides a wide range of advisory support to private woodland owners. They have drawn down a range of public funds to enable a continuous and broad-ranging support service to the small woodland sector in Cumbria, North West England. These are less important in terms of new afforestation but may be very significant in getting forest owners to use their trees. Wood energy systems have often been a good entry point.

### Traditional estates

Since 1963 there have been a series of surveys of traditional estates with forest which was repeated in 2012 and reported in Nicholls et al. (2013). Table 12 presents the results of these surveys in terms of the form of ownership reported by the surveyed estates. It is clear that although the estates themselves remained intact and often

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.csft.org.uk/>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.csgnt.org.uk/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/communities/woods-in-and-around-towns-wiat>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8J2GRS>

<sup>15</sup> <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/WIATProgressReportstorysofar.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/HeadsOfTheValleysWoodlandPlanExecutiveSummary2010a.pdf/\\$FILE/HeadsOfTheValleysWoodlandPlanExecutiveSummary2010a.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/HeadsOfTheValleysWoodlandPlanExecutiveSummary2010a.pdf/$FILE/HeadsOfTheValleysWoodlandPlanExecutiveSummary2010a.pdf)

continued to be managed by the heir of the same family that the form of ownership had

changed – mostly into that of a private trust.

Table 12: Ownership of traditional estates

Type of owner	Year			
	1963 (%)	1996 (%)	2005 (%)	2012 (%)
Private individual	69	40	40	32
Private company	14	8	0	0
Private trust	10	38	43	32
Charity	7	6	14	12
Other / Declined to answer	-	8	3	24
Number in sample	72	50	36	25

Source: Nicholls et al 2013

The private trusts are legal entities set up by large family estate owners and to which they transfer ownership of their estate. This provides additional security for the land and a means of avoiding inheritance tax while the income from the estate can still be returned to the owner (Cahill 2001). The family trust may also provide a robust tax shelter and a useful means of perpetuating family succession at a time when higher rates of divorce can threaten to break up landholdings.

### Community-led woodland groups

There is no tradition of communal ownership of land in the UK, although local authorities (usually larger than the equivalent municipalities in continental Europe) do own significant but poorly documented areas of land (Britt and Johnston 2008; van der Jagt & Lawrence 2014).

Community woodlands are generally thought of as a new phenomenon but there are antecedents which pre-date current interest which often take the form of gifts to the local community.

Data on new community woodland groups has improved greatly in the last three years (summarised in Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji, 2013). The first of the new community groups acquiring woodland was Wooplaw in the Scottish Borders, in 1987 (Lawrence et al 2009). There are many different organisational models for community woodland groups with the most common one being a 'company limited by guarantee' which represents the community group.

Some facts and figures for community ownership of woodland are:

- In Scotland progress against The Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) is

measured using a suite of indicators, one of which is *Number of community groups involved in owning or managing woodland*. The indicator measured in 2012 showed an increase of 67% in the number of community woodland groups over the last five years, to a total of 204. Of these, tenurial information was acquired for 184, of which one third owned their woodlands (Stewart and Edwards 2012).

- In Wales a systematic survey of community woodland groups found that 27% own their woodlands (Wavehill Consulting 2010).
- In another study, based on a review of all available evidence of impact of community woodlands across the UK, 681 cases were identified, of which 22% were classified as 'community resources' which were usually owned by the community (but also included secure tenure such as leasehold) (Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji, 2014).

These data confirm the overall impression that community ownership is lower in England than in Scotland.

In Scotland more qualitative evidence is available, where the emergence of community ownership from the late 1990s has begun to establish new ownership models. Pioneered by bodies such as Reforesting Scotland, community forestry became a prominent movement in the first decade of the new millennium. In practice, the total area covered by leases or ownership by community bodies remains relatively small but growing. In Scotland this is actively supported by schemes associated with the Land Reform (Scotland) Act of 2003, such as

the National Forest Land Scheme, and the Scottish Land Fund. Ownership is seen as symbolically significant in Scotland (Lawrence 2009).

Slee & Snowdon (1998) examined community groups and argued that most generate recreational opportunity rather than significant economic development opportunities. However, increasing difficulty securing grants and interest in the provision of woodland-based employment, at least in Wales, has led to a recent growth of woodland social enterprises and economic development in Wales and Scotland (e.g. North West Mull Community Woodland Company; Kilfinan Forest Trust; Stronafian Forest Trust).

Regardless of policy drivers, changes to community ownership have often been motivated by the communities themselves, and a wide range of ownership models is arising, including for example share purchase, long lease and partnership<sup>17</sup>.

Some accessible case studies are published in Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji (2013) and include:

- from Scotland: North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd – Langamull and West Ardu Woodland, Mull
- from England: Friends of Oakfrith Wood (FoW)

- from Wales: Blaen Bran Community Woodland Group
- Others can be found in the reports referenced in that publication, and also available at [www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-7TSD7E](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-7TSD7E) including CWA 2012 and Hughes 2012.

#### 4.4.5. Main trends of forest ownership change

Across Europe, the following drivers for ownership changes had been identified in the COST Action:

Privatization, or restitution, of forest land (giving or selling state forest land to private people or bodies)

Privatization of public forest management (introduction of private forms of management, e.g. state owned company)

New private forest owners who have bought forests

New forest ownership through afforestation of formerly agricultural or waste lands

Changing life style, motivations and attitudes of forest owners (e.g. when farms are given up or heirs are not farmers any more)

The relevance of these drivers in the UK context is presented in Table 13.

Table 13: Significance of trends in new forest ownership in the UK

Trends in forest ownership in the United Kingdom: New forest ownership through...	Significance*
• Privatization, or restitution, of forest land (giving or selling state forest land to private people or bodies)	1
• Privatization of public forest management (introduction of private forms of management, e.g. state owned company)	0
• New private forest owners who have bought forests	2
• New forest ownership through afforestation of formerly agricultural or waste lands	2
• Changing life style, motivations and attitudes of forest owners (e.g. when farms are given up or heirs are not farmers any more)	2
• Other trend, namely: purchase of land by community-led groups	1

\* 0 (not relevant); 1 (to some extent); 2 (rather important); 3 (highly important)

<sup>17</sup> <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/communities/national-forest-land-scheme-nfls>



#### 4.5. Gender issues in relation to forest ownership

There are few gender-disaggregated data on forest ownership in the UK and no explicit studies of gender in forest ownership and management.

Urquhart (2009) undertook a survey of private woodland owners where 83% of the respondents were male. Furthermore, there were distinct differences in the representation of women in the conservationist and amenity owner types as shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Association between gender and owner groups

Owner Group	Gender	
	Male %	Female %
Individualist	83.2	16.8
Multifunctional	82.1	17.9
Private Consumer	93.6	6.4
Conservationist	73.7	26.3
Investor	92.1	7.9
Amenity Owner	71.4	28.6

Source: Urquhart 2009, n=399

A later survey of 129 woodland owners for woodlands.co.uk showed a similar picture with 73% of respondents being male (Jeremy Leach Research 2011). This same study also found that there were proportionately more women in the 'Nature lovers' and 'Family foresters' than in the 'Creatives' and 'Bush crafters' owner types. See Section 4.3.2 for gender preferences in inheritance of land.

#### 4.6. Charitable, NGO or not-for-profit ownership of the forests

This section is concerned with forests owned by organisations such as conservation and heritage NGOs, self-organised community-based institutions and other philanthropic ("characterized or motivated by philanthropy; benevolent; humane" OED) organisations. The management objective for these forests

is usually to deliver social or environmental aims with maximisation of financial or timber returns as a secondary concern. Most owners are corporate and may invoke at least an element of group or participatory decision-making on management objectives and high ethical standards. It is possible for such ownership to be entirely private. However, the provision of public benefits (e.g. biodiversity, amenity, recreation etc.) which are free for everyone to enjoy or provide benefits to local communities (employment for disadvantaged people etc.) are sometimes recognised in the form of charitable registration. This in turn puts restrictions on the rights of the owners to use profits and to dispose of assets in exchange for tax exemptions and access to charitable funding.

The UK team found examples of seven types of charitable forests listed in Table 15 and described in the following sections.

Table 15: Charitable forest owner types in UK

Forests owned by ...	Yes	No	Uncertain
• Foundations or trusts	X		
• NGO with environmental or social objectives	X		
• Self-organised local community groups	X		
• Co-operatives/forest owner associations	X		
• Social enterprises	X		
• Recognized charitable status for land-owners	X		
• Other forms of charitable ownerships, namely: Church, universities and schools	X		

#### 4.6.1. Foundations or trusts

There are several examples of trusts including the Woodland Trust which owns and manages forest land. The National Trust and its Scottish counterpart own and manage forests and woodland within a complex portfolio of natural and historic heritage resources, and forestry development trusts. Some of these Trusts own significant areas of land – Cahill (2001) lists the National Trust for England and Wales as the third largest landowner in the UK with 222,600 ha of land. There are other trusts which rarely own land but advise on its use. Reforesting Scotland is a trust which advocates more community involvement in woodland creation and restoration. There are also local trusts, many of which have been in existence for some time, but are largely unknown even to the local populace. Gifts of woodland to communities have often been seamlessly absorbed into municipal management. More

recently local trusts have been the vehicle for community woodland initiatives, especially where community leases or acquisitions have been agreed.

A third type of trust is charitable trusts with a specific focus that have a single location and a sub-regional / regional reach (e.g. The Greenwood Centre in Telford). A further type of trust (similar to the Greenwood Centre) but more focussed on environmental enhancement rather than timber use is that created by municipalities to further partnership based woodland management such as the Greensand Trust in Mid Bedfordshire in the East of England region which is an independent environmental charity that works with local communities and landowners to conserve and promote the distinctive landscape, wildlife and history of the Greensand Ridge and the wider surrounding area. Cumbria Woodlands is a further example of trust which supports woodland owners.

#### CASE STUDY 8: THE WOODLAND TRUST: GLENFINGLAS

The Woodland Trust has acquired 80 woods in Scotland covering 8,500 hectares, stretching from the far southwest to the far North of Scotland. Its website notes that its 'woods include nationally and internationally important woodland sites as well as urban and community woodland. Its largest property is Glen Finglas in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park and extends to 4,863 hectares. The Woodland Trust Scotland acquired the estate in 1996 along with neighbouring Milton Glen, the Lendrick Plantation and Bochastle field. According to its website, The Woodland Trust Scotland hopes to restore wood pasture across the estate, creating a mosaic of woodland, scattered trees and open ground. It has sought to significantly reduce the deer population to allow woodland regeneration.

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/learn/estate/glen-finglas/the-great-trossachs-forest/](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/learn/estate/glen-finglas/the-great-trossachs-forest/)

#### 4.6.2. NGOs with environmental or social objectives

Many of these are also trusts such as The National Trust and the Woodland Trust. There are also a number of conservation NGOs such as the RSPB and the Wildlife Trusts which own land, some of which is forested. Some of these NGOs can own significant areas of land and Cahill (2001) lists the RSPB as the 7<sup>th</sup> largest landowner in the UK with 155,400 ha.

There are also many local forestry NGOs such as the Cheshire Landscape Trust with its volunteer tree wardens (<http://cheshirelandscapetrust.org.uk/tree-wardens>) and some of the 'Friends of' groups can also own land. For example, the Friends of the Lake District own and manage three woodlands and manage three other

woodlands (<http://www.fld.org.uk/our-land.html>).

NGOs with primarily social objectives might also find themselves the custodians of woodland most often as part of a property purchased primarily for other purposes.

#### 4.6.3. Self-organised local community groups

There is a growing community woodland movement across the UK. This started in Scotland as an off-shoot of the Land Rights movement and was facilitated by the Land Reform Act. There was also significant public support for the acquisition and collective ownership of land by local communities who are represented and supported at national level by the Community Woodland Association (CWA).

In Wales the community woodland movement has a somewhat different form and is represented by Llais y Goedwig (LlyG). LlyG's work in Wales is less concerned with the acquisition of land than the CWA and is working on facilitating local community access to forest land and co-production of forest policy and instruments with the Welsh Government.

In England the existence of the state-initiated community woodlands (see above) means that much of the activity is centred around the Community Forests and often take the form of 'Friends of...' groups which are more concerned with sharing management activities than owning forest land. There is as yet no grassroots community woodland network to along the lines of the CWA and LlyG for England.

See section 4.7 below for further details and case studies.

#### 4.6.4. Co-operatives / forest owner associations

There are no forest owner associations in the UK, in the sense that they exist in many EU countries. Under the Rural Development Programme England (RDPE) a number of woodland initiatives were established which provide support to small woodland owners, but they are not generally membership organisations. An exception is the Ward Forester scheme developed by Devon County Council which connects owners who are interested in having their woodlands managed, with consultants ('Ward Foresters') who are willing to take on a group of clients and offer their services at a group rate making use of the economies of scale that the situation presents. These initiatives are reviewed in Molteno and Lawrence (2013).

In addition, the body which promotes farm co-operation in Scotland (SAOS) has actively promoted collaborative action by farm woodland owners through a 'machinery ring' to enable more cost-effective management of woodland, with the increased management of small woodlands for biomass the primary intention.

In addition there are a few nascent associations of forest owners which are national in scope e.g. Small Woods Association and the looser Sylva Foundation,

both of which provide services to forest owners and seek to represent their interests. There are also emerging associations of people who have purchased woods through the same agent e.g. the Small Woodland Owners Group (<http://www.swog.org.uk/>) sponsored by Woodland Investment Management Limited trading as [woodlands.co.uk](http://woodlands.co.uk).

In the 1950s there were a few co-operatives of forest owners in a locality e.g. Flintshire Woodlands but these have apparently disbanded though the concept persists through initiatives such as Elwy Working Woods. Other enterprises such as Coed Marros are mechanisms for collective ownership where the co-op owns a single land holding and these are sometimes called 'workers co-operatives'.

There are several legal forms available which can collectively be termed 'co-operatives'. One of these the Industrial and Provident Society (IPS)<sup>18</sup> is proving popular as a mechanism to raise funds for group purchase of woodland which is then used as basis for a social enterprise.

#### 4.6.5. Social enterprises

In the UK the government defines a social enterprise as "a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally reinvested for that purpose in the business or in the community, rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for shareholders and owners" (Department for Business Innovation and Skills 2011). It can take several legal forms and the term describes the purpose of a business not its' legal form nor the type of products or services it produces.

There are a number of forestry social enterprises. This work is summarised in Stewart (2011), who highlights the different ways in which social enterprise has been understood. Swade et al (2013 and 2014) and Lawrence et al (2014) highlight the scarcity in practice of woodland social enterprises, and constraints to developing them. A new paper

<sup>18</sup> An industrial and provident society is an organisation conducting an industry, business or trade, either as a co-operative or for the benefit of the community, and is registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965. <http://www.fca.org.uk/firms/firm-types/mutual-societies/industrial>

proposes two descriptive typologies based on iterative analysis of 33 case studies: one typology identifies five different business models (see section 5.2.3) and one deals with governance and enterprise ethos which finds four different enterprise types (Ambrose-Oji et al. 2015) based on governance and enterprise ethos:

- i. *Social enterprises* which are for social benefit but are not driven by the local community,
- ii. *Community benefit enterprises* which involve the community in governance,
- iii. *Community groups* which involve a specific user group (a community of interest),
- iv. *Community governed concessions* where community owned forest is given over to a third party to manage to maximise profit for community group use.

Testing detailed financial data against the typologies demonstrates the limitations of current definitions of social and community enterprise in the forestry sector. It also identifies three main barriers to enterprise development: start-up costs, woodland and business management skills, bureaucracy. It concludes that policy responses should recognise a broad spectrum of woodland enterprise types rather than social enterprise alone, and support mechanisms enabling communities to find innovative solutions to raise capital, as well as providing the technical and legal advice they require.

#### **4.6.6. Charitable status for land-owners**

Nicholls et al. (2013) provide some insight into the use of charitable status by traditional estates. Between 1963 and 1996 around 6-7% of the estates responding to their survey were owned by a charity but by 2005 this has doubled with 12-14%.

Some landowners have created charitable trusts to manage recreational access to woodlands (e.g. the Glen Tanar Charitable Trust). This may have been motivated by the desire to obtain tax relief on 'heritage assets'.

#### **4.6.7. Church, universities and schools**

These are grouped together because they have similar origins and functions. Most are ancient institutions where the land formed part of the income either directly or as rental income. They are counted as charities because profits are used to support the institution and they have religious or educational purposes which are viewed as social benefits.

The church is a significant landowner which Cahill (2001) lists as the 13<sup>th</sup> largest landowner in the UK owning 54,600 ha. Cahill also noted that much of the medieval glebes (land within an ecclesiastical parish used to support the parish priest) are apparently 'missing' from modern records with no account of who now owns them.

The constituent colleges of older universities (e.g. Oxford, Cambridge etc.) and schools are endowed with extensive lands which include forests.

#### **4.7. Common pool resource regimes**

Commons - forest common pool resource regimes (CPR) are resource regimes where property is shared among users and management rules are derived and operated on self-management, collective actions and self-organisation (of rules and decisions). Examples of traditional CPR regime are pastures, forestland communities in Sweden, Slovakia, Romania, Italy and other European countries and irrigation systems in Africa or Asia. The number of new common property regimes is growing and it is a challenge for this Action to transfer knowledge and skills of traditional CPRs to new CPRs and vice versa. An example of a new (quasi-) CPR regime is the community woodlands in UK, established in last 20 years mainly in Scotland and Wales. Our interest in "traditional" and "new" common pool resources regimes (CPRs) in European forest is based on the understanding that robust resource regimes



are critical for sustainable forest management regardless of the property rights. Ongoing practice shows that local land users may also be CPR regime if they have the rights to determine management rules even though they may not own the land itself. Thus proper rules on management (harvesting, decision making and conflict resolution mechanism, cost/benefit sharing, sanctioning etc.) are key for sustainable use of CPR regimes.

The term 'commons' in England, Scotland and Wales refers to land where use rights, not ownership, is shared. This is a function of feudal land tenure, although current ownership may be present as at Birse (see CASE STUDY 9), historic appropriation of commons which were collectively owned was commonplace. There is no recent tradition of community-led management of woodland owned by municipalities in the UK, although local authorities do own significant but poorly documented areas of land (Britt and Johnston 2008; van der Jagt and Lawrence 2014). Many of the community woodland groups (also described above) could be considered as a UK-specific variation of a broad conceptualisation of commons, where the woodland is owned by a community-owned company.

On UK commons designated local people have prescribed rights to use land which usually belongs to a private (estate) landowner for which they do not pay rents. These commons are traditionally open pasture and much of this is now land of interest to conservation. However, loss of graziers means some commons are reverting to woodland and there may be increasing numbers of 'new' woodlands on commons. The ownership and management rights associated with trees on common land resides with the landowner and not with the commoners who usually only have rights to graze a specified number of animals, a turbarry right to cut peat (and sometimes firewood rights). The conservation interest means that the management objectives of many commons will be the maintenance of open conditions and removal of trees. There has been recent successful facilitation of graziers associations to regulate use and provide a mechanism to include common in agri-environment schemes in Wales (see Brakenbury et al 2012). There are also several papers examining governance of commons – e.g. Short (2008) and Edwards & Steins (1998) for the New Forest.

#### CASE STUDY 9: BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

Birse Community Trust manages nearly 1,000 hectares (2,500 acres) of forests and woodlands on behalf of the community in Birse parish. This includes the Commonly Pinewoods in the Forest of Birse (c.550 ha), Balfour Forest (241 ha), Slewdrum Forest (169 ha), Finzean Community Woods (17 ha) and several small areas such as the Finzean School Wood.

BCT holds ancient rights of Common over three of these forests (Birse Commonly, Balfour and Slewdrum Forests) one in each of the Birse parish's three communities. These are managed to promote the common good of the inhabitants of Birse parish and deliver wider public benefits.

Slewdrum and Balfour Forests, are former Forestry Commission plantations. Initially BCT became involve with these forests through management agreements and an informal partnership with the FC. BCT then played a pioneering role in the development of the Scottish Government's National Forest Land Scheme through which BCT was able to buy each of the forests.

While BCT is managing Slewdrum and Balfour to improve their environmental value as native forests, an important part of BCT management is to ensure that the forests also produce a long term sustainable supply of timber that contributes financially to other activities carried out by BCT on behalf of the local community.

<http://www.birsecommunitytrust.org.uk/Community%20Woodlands/communitywood.html>



## 5. Forest management approaches for new forest owner types

### 5.1. Forest management in the United Kingdom

The public forests are managed by the public forest enterprise sector: in Scotland by Forest Enterprise Scotland, in England by Forest Enterprise England, and in Wales by Natural Resource Wales. The current government intends to reorganise Forest Enterprise England into a private trust but this has now been deferred until the next government. Private commercial forests are usually managed by forest management companies, of which two prominent examples are UPM Tihill and Scottish Woodlands. These are international companies which also manage commercial forests in e.g. Scandinavia.

There are no forest owner associations (see Chapter 6) so other private non-commercial forest owners mainly contract forest agents (known elsewhere in Europe as 'consultants'); very rarely they employ a forester directly (on the larger traditional estates). Small scale woodlands may be managed by the owner him / herself, or more usually, not managed at all – in the sense of making explicit interventions for an explicit purpose.

#### 5.1.1. Management objectives

Lawrence and Dandy (2014) have summarised a review of studies on woodland owner objectives. Conservation, biodiversity and wildlife are the most common and/or primary owner objectives associated with woodlands (e.g. Blackstock et al., 2007; Glynn et al., 2012; Leach et al., 2012; Wavehill Consulting, 2009). Maintaining woodlands as landscape features also rates highly (Church and Ravenscroft, 2008; Glynn et al., 2012; Nicholls and Young, 2005). Other frequently identified objectives include providing shelter for stock or crops (Burgess et al., 1998; Stubbs, 2011; Wavehill Consulting, 2009), a venue for sporting activities such as shooting (Blackstock and Binggeli, 2000; John Clegg and Co. et al., 2002; Nicholls and Young, 2005; Sharpe et al., 2001), and personal amenity and leisure activities (Glynn et al., 2012; Land Use Consultants, 2007; Stubbs, 2011).

Timber production and the provision of public access are consistently low priorities in woodland management. Timber and fuel production was a management priority for only 17% of woodland-owning farmers in the Grampian region of Scotland, 13% of 'wood-lotters' in Kent (a category of new owner), and the principal objective of 5.6% of surveyed woodland owners in Bedfordshire (Burgess et al., 1998; Land Use Consultants, 2007; Stubbs et al., 2010). However, owners of larger areas of woodland are more likely to have timber production as a management objective (Render, 2004), and it is a significant objective for some estate owners (Nicholls and Young, 2005) and larger landowners in Scotland (WEAG, 2012). Although the commercial production of woodfuel is also rated low, many studies report non-commercial fuel production as important (Leach et al., 2012; Secker Walker, 2009). For example, 48% of farmers surveyed across Wales and 61% in the Blackdown Hills reported collecting firewood for their personal use (Greenshields, 2009; Wavehill Consulting, 2009). A recent survey of farm woodland owners in Scotland by Slee et al. (2014) reinforced the value of woodlands for domestic fuel.

These studies do not separate 'old' and 'new' owners, but we can infer that new woodland owners are less likely to prioritise timber production (but possibly not domestic woodfuel), because observation suggests that new owners have smaller areas, and are not estate owners. This conclusion is reinforced by the finding (again in Lawrence and Dandy 2014) that studies find the objectives for woodland creation are broadly similar to those for existing woodland. Wildlife conservation and landscape amenity are again at the top of owners' lists (Bell, 1999; Crabtree et al., 2001; Cunningham, 2009; Glynn et al., 2012). Further reasons include 'future income' generation (Glynn et al., 2012), provision of sporting (shooting) opportunities (Bell, 1999; Ward and Manley, 2002a,b), and provision of shelter (Bell, 1999; Crabtree et al., 2001). Carbon storage is a more recent reason for tree planting (Cunningham, 2009; Glynn et al., 2012).

Reasons for planting woodland also often relate to the objectives of particular grant schemes, which are commonly the focus of studies (see Crabtree & Appleton, 1992). A number of reasons are given for not planting woodland including that the 'land is too good' or 'unsuitable', aesthetic factors, a lack of interest, unfavourable economics, and that forestry operates (and benefits are obtained) over too long a timeframe (e.g. Bell, 1999).

### 5.1.2. Contracts for forest management

Very little has been documented about the contractual basis of forest management arrangements in the UK. From Lawrence and Edwards (2013) we can infer that;

- agents are most commonly contracted to prepare management plans and apply for grants;
- harvesting is the second most common entry point for such contracts
- a few traditional estates employ their own foresters but this is becoming rare
- large commercial forests are usually managed by inter/national forest management companies such as UPM Tihill, or Scottish Woodlands
- small woodlands are often not managed; where they are managed the owner may buy in services from large forest management companies or smaller independent consultants.

Urquhart et al. (2010) suggest that owners often would like to manage their woodland more but there are barriers, such as time and money.

Direct employment of foresters by estates is becoming less common. Environmental NGOs are increasingly finding a niche as providers of woodland management (Lawrence and Edwards 2013); for example:

- Borders Forest Trust which is contracted to manage new native woodland in the Ettrick Valley
- The Soil Association which is contracted to provide training seminars

on woodland management to farmers in Scotland.

- Machinery rings (a form of farmer co-operative which is common in Europe), have also taken on woodland management.

### 5.1.3. New forest ownership types and forest management services

Most new forest owners do not arrange forest management services, and the scarce research on this suggests that new owners, or landowners who create new forests are often confused about where to find advice and management services. Lawrence and Edwards (2013) document examples where the owners have found that the forest management companies are unsuited to their needs. Most farmers rely on private agricultural advisory services, and have found that forest grant advice supplied through them is also sometimes inadequate. Lawrence and Dandy (2014) document problems with advisory services, experienced by a wide range of woodland owners, particularly farmers. For example, Urquhart (2006) found that new owners (the individuals/families) get advice from a range of sources including FC, consultants, contractors, they take courses on management, talk to other owners, read books or search the internet, or seek advice from organisations such as the Smallwoods Association or by spending time in the woodland and seeing what works.

The only type of new owners who could be described as 'organising' is the community woodland groups. As noted in Chapter 4, the majority of these are not owners, but many have management agreements or leaseholds. In both Scotland and Wales, community woodland associations help community woodland groups to share experiences, provide advice to each other and access training. Some of the training on offer is relevant to woodland management, or business management.

See [www.communitywoodlandassociation.org](http://www.communitywoodlandassociation.org) and [www.llaisygoedwig.org.uk](http://www.llaisygoedwig.org.uk).

## 5.2. New or innovative forest management approaches relevant for new forest owner types

### 5.2.1. Overview

Over many parts of the UK, private forests are a residual land use, managed with a light silvicultural touch, where motives such as game management or the preservation of

woodlands as landscape elements are more important than timber production. In some regions, such as South West England, Regional Woodland and Forest Framework, 2005<sup>19</sup> it is suggested that the majority of private woodlands are unmanaged for either environmental or timber purposes, though the term unmanaged tends to mean not under active silvicultural management. This pattern of neglect is likely to be the norm for many small woodlands throughout the UK.

Table 16: Summary of management objectives by new owner type

New owner type	Management objectives	Management services	Source of evidence
1. Existing land owners, especially farmers, who have planted new woodland for multiple reasons	Often unmanaged Conservation, landscape, shelter Sometimes (and perhaps increasingly) woodfuel production Rarely timber production	Agricultural advisors – who know little about woodland management Many seek advice from the Forestry Commission, NGOs and local farmers, but not the standard agricultural advisory services. Sometimes, contracted forest management agents Rarely, environmental NGOs	Lawrence & Edwards, 2013 Lawrence & Dandy, 2014 Sleeet al., 2014
2. Private trusts (holding traditional estates on behalf of the family, sometimes replacing personal / family ownership with a form of corporate ownership)	No separate information		
3. Individuals and companies primarily seeking financial benefit or commercial advantage (e.g. by tax efficient financial services (investment and intergenerational capital transfer, or carbon or biodiversity offsets etc.))	Timber production Grant eligibility High return on capital	National or international forest management companies	Lawrence and Edwards 2013
4. Community woodland groups (in a plethora of legal forms and tenurial arrangements)	Community benefit: recreation, amenity, biodiversity; sometimes timber and woodfuel production, local employment; occasionally public safety is a motivation	Community Woodland Association (Scotland); Llais y Goedwig (Wales) Volunteers (i.e. community woodland group members) More rarely, forestry agents (consultants) or Forest Commission woodland officers	Lawrence and Ambrose-Oji, 2013, 2014 Urquhart 2006

<sup>19</sup> South West England Regional Development Agency (2005), Woodland and Forest Framework for South West England, Forestry Commission and SWRDA.

New owner type	Management objectives	Management services	Source of evidence
5. Individuals (or families) purchasing small woodlands for household use (amenity, recreation, firewood etc.)	Income is a low priority Custodianship, personal enjoyment, experience of woodland management, firewood. Wildlife conservation is also important.	98% were found to have received advice in the most detailed study (Leach et al, 2012) Sources include Forestry Commission, consultants and contractors as well as own knowledge	Leach et al. 2012 Urquhart 2006 Urquhart et al. 2011
6. New woodlanders - individuals or groups acquiring woodlands as a basis for their livelihood	Will depend on what woodland is being managed for – e.g. wood fuel, wood products, recreational access such as walking, cycling, camping, bush craft, paintballing, quad biking.	Contractors, own staff, themselves	
7. Environmental NGOs (usually in the form of charitable institutions with a focus on biodiversity or heritage conservation)	Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and landscape, public access and education	Internal (e.g. Borders Forest Trust, Woodland Trust, John Muir Trust), volunteers	Unpublished; personal knowledge of the organisations concerned
8. Devolved national governments	Multi-objective management of national / public forest estate including recreation and biodiversity Fulfilment of commitments to timber industry	Internal (Forest Enterprise Scotland, Forest Enterprise England, Natural Resources Wales, Northern Ireland Forest Services	Publicly available information (websites of the agencies concerned)
9. Local government	Much is neglected, or seen as a liability and managed to minimise risk	Internal; specific tasks such as pruning or felling may be contracted in	Britt and Johnston 2008; Swade et al 2013; van der Jagt and Lawrence, 2014

### 5.2.2. New silvicultural or technical approaches

The following is based on current knowledge of the situation rather than literature, which is almost non-existent.

#### *Continuous cover forestry (CCF) / low impact silvicultural systems (LISS)*

Currently policy drivers in England, Scotland and Wales aim to diversify forest structure. Private owners (particularly traditional estate owners) and enthusiasts in the Forestry Commission have for several decades experimented with CCF on land which they manage. Whilst there is an extensive scientific literature on this, and possibly 10% of public forests (managed by FE England, FE Scotland or Natural Resources Wales) are using this approach<sup>20</sup>, we can identify no literature on the adoption of CCF. Experience suggests that among the new owner types, community groups are particularly interested.

#### *Diversification of species choice*

Again this is encouraged by current policy drivers in England, Scotland and Wales. Environmental NGOs and community woodland groups are particularly focused on expanding native woodland; individual small owners are also enthusiastic about native species and often plant a wider range of native and exotic species for food production and ornamental purposes.

#### *Short rotation forestry (SRF)*

This has been supported by government incentives within the last decade, but markets have not yet proven reliable and trial areas are sometimes being 'harvested to waste' (i.e. written off as a loss). As a result this approach is not currently popular with farmers. The recent Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme may revitalise this type of management for fuelwood.

<sup>20</sup> [www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-63CCQB](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-63CCQB)

### ***Coppicing as both retro-innovation and return to traditional modes of broadleaved woodland management***

This approach is particularly popular among environmental NGOs (e.g. RSPB, Butterfly Conservation, Wildlife Trusts), community woodland groups and new individual (family) owners. There is a lot of interest in SE England (see CASE STUDY 13) to bring coppice woodland back into management, particularly to produce firewood for own use.

A recent survey by Reforesting Scotland found that in Scotland:

- 16 people make most or part of their living from coppicing
- a further 19 people coppice as a hobby
- 25 people grow coppice materials for coppicing, in the order hazel, willow and other species
- 31 people make products out of coppice materials
- 85% of the people surveyed would like to network with other coppicers

(Radical Rowan, June 2014, published by Reforesting Scotland)

The main species that are coppiced in the UK are sweet chestnut, hazel and hornbeam, as well as willow and (in Scotland, Wales, and western England) oak as a source of tan bark. Chestnut coppicing has traditionally been popular in the South East of England, particular Kent and Sussex which has around

60% of the UK's chestnut coppice<sup>21</sup> (see CASE STUDY 13). Kent is one of the few areas where coppicing is still done commercially with coppiced chestnut being used for fencing. Hazel, often coppiced in the Midlands and Devon, has traditionally been used for thatching, hurdles, walking sticks, bean poles, and wattle (walls of traditional houses). Hornbeam coppice was used for charcoal making.

Some woodland owners carry out coppicing works themselves and there is an increasing number of courses and information available for training in coppicing and other traditional modes of management. Alternatively, owners will hire the services of a professional coppice worker. Coppicing used to be a traditional activity that often passed on from father to son and cutters would often have in-depth knowledge about particular woodlands, but is now learnt through courses.

### ***Agroforestry***

There is currently an active renewal of interest in agroforestry systems; to date this is expressed more among an interest group and researchers (for example, the on-line Farm Woodland Forum) than among landowners themselves. Forthcoming changes to the Common Agricultural Policy, and hence to the Rural Development Programmes, will make this more feasible, and potentially more attractive to farmers.

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<sup>21</sup> [www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/the-importance-of-coppice-workers-a-family-tradition-worth-supporting](http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/practical-guides/the-importance-of-coppice-workers-a-family-tradition-worth-supporting)



Table 17: Summary of silvicultural approaches by new owner type

New owner type	New silvicultural approaches	Source of evidence
1. Existing land owners, especially farmers, who have planted new woodland for multiple reasons	New interest in managing for woodfuel	Molteno and Lawrence 2013
2. Private trusts (holding traditional estates on behalf of the family)	No separate evidence	
3. Individuals and companies primarily seeking financial benefit or commercial advantage (e.g. by tax efficient financial services (investment and intergenerational capital transfer, or carbon or biodiversity offsets etc.))	Potential interest in alternative conifer species	Current research, unpublished data (contact Anna Lawrence)
4. Community woodland groups (in a plethora of legal forms and tenurial arrangements)	Increased cultivation of native tree species To a lesser degree: CCF / LISS Coppicing	Current research, unpublished data (contact Anna Lawrence) Hughes 2012 Community Woodland Association 2012
5. Individuals (or families) purchasing small woodlands for household use (amenity, recreation, firewood etc.)	Coppicing	Urquhart 2006
6. New woodlanders - individuals or groups acquiring woodlands as a (part) basis for their livelihood	Increased cultivation of native tree species To a lesser degree: CCF / LISS Coppicing	Hughes 2012
7. Environmental NGOs (usually in the form of charitable institutions with a focus on biodiversity or heritage conservation)	Increased cultivation of native tree species To a lesser degree: CCF / LISS Coppicing	Observation, unpublished data
8. Devolved national governments	Cultivation of alternative conifers LISS Restoration of PAWS (plantations on ancient woodland sites)	Published policy documents and delivery plans
9. Local government	Very little management or innovation except where managed by community groups	Swade et al 2013; van der Jagt and Lawrence, 2014

### 5.2.3. Innovative business models

In this discussion, we consider business models as not just the operation of a forest-based commercial enterprise but also the organisation of forest ownership and forest-related supply chains. There is considerable innovation of business models in many of the new forest owner types as shown in Table 18. Widespread discourses assume that community woodlands are social enterprises, but recent work highlights the multiple understandings and applications of this term (Ambrose-Oji et al. 2015, Stewart 2011). Recent work finds five different business

models and four different enterprise types. Most are heavily reliant on grants and local government contracts. Barriers to enterprise development are start-up costs, lack of woodland and business management skills, and bureaucracy. Ambrose-Oji et al. (2015) conclude that policy responses should recognise a broad spectrum of woodland enterprise types rather than social enterprise alone, and support mechanism which enable communities to find innovative solutions to raising capital, as well as providing the technical and legal advice they require.

Table 18: Summary of innovative business models by new owner type

New owner type	New business models	Source of evidence
1. Existing land owners, especially farmers, who have planted new woodland for multiple reasons	Open invitation to lease farmland or sporting land for afforestation to FC Scotland	<a href="http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/grants-and-regulations/land-leasing">http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/grants-and-regulations/land-leasing</a>
	Co-operation between neighbouring farmers to develop farm woodlands	E.g. Pont Bren ( <a href="http://www.assemblywales.org/en/business-home/committees/sustainable-land-management/Pages/pontbren-farmers.aspx">www.assemblywales.org/en/business-home/committees/sustainable-land-management/Pages/pontbren-farmers.aspx</a> )
2. Private trusts (holding traditional estates on behalf of the family)	Increasing use of 'interest in possession' trusts by large scale family owners	Nicholls et al. 2013
3. Individuals and companies primarily seeking financial benefit or commercial advantage (e.g. by tax efficient financial services (investment and intergenerational capital transfer, or carbon or biodiversity offsets etc.))	Corporate social responsibility in peri-urban or other forests	<a href="http://www.cf-trust.org/corporate.htm">www.cf-trust.org/corporate.htm</a>
	Carbon offsets (certified under UK Woodland Carbon Code)	E.g. Cwm Fagor – woodland creation by Thorlux lighting company ( <a href="http://www.assemblywales.org/en/business-home/committees/sustainable-land-management/Pages/cwm-fagor.aspx">http://www.assemblywales.org/en/business-home/committees/sustainable-land-management/Pages/cwm-fagor.aspx</a> )
4. Community woodland groups (in a plethora of legal forms and tenurial arrangements)	Enterprise	Stewart 2011
	Social enterprise	Ambrose-Oji et al. 2015
	Various leasehold arrangements with public and private woodland owners	
	Woodlands as part of community-led green energy initiatives	<a href="http://www.thegreenvalleys.org/">http://www.thegreenvalleys.org/</a> (a CIC)
4. Community woodland groups (in a plethora of legal forms and tenurial arrangements)	Woodlands as part of community owned farms (co-operatives often in form of IPS)	Examples from Wales: Moelyci ( <a href="http://www.moelyci.org.uk">www.moelyci.org.uk</a> ) Felin Uchaf ( <a href="http://www.felinuchaf.org/1/about.htm">www.felinuchaf.org/1/about.htm</a> )
	Woodlotting (rental of small plots of forest by private owners)	<a href="http://www.scottishwoodlotassociation.co.uk">www.scottishwoodlotassociation.co.uk</a>
6. New woodlanders - individuals or groups acquiring woodlands as a basis for (part)of their livelihood	Small woodland based enterprises	Observation Documented examples e.g. <a href="http://www.wildernesswood.org">www.wildernesswood.org</a>
	Joint ownership by self-organised (small) groups of people who pool finances to purchase woodland for timber and income (using a range of legal forms)	Observation E.g. Coed Marros (Petty et al. undated)
	Woodland crofts (Scotland)	<a href="http://woodlandcrofts.org.cp-27.webhostbox.net/?page_id=4">http://woodlandcrofts.org.cp-27.webhostbox.net/?page_id=4</a>
7. Environmental NGOs (usually in the form of charitable institutions with a focus on biodiversity or heritage conservation)	Leases to people/groups local to specific woodlands (Woodland Trust) Corporate partnerships (Woodland Trust) Corporate Social Responsibility bonds	<a href="http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100032545/corporate-partnerships-opportunities-1013.pdf?cb=e143ac8a387a4ec3b954ae8535330e25">www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/mediafile/100032545/corporate-partnerships-opportunities-1013.pdf?cb=e143ac8a387a4ec3b954ae8535330e25</a> <a href="http://www.cf-trust.org/corporate_g.htm">www.cf-trust.org/corporate_g.htm</a>
8. Devolved national governments	Woodlands and You (Wales) facility for management agreements and leases on public forest Management agreements and partnerships with communities in Scotland	<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infid-8ywcf6">www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infid-8ywcf6</a>

New owner type	New business models	Source of evidence
9. Local government	New leasing arrangements with Forestry Commission New leasing arrangements and management agreements with community groups	Examples are described in Ambrose-Oji et al 2013 (WIAT evaluation); van der Jagt and Lawrence 2014
	Partnerships with business in peri-urban forests (as corporate social responsibility)	E.g. Mersey Forest & United Utilities (www.merseyforest.org.uk/work-with-us/partnerships-with-businesses/ )

On a slightly different interpretation of business model we might note the increasing interest in triple bottom line accounting for corporate social responsibility. United Utilities which owns a considerable forest estate inherited from Victorian planting in the catchment of water supply reservoirs uses the government-led (Cabinet Office) methodology 'social return on investment' for its social accounts<sup>22</sup>. Some of United Utilities corporate social responsibility took the form of a £250,000 community fund administered by the Mersey Forest to enhance green infrastructure and tree planting in a community impacted by water pipeline construction<sup>23</sup>. The Mersey Forest now offers corporate investors the opportunity to buy fixed term CSR bonds<sup>24</sup> though they do not report on the level of uptake of this opportunity.

In Scotland, the body which promotes agricultural co-operation (SAOS) has been active in establishing pooled management of small woodlands under the aegis of machinery rings, which are long-established mechanisms to pool machinery for use on farming enterprises. The large number of under-managed small woodlands (many planted since the introduction of farm woodland grants in the 1980s) now require management. Expanding wood energy markets create a potential market, but individual owners lack the knowledge, the business networks and the technology to exploit the opportunity. This has created space for machinery rings to deliver woodland management services.

The Crown Estate takes a different approach and uses an accounting technique called 'Total contribution' to value the contribution of

Crown Estates to the UK (Crown Estate 2013). This is a self-proclaimed innovative approach to extend the 'triple bottom line' of economic, social and environmental values to include indirect impacts through the supply chain and from activities which take place on the estate (NEF Consulting 2013).

Carbon accounts and off-sets are another way in which the investment and return from forestry can be accounted for in terms other than money. Carbon trading as an incentive for forest investment is provided for in the Woodland Carbon Code<sup>25</sup> administered by the Forestry Commission and set up in 2009. To date this has been most attractive to corporate investors e.g. Thorlux Lighting who purchased and planted 80 ha of new woodland under the Carbon Code to offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from making and operating its line of low energy lighting fittings<sup>26</sup>.

In sum, the main new business models are:

- New forms of collective organisation to purchase woodlands or acquire management rights over woodland, often for multiple use
- New forms of collaboration e.g. Machinery Rings and partnership working
- New forms of accounting which embrace environmental; and non-market values

### 5.3. Main opportunities for innovative forest management

#### 5.3.1. Adaptation

Current drivers for change in forest management include:

<sup>22</sup> <http://corporateresponsibility2013.unitedutilities.com/Assessingoursocialimpact.aspx>

<sup>23</sup> <http://corporateresponsibility2013.unitedutilities.com/pipingincommunityinvestmentinthelens.aspx>

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.cf-trust.org/corporate\\_g.htm](http://www.cf-trust.org/corporate_g.htm)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/carboncode>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8UHHEK>

- perceptions of climate change
- fears and experiences of tree health crises
- changing expectations of social and cultural benefits from forests
- new modes of community engagement
- demand for woodfuel.

All of these drivers point towards two main areas of innovation:

- diversification of forest structure
- diversification of species choice.

These trends are combined with a strong and vocal timber processing sector which is concerned about forecast declines in timber production. These concerns are likely to be aggravated in view of the trends towards more diverse forests.

There is little published evidence for these changes and motivations – the situation is summarised in the previous section. The only published evidence on woodland owners' attitudes to adaptation in the UK, is based on interviews with forest managers in North Wales, and indicates a widespread reluctance to change current practice, and / or a trust in nature to do the adapting (Lawrence and Molteno, 2013).

### **5.3.2. Changing woodland ownership**

Community woodland groups, private individuals and environmental NGOs are all showing interest in increasing the proportion of native species in woodland, and in some cases increasing the management intensity through, for example, coppicing. As these forms of ownership are all increasing (albeit slowly) they bring the possibility of a gradual shift in woodland management approaches.

### **5.3.3. Growing woodfuel markets**

Woodfuel prices have more than doubled in the last five years, and markets for woodchips

and pellets are also growing, making it now economically viable for farmers and others with small woodlands to increase management intervention and remove firewood. While this does not lead to particularly novel modes of silviculture, it could lead to increase in coppicing of suitable species e.g. oak, sycamore etc. Optimal sized logs for firewood are smaller than for timber which will over time lead to shorter rotations. Also we may see an increase in sour felling (ring barking trees so they die standing and dry before felling) etc.

### **5.3.4. Public expectations of multiple ecosystem services**

In general, awareness of and appreciation for the recreational and environmental benefits of forests has influenced forest management in the UK for some time but has gained prominence in recent years.

Public expectations for more diverse forests have risen sharply and challenge the prevailing industrial monoculture plantations. Change in the composition of forests is necessarily slow but there are some signs that diversification of species choice and silvicultural system is accompanying this change. However, other drivers related to climate change and tree health problems are stronger, and make it difficult to separate out these effects.

## **5.4. Obstacles for innovative forest management approaches**

### **5.4.1. Lack of evidence**

No research has been conducted in this area, to our knowledge. Current research is focusing on constraints to adaptive forest management, and to use of a wider range of productive conifer species (unpublished data, Forest Research).

Table 19: Summary of opportunities and obstacles to innovation, by new owner type

New owner type	Opportunities	Obstacles to innovation	Source of evidence
1. Existing land owners, especially farmers, who have planted new woodland for multiple reasons	New policy openings including agroforestry incentives New markets for firewood	Culture split between farming and forestry	WEAG 2012; Lawrence and Dandy 2014 [in turn summarising many others] Slee et al. 2014
2. Private trusts (holding traditional estates on behalf of the family)	Some are 'hobby owners' who want to make a mark by restoring landscape and are potentially some of the most innovative	Possibly, absenteeism	Lawrence and Edwards 2013
3. Individuals and companies primarily seeking financial benefit or commercial advantage (e.g. by tax efficient financial services (investment and intergenerational capital transfer, or carbon or biodiversity offsets etc.))	Some forest management agents feel more able to experiment with less familiar species because they are not constrained by the bureaucracy of public forestry	Some resistance to innovation with silviculture Sitka spruce is widely known as a very reliable and profitable species. Climate change is perceived as unlikely to affect Sitka spruce production at least for another rotation.	Lawrence and Marzano (2013)  Lawrence and Edwards (2013)
4. Community woodland groups (in a plethora of legal forms and tenurial arrangements)	New forest management objectives, particularly supporting increased native tree species and diversification of stand structure	(Sometimes) lack of forest management knowledge  Lack of resources (time and money)	Current research  Urquhart 2006
5. Individuals (or families) purchasing small woodlands for household use (amenity, recreation, firewood etc.)	New forest management objectives, particularly supporting increased native tree species and diversification of stand structure	(Sometimes) lack of forest management knowledge  Lack of resources (time and money)	Unpublished data  Urquhart 2006
6. New woodlanders - individuals or groups acquiring woodlands as a basis for (part) of their livelihood	Diversification of woodland products	Strict planning controls on new buildings and structures in woodlands	
7. Environmental NGOs (usually in the form of charitable institutions with a focus on biodiversity or heritage conservation)	Demand for restoration of native woodland on sites of conifer plantation	Objectives seldom focus on productive forestry	Unpublished data
8. Devolved national governments	Considerable flexibility within forest districts Move from economic imperative to multi-purpose forest management Large scale felling of larch as a result of <i>Phytophthora</i> infection	Commitment to produce timber volume for industry	Current research
9. Local government		Perception of woodland as liability	Van der Jagt and Lawrence, 2014



**CASE STUDY 10: ARBUTHNOTT WOOD PELLETS, ARBUTHNOTT, KINCARDINESHIRE**

*Arbuthnott Wood Pellets (AWP)* is a family company located on the Arbuthnott estate in Kincardineshire just south of Aberdeen in north-east Scotland. The Arbuthnott estate comprises about 800 hectares of mixed farming, forestry and sporting (commercial shooting) estate with diversification into tourism in the North East of Scotland. AWP was established in 2007 independently of the other estate enterprises.

The AWP director decided to implement a wood fuel plant in order to add value to the timber growing in the estate. This implied a management change to sustainable forest management since 100% of the virgin wood is sourced from sustainable managed conifers (mainly pine, spruce and larch). The raw material for the woodpellets is sourced from woodlands on the estate, and from off-cuts from a nearby sawmill. The key innovation is finding the right raw material for making the pellets, i.e. to choose the right type of trees and then transforming the product to make the right sort of fibre (without bark). There have been continuous attempts to reduce the variability in this regard.

The director picked up the idea while serving on the board of the Scottish Rural Property and Business Association. Although most woodfuel businesses in Scotland were producing woodchips, the AWP director decided to produce woodpellets because he recognised they were more easily handled for domestic use. The main objective was production for woodfuel, but once he found out that a nearby distributor was selling pellets for the horse bedding market, he decided to start producing and supplying pellets for this market. This “spontaneous innovation” was discovered by chance later on in the process. The wood pellets are sold to domestic and commercial woodfuel markets *via* wholesalers. According to the AWP director, the Forestry Commission and the Biomass Development Officer have been very helpful promoting the enterprise outside and inside the council. They are the core actors in the public sector.

The development of the UK woodfuel market started in 1999 with the assistance of an EU funded project named “Introducing Wood Pellet Fuel to the UK”. The project supported the establishment of wood pellets manufactures and the promotion of the installation of first wood pellet-fired appliances. A report on the demand and usage of woodfuel in Scotland shows an increase of approximately a 312% increase in woodfuel usage between 2005 and 2010 (FCS, 2011). According to this same report large-scale plants are the biggest users of wood fuel, but the fastest growing sector is small to medium scale heat use. Barriers to the uptake of woodfuel heating systems are the high capital investment needed to install wood pellet boilers. The success of the business is also threatened by big competitors (e.g. Balcas; electricity competitors), product lower margins and the reliance on a single supplier of sawmill chips.

*Forestry Commission Scotland (2011). Woodfuel. Demand and usage in Scotland. Hudson Consulting.*

**CASE STUDY 11: DIVERSIFICATION OF SILVICULTURAL SYSTEM THROUGH OPPORTUNISTIC EXPERIMENTATION, THETFORD FOREST, ENGLAND**

Thetford Forest is a part of the public forest estate managed by Forest Enterprise England. Until recently 90% of the forest consisted of Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra*) with some Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) but following a serious outbreak of Dothistroma Needle Blight which has infected every stand in the forest, the forest managers have been looking for alternative species. In doing so, opportunities have presented themselves for experimentation. Technical advice to heavily thin younger Corsican pine (at 17 years instead of 30 years) led to a new environment with space on the forest floor, and dappled shade. On a whim, one of the forest management team underplanted the now widely spaced Corsican pine with a few hundred surplus seedlings of Douglas fir, Serbian spruce, European silver fir and Cryptomeria. Three years later, survival, condition and growth of the seedlings greatly exceeds plantings of the same age in open (restock) sites. These shade tolerant species are performing much better in a different silvicultural system, and the Forest District is considering permanent conversion to continuous cover forestry using these so-called “alternative species”. The site is constrained by designations which require clearfelling, in order to maintain habitat for nightjars and wood lark, but the opportunities provided by major disease outbreak, and the need to find suitable silvicultural systems for alternative species, challenge these regulations. The sites have been visited by foresters from both the public and private sector, and land managers from other government departments. Policy is changing as a result of innovative practice, rather than what is usually assumed to happen – practice following policy.

*Source: Lawrence, A. (2015). "Real life experiments." Chartered Forester April 2015: 26-28.*

**CASE STUDY 12: WEEKEND WOODLAND OWNERS IN SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND**

Weekend (or absentee) new woodland owners in South-East England often live in an urban area (e.g. London) and purchase woodland as their own private piece of the countryside. These owners may link their desire for owning woodland to their childhood experience of woodlands and may have purchased their own woodland for weekend visits with the family for picnics and camping. It provides a contrast from city life and enables them to 'get close to nature' and instils a 'warm glow' of owning woodland.

In general, absentee new woodland owners have smaller woodland holdings than resident new woodland owners. They often purchase their woodland through land agents, where larger plots are divided into smaller plots and sold to separate purchasers. Current prices for woodland in South-East England are between £17,000-£28,000 per hectare for plots of 12-22 ha ([www.woodlands.co.uk](http://www.woodlands.co.uk)). However, small plots of 4-5 ha are not unusual for absentee owners. The absentee new woodland owner may have chosen woodland, as opposed to other types of land, since it presents less work to maintain than agricultural land.

Absentee owners carry out very little woodland management, but when they do they usually use a contractor. They are less concerned than resident owners about having a productive wood, even for their own consumption (as the distance to transport wood logs is not feasible). They may carry out light tasks themselves but their time is limited as they live and work some distance from their woodland. Their motivations for management are for personal enjoyment (both to improve the woodlands for their own amenity and they enjoy carrying out light maintenance tasks themselves), wildlife conservation and to improve the health of the woodland. Some may also anticipate a financial return from the timber value of their woodland in the future, although this is generally not their primary motivation, but a welcome bonus. As their main motivation for ownership is privacy and personal amenity they are generally not in favour of public access as this would have a negative impact on their perceived 'private place' in the countryside.

An example described in Urquhart 2006 is a new woodland owner who lived in London and bought his woodland to have somewhere to go with his children in the countryside at weekends. They would visit the woodlands perhaps twice a month. However, after he moved out of London to a small village near to his woodland he does not visit the woodland as much, commenting that the need to go there has diminished since there is now plenty of countryside and woods right on his doorstep.

*Summarised from Urquhart 2006; Urquhart et al 2010*

**CASE STUDY 13: MERROW DOWNS COPPICE WORKER**

Rob Stringer who trained at Merrist Wood College (a Further and Higher Education establishment offering course in arboriculture and forestry) and has been working restoring woodland for the last four years in Surrey. He and a colleague are working in a woodland Merrow Downs which has been abandoned since the Second World War and are densely packed with old, poor quality wood, that until recently has not been worth touching. Using a grant from Leader to purchase a trailer and winch he is now producing and marketing coppice wood products from the woodland. This includes charcoal, plant support wigwams, beanpoles and pea sticks, hazel hurdles, stakes and binders for hedgelaying, thumb sticks, chestnut post and rail fencing and logs for fuel. Rob also offers a coppicing, coppice restoration, woodland management and hedge-laying service.

<http://www.swog.org.uk/news/grant-funding-helps-coppice-workers/>

## 6. Policies influencing ownership development / Policy instruments for new forest owners

Policy and ownership are related in various ways. Firstly, policies directly or indirectly influence ownership development or even encourage or create new forms of ownership. Secondly, policy instruments are emerging in response to ownership changes, including instruments addressed to support new types of owners e.g. through advisory services, cooperative or joint forest management, etc.

### 6.1. Influences of policies on the development of forest ownership

#### 6.1.1. Nationalisation

Forest policy has been a key driver for change in forest ownership in the UK over the past 100 years. As a result of the Forest Act of 1919, the Forestry Commission came into force in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland with the remit to develop and maintain a strategic timber reserve for Britain. This involved extensive afforestation programmes on state-purchased or leased land alongside the provision of grants and tax incentives to encourage private landowners to plant woodland. Much of the new planting was fast growing conifer plantations. The state purchased low value land from private estate owners by offering them relatively high prices as an incentive to sell. This resulted in significant displacement of tenant farmers and long-lasting resentment of 'the forestry' (Spence 2013; Linnard 2000).

The 1950s to 1970s saw rapid industrialisation and mechanisation of forestry, with grants, tax concessions and technical support provided to encourage new planting and growth of the timber industry. Private landowners were given financial incentives to convert their land to forest under the Dedication Scheme (which became the Forestry Grant Scheme in 1981).

Taxation of land and forests is a complex issue in the UK with debates about the use of taxation as a forestry incentive dating back to 1909 with the latest rules set out in 1988. There are two basic forms of taxation relief for forestry: relief on forestry investment which

was intended as an incentive for new private forestry to complement the expansion of state forest; and inheritance tax relief on forests which mirrors taxation arrangements on agricultural land and serves to perpetuate long-term family based forest ownership. Prior to 1988, exemption from income tax on commercial forests led to top rate tax payers investing in commercial forests as a way of offsetting other income against expenditure on forestry. Thus, in 1988 significant changes were made which included the cessation of income tax relief for investments in commercial woodland and the introduction of new rules on the inheritance tax relief on forestland (Hansard HC 1988). At the time the reduction in investment relief had a significant impact on the market for private commercial forests as it became a less attractive option for investment trusts. Rates of planting fell dramatically in the 1990s.

#### 6.1.2. Devolution

The UK is made up of the union of what were historically four separate states and is presently in the process of devolving powers from Westminster to Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff. Northern Ireland obtained Home Rule in 1921 which explains why it has a Forest Service with no formal links to the Forestry Commission. Devolution in Scotland and Wales commenced following wins for 'yes' in referendums in 1998. At the time the state was the single largest forest owner in Britain. In 2003 along with a suite of powers, state forest land was devolved along with FC staff who become answerable to their respective governments.

Since 2005 Forest policy in the UK is devolved such that there are independent policies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. All four policies set objectives for forestry that apply equally to state and private forests.

#### 6.1.3. Privatisation

Before 1980 the state acquired and did not sell any capital assets (buildings or land). Following a review of forest policy in 1980 the

government decided that the FC should sell a proportion of the public estate to meet government objectives to expand the private forestry sector and reduce the cost to the exchequer (Ministry of Finance) of maintaining the forest estate. Since powers to effect disposals had not been included in the 1967 Forestry Act the Act was revised (Forestry Act 1981). This provided forestry Ministers with “the powers to dispose, for any purpose, of land acquired for purposes connected with forestry”. The proposals for large scale sales for any purpose proved unpopular and after a civil protest a curb of sales of not more than 15% of the total area could be sold in any 4 year accounting period. Subsequent sales in the 1980s and early 1990s amounted to 18,000 ha of state-owned forest land in Wales (Spence 2013) and 73,000 ha of land and forests in Scotland<sup>27</sup>. There was considerable public disquiet about this erosion of the forest estate and a further proposal to sell a large portion of the estate in 1993 was met with protests from many conservation groups. In 1994, the government backed down and announced that the FC woodland would remain in the public sector. In 1997 the 1981 policy was rescinded and replaced with two directions which stated that:

*"The Commission may only sell agricultural land, land associated with houses and other buildings, unplanted land and relatively small and isolated blocks of forest land which do not make a significant contribution to its objectives and which are surplus to its requirements."*

*"The Commission may also sell areas for development where this is in the public interest. Areas of forest land which are important for public access will not be sold unless an access agreement is in place."<sup>28</sup>*

In 2009 the Scottish Government proposed to lease the most productive 25% of the public forest estate to private companies. This was intended to be a contribution to the Scottish Government target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. The money raised by selling the 75 year leases was to be used to fund tree planting to sequester

carbon. A public protest citing the damage this proposal would have on public access, wildlife and the integrity of the estate provoked a retraction of this proposal<sup>29</sup> (see also Buttoud et al. 2010)

In 2011 the government proposed to sell off at least 15% of England's public forest estate, raising around £100 million for the Treasury. However, as a result of significant public outcry and the recommendations from the Independent Panel on Forestry (set up following mass criticism of the public consultation on the sell-off) the decision was rescinded and a new public body is to be established to hold the nation's forests in trust.

Each country region inherited a land disposal policy from the FC. These allow the sale of land considered of low public benefit on the open market with the proceeds retained in a special fund to be used to purchase or lease land for afforestation in locations where new woodland could deliver high public benefits. This is a formal 'Re-positioning programme' in Scotland (Table 10) but is less active in Wales and England.

Forestry Commission Scotland land leasing scheme is intended to facilitate planting on third party land. The leases are for bare land and for a period of ten years after which the young forest and land is returned to the owners. The planting can be done either by FCS in which case no rental is paid to the landowner or by agents, estates or landowners with the capacity to undertake afforestation when the costs will be paid in full by Forestry Commission Scotland. Interestingly the woodland created should be primarily for timber production (rather than amenity as for Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT)) and have a plantable area of not less than 30 ha and on land that is part of an on-going farm business<sup>30</sup>.

Changes to legislation resulting from the Public Bodies Act (2011) in England mean that leases of the forest estate can now be made to third parties. The 'Woodlands and You' programme in Wales is an instrument designed to facilitate uptake of this new opportunity. Proposed changes to the RDP

<sup>27</sup> <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/managing/work-on-scotlands-national-forest-estate/land-and-building-management/re-positioning-programme>

<sup>28</sup> [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written\\_answers/2000/jul/10/forestry-commission#column\\_387w](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/2000/jul/10/forestry-commission#column_387w)

<sup>29</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/south\\_of\\_scotland/7941645.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/south_of_scotland/7941645.stm)

<sup>30</sup> <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/grants-and-regulations/land-leasing>

may allow funding to be used by third parties working in state forests and could also facilitate a change in the types of activities and actors who could establish activities and enterprises in state forests.

#### 6.1.4. Inheritance rights

The main policy instrument which influences the inheritance of forest land in the UK is inheritance tax relief (see below). Moxey (2008) points out that the use of fiscal instruments is “to encourage establishment and retention of an appropriate stock of forestry capital in the face of perceived market imperfections and failures, including comparability with agriculture.” The inheritance tax relief portion of this is part of levelling the playing field with agriculture so both are treated as heritable business assets. This has two consequences: first it facilitates the retention of forests by land owning families which provides for long term continuity and integrity for established estates and second, and perhaps perversely, it acts as an incentive for purchase of forest land as a means of transferring capital between generations without incurring inheritance tax. According to UPM Tilhill & Savills (2013) inheritance tax relief has been and remains a significant incentive for woodland ownership. These owners often do not interfere with the actual management practices or plans in the forest so continuity is ensured by the agents employed by the owners. There are a number of these and all adhere to the UKWAS standard even if the forests are not certified.

There are three types of inheritance tax (IHT) relief that may apply to woodland/forest holdings. These are: deferral relief for the standard investment holding, agricultural property relief (APR) and business property relief (BPR).

Deferral relief is the least attractive, as it merely defers the tax obligation, rather than removing it. Deferral relief operates by delaying the obligation to pay inheritance tax until the timber is felled or sold. At this point, the proceeds of the sale are taxed at the rate of 40%.

For woodland to qualify for APR it must be registered as an agricultural property in accordance with the Inheritance Tax Act 1984 (IHTA 1984) or be owned as an ancillary to

farmland. Woodland used for production of timber or when new planting has occurred on previously agricultural land cannot be considered as agricultural land. However, woodland used as game coverts and coppiced woodland used for farm timber qualify as they are ancillary to the farmland. Qualifying woodlands receive 100% IHT relief.

In order to qualify for BPR the woodlands must be managed commercially as part of a business or as advised by UPM Tilhill (2013): “The fundamental criteria for commercial woodlands is that they should be in the UK, or EEA, and ‘managed on a commercial basis and with a view to the realisation of profits.’” These profits can be derived from commercial timber production, as well as other business activities such as tourism (holiday cabins), shooting, coppicing, fishing ponds in woodland, firewood, nature trails, paintballing etc. The value of commercial woodlands, including both the land and the trees, comes under Business Property Relief at 100% once it has been owned for at least two years immediately preceding a transfer (which can be made as a gift before death though the giftee has to then continue to own the property for seven years after the date of the gift) or between spouses, so there would be no inheritance tax liability (IHTA 1984 s. 104-106 and 115). There is also a special provision for the deferment of tax on the value of growing timber until it is sold (the ‘Woodland Relief’) which does not qualify for any other inheritance tax relief (IHTA 1984 s. 125-130).

In addition, woodlands of outstanding scenic, historic or scientific interest may qualify for Heritage Relief.

#### 6.1.5. Community forest policies

In the UK there are two quite different models of community forestry. The first, such as the National Forest and Community Forests policy in England (discussed in section 4.4.4.), represents top down community forestry where community forests are designated over large tracts of mixed use peri-urban land, seeking to increase forest cover, access and manage existing woodland and promote forestry on derelict or lightly managed land. Under the National Forest



policy, a new form of owner, the National Forest Company was established to lead the initiative. The focus of funding is for the creation of woodland through tree planting and the creation of wildlife habitats (e.g. The Changing Landscapes Scheme, Firewoods Scheme, Programme Development Fund, Parkland and Wood Pasture Scheme) and, therefore, impacts on the management behaviour of existing woodland owners, but also encourages other landowners to plant woodland. In both the National Forest and Community forests the dominant type of ownership is by private landowners but also includes local authorities, schools, hospitals, Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust, businesses, golf courses, private estates, farmers and community groups. Similar initiatives were established in Northern Ireland (Forest of Belfast scheme in 1992), Scotland (Woods In and Around Towns) and Wales (Heads of the Valleys Woodland Plan).

The second type of community forests are those enabled by new legislation which are bottom up initiatives by communities of place seeking to assert collectively-determined management regimes over woodland that was previously in state or private ownership.

#### 6.1.6. New legal forms of ownership

In response to the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Forestry regarding England's public forest estate, the UK government set out its plan to create a new body to hold the public forest in trust for the nation. This operationally-independent Public Forest Estate management body will be established via legislation and will generate the majority of its income through commercial activity but will have the goal of enhancing the social, environmental and economic benefits of the woodlands (Defra 2013).

Government policies related to facilitation of social enterprise activity resulted in the emergence of two new legal entities in the UK that can own land. There are examples of the use of both of these for community forest ownership (Woodland Trust 2011). These forms are:

- *Community interest companies* (CIC): A new form of private company (since 2005) that can take any form of a private company but in addition must

pass a community interest test and all assets belonging to a CIC are locked and there is a cap on dividend payments. CICs can have a broad range of purposes, provides limited liability, allows directors to be salaried (not possible in charities) and are regulated by Companies House and the Office of the Regulator of CICs.

- *Charitable incorporated organisations* (CIO): CIOs combine the protection of a company with charity registration in one registration with the Charity Commission (previously registration had to be with both Companies House and the Charity Commission). This legal form only became available in 2012 and to date it is only possible to register new CIOs but not to change an existing company into a CIO. The main benefit of a CIO is that the organisation can enter into contracts (and own land) in its own right and its trustees will normally have limited or no liability for the debts of the CIO<sup>31</sup> In Scotland, Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO) have similar powers, limited liability as a company limited by guarantee but with charitable status built in and regulated by one organisation – the office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

## 6.2. Influences of policies on forest management

There is a long history of policy instruments that attempt to influence and change behaviour in the UK, including the forest sector. The obligations associated with subsidies reflect the strategic objectives of current policy. Incentives and grants now largely encourage woodland management that enhances public good provision, such as biodiversity and public access, including a strong emphasis on the health benefits of woodland recreation and investing in new woodlands to deliver additional public benefits. New commercial planting in Scotland is dependent on grants (which are more generous than in England); particularly

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/frequently-asked-questions/faqs-about-charitable-incorporated-organisations-\(cios\)/cios-general-information/what-is-a-cio/](https://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/frequently-asked-questions/faqs-about-charitable-incorporated-organisations-(cios)/cios-general-information/what-is-a-cio/)

the native woodland grant scheme is highly profitable to landowners (Lawrence and Edwards 2013). But that is not necessarily the case in England and Wales (Lawrence and Dandy 2014).

The single most important change in framing new forest planting has been the introduction of farm woodland grants since 1987. These (they have been modified since that time) compensate farmers for loss of agricultural income for 10-15 years as well as providing grant aid for the afforestation. They are the primary cause of the increase in woodland planting by farmers. Few farmers undertook this work themselves. Most was undertaken by contractors.

Regulatory measures, such as felling licences, ensure good practice in forest management and the maintenance of UK forest cover. Advisory and guidance services support woodland owners and managers in meeting the required standards for woodland management and also offer advice for new approaches to management. In addition, market-based policies can stimulate owners to manage their forests in particular ways.

### **6.2.1. Forest management planning**

Forest management planning in UK private forests is voluntary for owners who are not in receipt of any grants or subsidies. Since the 1990s there has been increasing requirements for management plans for private owners wishing to access public funding for forest management. Some (but not all) of these schemes provide grant support for the preparation of management plans to meet UKWAS standards which is itself a voluntary standard which forms the basis for UK forest certification. Relevant economic instruments affecting forest management planning in the UK include the Woodland Management Grant under the English Woodland Grant Scheme (now closed); the Glastir Woodland Management Grant in Wales; Woodland Improvement Grants in Scotland and the Woodland Grant Scheme in Northern Ireland.

In England, in order to be eligible for funding for woodland management under the English Woodland Grant Scheme, woodland over 100 ha has to be certified to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) and have a

management plan in place. Woodland under 100 ha has to either be certified or have a management plan in place.

In Scotland, the Forestry Commission administers a number of Woodland Improvement Grants, including assistance with preparing a 10-20 year woodland management plan, a management plan for work that will benefit UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats or species, restructuring and regeneration of even-aged woodlands (<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-8J9H8A>).

Under the Glastir Woodland Management Grant in Wales, woodland advisers work with landowners to devise a management plan that meets the objectives of the grant scheme, taking into consideration landowner aspirations.

In Northern Ireland, grants are available to assist private woodland owners to undertake forest management activities that enhance ecosystems and prevent damage by wild and domestic animals (e.g. removal of invasive species). In order to qualify for the grant, applicants must submit a 5-year management plan (Forest Service 2007).

### **6.2.2. Compensation for state-imposed restrictions in harvesting**

No compensation is available to forest owners for restrictions in harvesting imposed by the state in England, Wales and Scotland. Landowners can, however, appeal the decision to the appropriate Forestry Minister if they have been refused twice for the same area and work providing three years have elapsed between the first and subsequent refusal (Forestry Commission 2007). In Northern Ireland landowners are entitled to compensation for any depreciation in the quality (and hence value) of the timber as a consequence of a refusal to issue a felling licence (Forestry Act 2010).

### **6.2.3. Environmental and land use policies affecting forest management**

In addition, there is a range of other environmental and land use policies that have

an impact of forest management in the UK. These include:

### **Nature designations**

Many nature designations include woodland sites. The following outlines relevant nature designations that may affect woodland in the UK (Urquhart 2009).

*Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):* SSSI designation gives sites some legal protection to ensure that sites are well managed. The owner of the land has certain responsibilities alongside the local authority and other public bodies.

*National Nature Reserve (NNR):* NNRs are sites designated for wildlife conservation because of their importance for a particular habitat. NNRs are either owned or managed by English Nature, a Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust or a local authority.

*Local Nature Reserve (LNR):* LNRs are established by local authorities under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) on land in which the authority has a legal interest.

*Biodiversity Action Plan (BAPs):* The UK's Biodiversity Action Plan is the government's response to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) signed in 1992 and provides a framework for the protection of vulnerable species and habitats. There are 45 Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) that include woodland habitats. In addition, there are around 135 Species Action Plans (SAPs) linked to woodland.

*Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs):* TPOs can apply to single trees, a group of trees or woodland. They are issued by the planning authority to protect trees with amenity or environmental value.

*Ancient Woodlands:* Ancient woodland is land that has had continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD and it may be either (1) Ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) – ancient woodland sites that have a native tree and shrub cover; or (2) Plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS) – ancient woodland sites where the native trees have been felled and replaced by plantations, often of conifer species. Ancient woodland is not a statutory designation and so gives no legal protection to the woodlands. While some ancient woods are designated, as SSSIs for example, 85%

of all ancient woodlands (including 5 of the 12 largest woods in England) have no designation (WT 2009). The category is however used to target woodland grants on private land and project interventions on state land. Designation will also increase the level of scrutiny of applications for felling licenses and in many instances trigger pro-active intervention.

### **International designations**

*Special Protection Areas (SPAs):* SPAs are strictly protected sites under the EC Birds Directive. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive and for migratory species. In the UK the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is responsible for selecting and monitoring SPAs.

*Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):* SACs are sites strictly protected under the EC Habitats Directive which requires the establishment of a network of important conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitats and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive. 78 of these habitats occur in the UK, and 43 of the species are native to the UK. All NNRs and SSSI's are designated as SACs.

*Biosphere Reserve:* Biosphere reserves are internationally designated by UNESCO under the Man and Biosphere Programme. Private forest owners within such areas will be encouraged to manage their woods in a way that complements the objectives of the Biosphere designation. This may or may not be backed by special grant incentives or payments or may simply be served by targeting of existing woodland grant schemes. There are only nine biosphere reserves in the UK, four of which have woodland as part of the site.

### **Rights of Way**

Access to woodlands in England and Wales, including woodland, is regulated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949). Woodlands and forest remain outside the legislation of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) except for the special case of dedication. Public rights of way are access routes on which the public is legally permitted to pass and includes public

footpaths (pedestrian use only), public bridleways (on foot or on horseback – and by extension bicycles) and public byways (all traffic). In addition, landowners may establish concessionary footpaths and bridleways, as permissive rights of way.

In Scotland, access is regulated under the Land Reform Act (2003), granting public non-motorized access to all land and inland water throughout Scotland subject to compliance with a code of good behaviour.

### **Water Framework Directive**

The main instrument for achieving good woodland management practice for the protection of inland water in woodlands is the Forests and Water Guidelines produced in association with the revised UK Forestry Standard, which are obligatory on public forest land and private land in receipt of grant support (Forestry Commission 2011). Landowners are obliged to manage their land in a way that does not give rise to diffuse pollution and must consider aspects such as appropriate site selection for woodland planting, maintenance of open stream sides, ground disturbance, species mix, use of fertilizers and herbicides and felling operations.

### **6.3. Policy instruments specifically addressing different ownership categories**

Forest policy in the UK, with its emphasis on enhancing the social and environmental benefits of existing woodlands and planting new woodlands, impacts on the various types of forest owners in different ways. There is evidence to suggest that different types of woodland owner will respond differently to policy instruments. For example, Urquhart et al. (2011) identified six distinct types of woodland owners in their study in England – individualists, multifunctional owners, private consumers, conservationists, investors and amenity owners. Four of these owner types, multifunctional owners, amenity owners, conservationists and investors, are likely to be influenced by grant incentive schemes. However, each of these may be motivated by differing management goals with amenity

owners more likely to be willing to provide recreational access, while conservationists are more likely to respond to incentives for biodiversity enhancement and investors are likely to seek incentives that enhance economic profitability. Private consumers and individualists were the least likely to be influenced by grant schemes that incentivized public good provision. The study also suggested that multifunctional owners, private consumers and investors are more likely to be influenced to manage their woodlands by market mechanisms that stimulate the market for timber products and wood fuel.

Thus, forest policy objectives are potentially well aligned to the objectives and motivations of new owners. Increasingly woodland is purchased for its social and positional value with new owners placing less importance on maintaining productive woodland, but rather aim to enhance the environmental and amenity value. Financial support and advice for habitat enhancement and management planning can be beneficial to many types of new woodland owner. Existing landowners, especially farmers, may also benefit by receiving grant aid to plant trees on unproductive agricultural land.

Where policy and owner objectives may deviate is when it comes to the provision of access and recreation. For some new owner types, such as community woodland groups, local authorities and NGOs, recreation and public access will be central to their management planning. However, for others, such as individuals (or families) that purchase woodlands for their own use, public access can conflict with their personal motivations. This is especially the case for absentee new owners who often purchase woodland as their own private place of escape to the countryside (Urquhart et al. 2010).

Other work, such as Dandy (2012), suggests that the pre-existing management 'trajectory' of landowners strongly restricts their willingness to change their behaviour. When change does occur, it tends to be during periods of ownership change (including inheritance), during periods of crisis or through increased innovation, with risk being a very prominent factor in decision-making. Dandy suggests that land-manager decision-making is influenced by economic, social and environmental factors. Economic factors



influencing landowner decisions include market security, infrastructure, scale, price and margin. Dandy asserts that market forces are stronger in influencing decisions than economic incentives, such as grants, tax reliefs and preferential finance. Although it should be noted that inheritance tax relief is still a significant incentive for woodland ownership (UPM Tilhill & Savills 2013). Social influences include concerns and perceptions of bureaucracy in regulation, pressures from society such as levels of acceptability of felling, social networks and social norms in land management culture, and the personal attitudes and pre-existing objectives of land managers (contracted by some new owners to advise/implement forest management), including their perceptions of risk. Environmental factors include the particularities of physical and environmental characteristics of different land parcels that influence productivity and environmental quality of the land. In addition, landowners are influenced by pragmatic decisions relating to ease of access to the land for planting and harvesting, as well as the availability of labour.

### 6.3.1. Policy instruments aimed at farmers

#### **England**

The Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (England) 1992-2005 (part-funded by the EU) administered by the Forestry Commission England encouraged farmers to convert productive agricultural land to woodland by providing annual incentives. Farmers were paid for 10 years for mainly conifer woodlands and for 15 years for mainly broadleaved woodlands to compensate for lost farming income. These payments were in addition to any payment received under the Woodland Grant Scheme.

The Farm Woodland Premium Scheme was replaced by Farm Woodland Payments (FWP) under the English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) in 2005. Alongside receiving a grant towards the costs of establishing new woodland, farmers can also receive compensation payments under the

Single Payment Scheme for agricultural income foregone when woodlands are planted on agricultural land. From 2009 the rates were £300 per ha per year on arable land in the lowlands, £200 per ha per year on other improved land in the lowlands, and £60 per ha per year on unimproved land and/or land in the uplands<sup>32</sup>. The FWP scheme has now closed.

#### **Wales**

The Glastir Woodland Creation (GWC) grant is available to landowners with over 0.25 ha of land to plant woodland. As well as a grant towards the costs of planting and establishing woodland, the Glastir Woodland Creation Premium provides an income foregone payment for land taken out of agricultural production and a lower payment for non-agricultural land. The grant is administered by the Rural Payments Division directly from the Welsh Government.

#### **Scotland**

Prior to 2006 Scottish farmers were able to receive payments for foregone income for land taken out of agriculture under the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme Farmland Premium as part of the Forestry Commission Scotland's Forestry Grant Scheme (SFGS). Woodland grants are now administered under "woodland creation" as Rural Priorities of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP). The current SRDP closed on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013 with the new programme covering the period 2014-2020 expected to open late 2014 or early 2015. The new programme includes an agroforestry option.

#### **Northern Ireland**

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARDNI) administers the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme which encourages the creation of new woodlands on farms through annual payments which offset the foregone income for land taken out of agriculture. Payments can be made for 10 or 15 years. ([www.dardni.gov.uk/index/grants-and-funding/forestry-grants/farm-woodland-premium-scheme.htm](http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/grants-and-funding/forestry-grants/farm-woodland-premium-scheme.htm)).

<sup>32</sup><http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infdf7s2fr5>



### 6.3.2. Advisory services for new woodland owners

There is no formal state institution that provides advice to woodland owners but grants for forest extension/advisory services are included in the post-2013RDP so it is likely that provision will increase dramatically over the next few years. There is some discussion in Wales about whether such advice should be delivered by a government agency or by strengthening existing providers. At the time of writing the preferred option is to strengthen existing provision but it remains to be seen what will actually happen.

However, for community woodlands there are several organisations that provide advice, networking and support. For example, in Scotland there is the Community Woodland Association and in Wales there is Llais y Goedwig.

The Community Forests and their ilk in England provide advisory services for woodland owners within their area e.g. the Mersey Forest. Many county councils also provide advice through their woodland officers and programmes. In Wales woodland advice is provided by Coed Cymru (woodland NGO) officers seconded to the County council to serve as council woodland officers. This latter arrangement is a novel use of local authority and NGO partnership on woodland advice which extends to co-funding of posts including, formerly, funding from Forestry Commission Wales.

There are also new or re-purposed organisations who offer support to new forest owners regardless of whether they are individually or community owned such as the Sylva Foundation and the Smallwoods Association in England. Sylva offer a free online service, called myForest, for woodland owners, forestry businesses and wood users to help woodland management planning and marketing of forest products (<http://sylva.org.uk/myforest/>). Generally the advice offered by third sector and private

advisory organisations is closely aligned with public sector policies that are most relevant to their members. Of course this may not include all public sector policies and occasionally detailed advice will vary.

### 6.3.3. Campaigns targeted at new forest owners

To date there have been no concerted ‘campaigns’<sup>33</sup> targeted at new forest owners but there has been information and advice specifically packaged to address the needs of new woodland owners such as that prepared by the FC England (see Case study 14). There have also been advocacy brochures such as ‘New farm woodlands – How planting trees can contribute to your farm business’ prepared for use in Wales<sup>34</sup> and Scotland (see Case study 15).

These one-off publications hardly add up to a coherent “campaign” however, a recent report by Moseley & Valatin (2014) takes a rather more structured approach and lays out a series of ‘nudges’ which could be employed to influence people’s choice to plant new woodland to meet government targets for climate change mitigation. Nudges are ways of influencing choices without limiting options or changing their cost and arise from the study of behavioural economics. In effect they offer an alternative to the more conventional ‘sticks’ and ‘carrots’. Nudge type approaches proposed for woodland creation are: addressing perceived barriers to woodland creation, encouraging private woodland creation by highlighting successes to create new social norms for planting (for an example of this see Case study 16) and by the public sector leading by example. To be effective, Moseley & Valatin (2014) note that nudges should be adapted to different types of landowners who may vary in their attitudes, motivations and willingness to plant trees. The use of nudge type interventions is a very recent innovation and has yet to be tested in the field.

<sup>33</sup> “Any organised course of action analogous to a military campaign; *esp.* one designed to arouse public support for a party in an election, a cause, etc.” Oxford English Dictionary

<sup>34</sup> [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/New-farm-woodlands-English.pdf/\\$file/New-farm-woodlands-English.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/New-farm-woodlands-English.pdf/$file/New-farm-woodlands-English.pdf)

**CASE STUDY 14: SO YOU OWN A WOODLAND?**

In 2002 Forestry Commission England published a booklet titled "So you own a woodland?" focussed on providing information for new woodland owners in South East England (where a lot of new purchases of small plots of amenity woodland were occurring). The booklet covers basic information on woodland biodiversity and management of lowland, broadleaf woodlands and signposts other sources of information and advice on grants and incentives available. It was aimed at those who have never owned woodland before and have no experience of woodland management. The first edition proved popular with woodland owners and a second edition was published in 2003 for wider dissemination. The third edition came out in 2009 with additions to reflect new legislation, includes information on wood fuel and is designed for woodland owners across the whole of England.

There has not been any official impact assessment of this campaign but the fact that it has been through three editions is a measure of demand for advice of this type.

Interestingly the Forestry Commission does not have a specific publicity campaign for this booklet and it is not prominent on the FC England or FC publications webpages. However, it is available as a pdf from the FC website and is widely referenced and used by third party woodland advisors e.g. <http://gabrielhemery.com/2011/10/10/so-you-want-to-own-and-manage-a-woodland/>.

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf/\\$file/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf/$file/so-you-own-a-woodland.pdf)

In addition to official publications there is a large volume of popular articles on the internet and using social media describing the benefits of personal ownership of woodland. These range from promotional campaigns by those selling woodlands to blogs, articles in the popular press and even a TV reality programme. A sample of this type of material is:

- <http://jorgandolif.com/consume/how-to-buy-a-private-woodland/>
- <http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/mortgageshome/article-2216781/I-paid-21k-wood-love-How-buy-woodland.html>
- 'Tales from the Wild Wood' was a reality TV programme aired in 2012 which followed a year in the life of a woodland through the eyes of a new woodland owner.
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01ng5lr/episodes/guide>
- [http://www.robpenn.net/?page\\_id=22](http://www.robpenn.net/?page_id=22)

Note that much of this material dates from 2012, nevertheless, there is a steady stream of material focussed on new woodland owners much of it associated with the forest agents who sell woodlands e.g. <http://www.woodlands.co.uk/>; <http://www.woods4sale.co.uk/information-pages/managing-a-woodland.htm>.

Running through this diversity of material and activity we can discern two currents. Firstly, informal communication channels through which private owners share information and experience of woodland management (often relating to the purchase of woodlands as private assets for personal benefit). Secondly,

advocacy by government in response to public policy for woodland creation which is targeted, largely, at farmers.

#### **6.4. Factors affecting innovation in policies**

There are no specific statements in the devolved UK forest policies that relate directly to the nature or extent of private forest ownership. There have, however, been government policies that proposed radical changes in state ownership of forests. These initiatives were made in response to non-forestry policies and principally as actions to realise carbon policies (which are partially devolved<sup>35</sup>). For example, the Welsh Government adopted the recommendations of the Land Use and Climate Change Group report (2010) and proposed a large-scale expansion of woodland in order to create a carbon sink for future use as a renewable heat source. There have been significant difficulties implementing this as a consequence of the approach taken to avoid afforestation of land of conservation or heritage value and the interregnum in RDP funding which is a primary source of funding for the grant scheme. Agricultural land prices in Wales are such that the state is not able to purchase land to plant so the implementation of this policy rests with incentivising private sector planting. It is also clear (UPM Tilhill & Savills 2012) that land prices are too high for private purchase of land for planting so most schemes are brought forward by owners

<sup>35</sup> UK Climate Change Act is UK wide. The Climate Change Committee set up by CCA has UK-wide reach. It is a confused area as Scotland also has CCSA 2009.

wishing to plant on their own land. The largest group of people with land to plant are farmers and so the policy seeks to change owners' objectives for land rather than a change in ownership.

In addition, there are no policies to stimulate associations for small forest owners. Indeed, membership of forest owner associations in the UK is perhaps less dominant than in other European countries. For example, in Scotland the Timber Growers Association (TGA), representing forest owners' interests, has been subsumed into the Confederation of Forest Industries (ConFor), a body which represents large forest corporations and forest management companies more broadly (Wightman 2012).

In the 1950s a number of regional forest owner's co-operatives were established to promote forestry in Wales (Linnard 2000). However, it is not clear whether these were spontaneous or the result of a specific policy or popular movement but have all now either

disbanded or been privatised and become private companies acting as woodland agents.

NGOs such as Sylva and the Smallwoods Association obtain at least part of their funding from the state though all except Sylva are formally constituted networks of woodland owners. They represent the interests of small woodland owners by responding to policy documents, contributing to policy groups and engaging with government agencies such as Defra, the Forestry Commission and Natural England on issues relating to small woodland owners.

The main emphasis on ownership matters in policy agenda relates to advisory services. There is increasing attention paid to developing appropriate advisory and information services that cater for the wide range of new owner types, many of which have no prior experience of forest or land management.

**CASE STUDY 15: "BOOST YOUR FARM BUSINESS WITH WELL MANAGED WOODLAND"**

In order to encourage farm woodland planting, Forestry Commission Scotland have tailored their advisory service to the specific objectives of farmers. They focus their advice how well managed woodlands can work alongside other agricultural activities to generate income and save money. They cite examples from farmers who have used woodland for livestock shelter and wood fuel. The emphasis is on the added value of farm woodlands as a win-win situation, rather than a loss in land productivity. This is an example of advisory services being tailored for a particular land ownership type.

[www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/benefitsofwellmanagedwoods.pdf/\\$FILE/benefitsofwellmanagedwoods.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/benefitsofwellmanagedwoods.pdf/$FILE/benefitsofwellmanagedwoods.pdf)

**CASE STUDY 16: USE OF GLASTIR WOODLAND CREATION GRANTS BY SMALLHOLDERS**

The Glastir Woodland Creation scheme is marketed at farmers as an incentive for trees planting on agricultural land. However, the scheme is open to any landowner and is not restricted to registered agricultural holdings. The minimum size for a scheme is 0.25 ha and has proved to be attractive to smallholders (cottages with small parcels of land (~1-4 ha) originally intended for subsistence farming alongside employment in the quarry). Where one smallholder takes up the grant this is often followed by neighbours also taking up the scheme leading to the emergence of new wooded landscapes. An example of this is Mynydd Llandygai which is a quarry village at 300 m in North Wales where every cottage has a smallholding.

In the satellite image below, the blue polygons indicates land where six different landowners have planted trees since 1990 using the Glastir Woodland Creation scheme or its predecessors the Better Woodlands for Wales and Woodland Grant Scheme. In this exposed location shelter is an important service but owners are also concerned about biodiversity and fuelwood production. The table gives details of the schemes approved since 2010.

The pale green edged polygon indicates woodland which has belonged to the Coetir Mynydd community woodland group (a private company limited by guarantee with charitable objects) since 2004. All of the smallholders who have planted new woodland are members of Coetir Mynydd.





Scheme	Name	Ha	Planting stock	Owners objectives (from management plan)
BWW	Bodorgan	2.11	Native broadleaves, local provenance (rowan, downy birch, common alder, ash, willow, hazel, sessile oak)	The owner intends to establish a new native woodland on the site to provide shelter, amenity and conservation benefits as well as woodfuel production in the longer term.
GWC	Pen y Llyn	0.35	Woody shrubs, willow, rowan, ash, common alder, Stika spruce, mixed native broadleaves, downy birch	The woodlands will provide shelter for adjacent grazing land and farm buildings whilst making a positive contribution to the biodiversity and landscape of the holding and its surroundings.
GWC	Ynys Uchaf	0.45	Sessile oak, common alder, hazel, birch, scots pine, sycamore	The new woodland will create an extension to existing broadleaved woodland. It will also sequester carbon, provide a source of fuelwood and timber, and enhance biodiversity and landscape of the holding.
GWC	CaeEmyr	0.33	Birch, common alder, woody shrubs, mixed native broadleaves, ash, wild cherry, sessile oak	Establish a native woodland for biodiversity, landscape and small scale fuelwood production for own use.

Source: Public register of grant aided woodland creation  
[https://www.eforestry.gov.uk/glade/public\\_register\\_publicRegisterMap.do](https://www.eforestry.gov.uk/glade/public_register_publicRegisterMap.do)

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## 8. Annex

### 8.1. Tables with detailed description of 10 most important publications

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (1)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Glyne M, Richardson W, Anable J, Quick T, Rowcroft P &amp; Smith S (2012) Independent Panel on Forestry Woodland Owner Survey. Final Report to the Independent Panel on Forestry. URS, London.</b>
English language summary/abstract	<p>The report calls for England's woods and forests to be re-valued for all the benefits they provide.</p> <p>These include areas for recreation, clean air, clean water, and habitats for wildlife. They also lock up carbon, provide shade and can help reduce flooding. Wood is the raw material for timber frame buildings, furniture, flooring, fuel, and of course paper.</p> <p>The report calls for a revival of a woodland culture that appreciates how important trees are for people, for nature and the economy.</p> <p>The report also makes clear that the Independent Panel on Forestry believes the public forest estate is a national asset, which should remain in public ownership. The Panel recommends an evolution of the Forestry Commission. The new organisations should have greater financial freedoms and investment to generate even greater benefits for people, nature and the economy.</p>
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	Government appointed independent enquiry panel chaired by Bishop of Liverpool.
Type of funding used	Public sub-national (DEFRA) With considerable private and in-kind contributions from NGOs and civil society
Regional scope	Sub-national (England)
Theoretical approach	Political – follows the established form of public consultation on new statute.
Methodical approach	Solicited free form comments from institutions and individuals. Content analysis used to consolidate large numbers of free-form consultation responses.
Thematic focus	Ownership change (public to private)
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	
Weblink	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-panel-on-forestry-final-report">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-panel-on-forestry-final-report</a>



SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (2)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Lawrence A and Dandy N (2014) Private landowners' approaches to planting and managing forests in the UK: What's the evidence? Land Use Policy 36: 351– 360.</b>
English language summary/abstract	Woodland expansion and sustainable forest management are key features of forest policy in the UK. Because a large majority of land and forests is owned privately, these policies need the involvement of private landowners. Studies of owners' attitudes and decisions in the UK are at a disadvantage as there is no complete database of land or forest ownership. This paper is based on a Rapid Evidence Assessment which identified 42 relevant studies. The predominant narrative reflects a low level of interest and management activity. There are many exceptions to this, and land management decisions are more differentiated within the socio-cultural, multipurpose landscape than has perhaps been previously acknowledged. A wide cultural gap between farming and forestry is often noted, in contrast to the inter-national literature. Many woodland owners see themselves as managing their woodlands, in contrast to official perceptions and statistics. The evidence also reports generally negative attitudes towards wood-land creation. The predominant policy tools are grants and advice. Grant uptake across England, Wales and Scotland is not currently as high as governments would like. A combination of amount offered, fit with owners' objectives, amount of paperwork and interaction with professionals are cited to explain low grant uptake. Information and advice is an important and neglected factor in the equation. A focus on both content and process of interactions with advisors, knowledge exchange and application, and outcomes, is lacking in the UK. Given the centrality of private landowners in delivering public policy, we see a need to go beyond this body of evidence and focus on innovative approaches, including engagement via social networks, knowledge exchange processes which build on existing relations and link with land managers' existing objectives, and the contextualisation of woodland within the wider land use sector.
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	Public research institute (Government research agency)
Type of funding used (multiple answers allowed)	Government forestry research budget
Regional scope	National (UK)
Theoretical approach	Broad social science approach
Methodical approach	Rapid evidence assessment
Thematic focus	Owners' attitudes to forest management; effectiveness of policy instruments
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	
Weblink	<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-86ED4H">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-86ED4H</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (3)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Lawrence, A. and Ambrose-Oji, B. (2014) Beauty, friends, power, money: navigating the impacts of community woodlands. Geographical Journal. [Published on line]</b>
English language summary/abstract	Community forestry in the UK has developed rapidly over the last 25 years, and the wide range of drivers has resulted in a great variety of relationships between communities and woodlands, and over 650 community woodlands. Given strong current policy interest, the study aims to assess existing evidence for the impact of these initiatives. The variety of models, evaluation purposes, and impacts require a new approach to organising the evidence, including a new typology of community woodlands. The review identified more than 70 studies, covering 681 evaluation cases. Of these, 41% are 'urban regeneration' programmes, 32% are locally-led 'community place' projects, and 22% are locally owned 'community resources'. Only 3% are 'economic partnerships' where the primary objective is enterprise; and 1% are 'lifestyle alternatives'. The majority of evaluations are conducted by the public sector. Evaluations tend to focus on the positive and the quantitative and relate predominantly to outputs (e.g. trees planted, meetings attended). Only 21% of cases identify outcomes (e.g. neighbourhoods enhanced, well-being enhanced), and very little evidence of community empowerment or meaningful engagement in decision-making. Attention has shifted from biophysical to social and participation indicators in recent years, but evidence of change over time is lacking. The policy relevance of the evidence base will be greatly enhanced if cases distinguish between types of community woodland, consistently include comparable indicators, and link context, process, outputs and outcomes.
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	Public research institute
Type of funding used (multiple answers allowed)	Government forestry research budget
Regional scope	National (UK)
Theoretical approach	Evaluation science
Methodical approach	Quantitative and qualitative analysis of secondary data
Thematic focus	Community forests and community woodland groups (as owners, and or partners in woodland management)
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	
Weblink	<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-9KKG7J">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/INFD-9KKG7J</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (4)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Lawrence, A. and Edwards, D. (2013) Prospects for new productive woodland in Scotland: insights from stakeholders. A report to Forestry Commission Scotland. . Forest Research, Roslin, UK, p. 70.</b>
English language summary/abstract	
Language of the study/publication	
Type of organization conducting the study	Government research agency
Type of funding used (multiple answers allowed)	Contract funding from Government agency
Regional scope	Scotland
Theoretical approach	Qualitative social science
Methodical approach	Qualitative interviews and stakeholder analysis
Thematic focus	Attitudes and behaviour in relation to planting new commercial forests in Scotland
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	<p>The research describes the relationships of four types of landowners (farmers, estate owners, investors, and new 'hands-on' owners) to other stakeholders including advisors and regulators.</p> <p>Four sets of influencing factors affect decisions about the type of woodland created.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grants and incentives underpin most woodland creation decisions and tend to favour native woodland creation. For most respondents the simple answer to the problem of conifer planting is to change the financial incentives, including grants and carbon finance. The current grant system is seen as inflexible, complex and as discouraging integration of farming and forestry.</li> <li>2. Where woodland expansion depends on whole farm sale and planting, as is normally the case, the approvals process for planting applications is weighted against production. Opponents of new conifer schemes often exercise most influence in the process.</li> <li>3. The advisory system replicates a farming/forestry split. Forestry advisers liaise with forest owners, and agricultural advisers. More farm forestry, including productive farm forests, requires change in the structure and content of the advisory and extension system.</li> <li>4. Leadership and policy: stakeholders complained of lack of leadership on this issue by FCS and Scottish Government. Political support influences the other three factors: levels of grants, the extent to which forestry "stands up" to its opponents, and the resources allocated to advice and extension services that encourage integrated land use.</li> </ol>
Weblink	<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Lawrence_Edwards2013.pdf/\$FILE/Lawrence_Edwards2013.pdf">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Lawrence_Edwards2013.pdf/\$FILE/Lawrence_Edwards2013.pdf</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (5)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Nicholls D, Young M, Hemery G, Petrokofsky G &amp;Yeomans A (2013) British Woodlands 2012: A national survey of woodland owners. RICS Research Trust.</b>
English language summary/abstract	The British Woodlands 2012 survey was undertaken with the aim of gaining insights into three aspects of sustainable forest management: 1) the extent to which woodland owners feel they understand the principles of effective stewardship of their woods or 'sustainable forest management'; 2) what woodland activities owners carry out that could be categorised as management for sustainability; and 3) what barriers appear to exist to implementing sustainable woodland management.
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study(in case of multi-institutional studies multiple answers allowed)	Private research institutes University
Type of funding used (multiple answers allowed)	Private other Public national Public sub-national
Regional scope	Sub-national (Great Britain)
Theoretical approach	Sociology
Methodical approach	Questionnaire survey (2,603 responses representing 7.4% of non-Forestry Commission woodland in Great Britain).
Thematic focus	Motives and behaviour of ownership types
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	<p>While income generation was the main goal for landholdings as a whole, personal pleasure was the most commonly cited management aim for woodlands, followed by landscape conservation and biodiversity. Over 80% of owners had more than one aim for their woodland.</p> <p>Half of the owners were not in receipt of any grant aid. Nevertheless most cited grant aid as the main factor that would incentivise them to plant new woodland though this is discouraged by the perceived complexity of regulations. The main motivations for new plantings were biodiversity and landscape. More than 90% of owners believe their woods are 'quite important' for wildlife and landscape.</p> <p>Only 10% of owners have or are seeking FSC certification. 60% of owners registered losses on their woodlands in the past year, with 16% claiming a profit and the rest breaking even.</p> <p>With the notable exception of provision of public access, over a third of owners were receptive to entering a binding contract to provide ecosystem services in return for an income from private or public sources of funding. Responses to questions in climate change revealed that the majority believed that changing woodland management would have little impact on climate change while half felt they were already doing as much as they could and half citing insufficient information as a limiting factor.</p> <p>The current pattern of incentives alone seems unlikely to result in achieving all the government's goals for forestry.</p>
Weblink	<a href="http://sylva.org.uk/forestryhorizons/research_bw2012_home.php">http://sylva.org.uk/forestryhorizons/research_bw2012_home.php</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (6)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Nichols D &amp; Young M (2005) Private woods in crisis? A report on a survey of private woodland estates in England and Wales. University of Cambridge Department of Land Economy &amp; Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.</b>
English language summary/abstract	<p>This report is based on a postal survey of a selection of 66 private woodland estates from all over England and Wales, carried out in 2005. Full responses were received from 55%, and seven key questions were answered by a further 25%, giving a total response rate of 80%.</p> <p>The estates were first studied in 1963 on the recommendation of professional foresters as among the best-managed woodlands in the different parts of the country, and the percentage of woodlands on the estates is far above average. Most of the original selection of estates have remained largely intact (though many individual ownerships have given way to private trusts), but woodland management has declined – and on 28% nothing appears to have been done in the woodlands last year.</p> <p>The main factor in declining management is deterioration in woodland income, coupled with rising costs. In many cases, money cannot be poured indefinitely into a loss-making enterprise. For over 40%, the estate (not just the woodlands) was reported to be the owner's main source of income.</p> <p>Tradition in land use and management, both as a constraint from the past and as an ambition for the future, is a very powerful influence on the estates. Most of the owners try to take a very long-term view wherever possible.</p> <p>Owners are seeking multiple benefits from their woodlands, as from their estates as a whole, and many of these coincide with goals of public policy. In other cases, public benefits may accrue incidentally from the management of the private woodlands.</p> <p>In the long run, public as well as private goals appear to be at risk from reduced management activity. Current forms and levels of public support for private forestry do not appear to be appropriate or adequate to ameliorate this risk. There is little confidence that the new woodland grant schemes will provide a significant solution under current conditions.</p> <p>Given that the survey evidence comes from some of the best woodland estates (and some of the most enthusiastic owners) in the country, there is a stark warning contained in the conclusions, that many other private woodlands in England and Wales may be at greater risk.</p> <p>There appears to be a strong case for a comprehensive review of public aid to private forestry, based on increased understanding of the relationship between private and public benefits from forestry, and the motivations of woodland owners. The present pattern of aid does not seem to be well directed at key issues.</p>
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	University
Type of funding used	Private foundation
Regional scope	England and Wales
Theoretical approach	General sociology
Methodical approach	Time-series semi-quantitative questionnaire survey
Thematic focus	Motives and behaviour of ownership types
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	
Weblink	<a href="http://sylva.org.uk/forestryhorizons/research_bw2012_previous.php">http://sylva.org.uk/forestryhorizons/research_bw2012_previous.php</a>



SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (7)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Quick, T., Smith, S., Johnson, M., Eves, C., Langley, E., Jenner, M., Richardson, W., Glynn, M., Anable, J., Crabtree, B., White, C., Black, J., MacDonald, C., and Slee, B. (2013) Analysis of the potential effects of various influences and interventions on woodland management and creation decisions, using a segmentation model to categorise sub-groups - Volume 4: Woodland creation segmentation and assessment of interventions. Draft report Defra, London.</b>
English language summary/abstract	
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	University Private consultants
Type of funding used	National
Regional scope	National (England)
Theoretical approach	Social science
Methodical approach	Literature review
Thematic focus	Motives and behaviour of ownership types
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	<p>Results of a literature review of 30 previous studies of segmentation of forest owner types. Presents an intuitive typology based on the literature which gives 7 forest owner types: private consumers, investors, active conservationists, inactive conservationists, honestly disengaged, private retreat and multi-functional owners.</p> <p>Gap analysis indicates that there is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no understanding of existing woodland owners;</li> <li>• no understanding of potential woodland creators</li> <li>• no basic socio-economic details of owners and a failure to link socio-economic characteristics to objectives</li> <li>• little evidence of the objectives/motivations of non-private woodland owners</li> </ul> <p>inconsistent information on the receptiveness of different groups to policy and the best way of communicating with them.</p>
Weblink	<a href="http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&amp;Module=More&amp;Location=None&amp;Completed=0&amp;ProjectID=18470">http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&amp;Module=More&amp;Location=None&amp;Completed=0&amp;ProjectID=18470</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (8)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Urquhart J &amp; Courtney P (2011) Seeing the owner behind the trees: A typology of small-scale private woodland owners in England. Forest Policy and Economics 13: 535-544.</b>
English language summary/abstract	The diversity of woodland ownership in England has increased in recent decades to encompass a wide range of non-financially-oriented owners, many with little previous experience of woodland management. With public benefits such as environmental conservation, amenity and carbon sequestration being increasingly emphasised in forest policy agendas, there is a need to understand the willingness and ability of traditional and new owner groups to deliver such benefits. A quantitative typology of private woodland owners was developed through a self-completion postal survey administered in three study areas in England: the Lake District, Cornwall and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Owners were classified using Factor, Cluster and Discriminant analysis into six owner types: the Individualist, the Multifunctional Owner, the Private Consumer, the Conservationist, the Investor and the Amenity Owner. Of all owner types, Multifunctional Owners are the most likely to deliver a range of public benefits, while Individualists are the least amenable to subsidies to encourage public good delivery. A range of policy options will be required to reflect to diverse range of objectives and goals of woodland owners, including advisory services, incentives and market mechanisms.
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	University
Type of funding used (multiple answers allowed)	Public national University (ESRC CASE PhD Studentship with Forestry Commission as CASE partner)
Regional scope	Sub-national
Theoretical approach	Human geography Policy studies
Methodical approach	Q-Methodology
Thematic focus	Motives and behaviour of ownership types Policy instruments addressing ownership
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	
Weblink	<a href="http://eprints.glos.ac.uk/335/">http://eprints.glos.ac.uk/335/</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (9)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Wightman, A. (2012) Forest ownership in Scotland: a scoping study. The Forest Policy Group.</b>
English language summary/abstract	<p>The pattern of ownership has itself been profoundly influenced by the design and structure of publicly funded forestry incentives over the last 50 years, attracting some types of owner much more than others. Deliberately or otherwise, public policy has driven a very distinctive pattern of forest ownership, which may not be optimal for securing the full suite of potential public benefits.</p> <p>Preliminary research using sample areas of Scotland reveals that, leaving aside the one third of Scotland's forest which is owned by Scottish Ministers and managed by the Forestry Commission,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91% of the rest is owned either by landed estates or by investment owners.</li> <li>• 55% is owned by absentees.</li> <li>• 32% of the private owners live outside Scotland.</li> </ul> <p>Scotland's forest resource is thus dominated by the state, landed estates and forestry investors. The big contrast with other European countries is the insignificant proportion owned here by individual resident owners, farmers, co-operatives, and municipalities.</p> <p>Unsurprisingly, there is also a contrast in the level of forest owner representation. In many European countries there are significant forest owners' associations; in Scotland these have been subsumed into wider coalitions dominated by industrial timber interests, investment-driven forest management companies and landed estates.</p> <p>A more diverse ownership pattern would arguably be more likely to deliver far greater diversity in approaches and models of management leading to greater innovation, investment and commitment to local economies, in addition to greater resilience to external change. In particular, sectors currently under-represented such as community owners, small-scale individual owners, co-operatives and farmers and crofters could deliver wider benefits.</p> <p>This paper concludes with five key points. Ownership is a significant issue; there is no policy identifying desirable objectives in the pattern of ownership to be encouraged; informed debate is inhibited by the lack of information; there are opportunities for diversifying ownership, inspired by European examples; and further investigation of these issues would be highly desirable.</p>
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	Private policy thinktank
Type of funding used	Private
Regional scope	Scotland
Theoretical approach	Policy analysis
Methodical approach	Collation of existing forest ownership statistics
Thematic focus	Ownership structure
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	
Weblink	<a href="http://www.andywightman.com/docs/ForestOwnershipScotland_2012.pdf">http://www.andywightman.com/docs/ForestOwnershipScotland_2012.pdf</a>

SELECTED REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS (10)	
Full reference of study/publication	<b>Woodland Expansion Advisory Group (2012) Final report, Forestry Commission Scotland, Edinburgh.</b>
English language summary/abstract	
Language of the study/publication	English
Type of organization conducting the study	Private advisory group
Type of funding used	Public - other
Regional scope	Scotland
Theoretical approach	Policy analysis
Methodical approach	Call for views, stakeholder consultation and focus groups
Thematic focus	Motives and behaviour of ownership types
Main results should be given here if not yet included in the summary.	<p>Historical trends show that planting levels in recent years have been at their lowest level for half a century and that, currently, most woodland creation is undertaken with native species.</p> <p>Around 46% of Scotland's land is largely unavailable for woodland creation and that a further 20% is significantly constrained. The remaining one third of Scotland's land has the most potential for woodland creation – much of this is farmland, in particular grazing land, and consists of open ground habitat, some of which is sensitive to tree planting.</p> <p>The report makes 24 recommendations: which includes the following relevant to forest ownership:</p> <p>(2) encourage woodland owners and managers to consider opportunities for producing timber and/or wood fuel when creating new woodlands of all types</p> <p>(3) Land in and around towns, including vacant and derelict land, should be used for tree planting where it can make a cost-effective contribution to remediation and improving the quality of life in urban areas</p> <p>(10) Making use of 'agroforestry' measures in the Rural Development Regulation. Ensuring that eligibility criteria permit and encourage the creation of small woodlands, riparian woodlands and hedgerow trees.</p> <p>(11) woodlands created on whole farms should be required to consider opportunities for integration with other land uses</p> <p>(14) Land managers should be encouraged to work together across ownership boundaries to achieve integrated land management objectives</p> <p>(17) facilitating involvement in group schemes where land managers can work together to achieve carbon sequestration.</p> <p>(20) Landlord and tenant representatives should work together in the context of the Tenant Farming Forum to promote woodland creation</p> <p>(21) Crofting and forestry stakeholders should work together to promote crofter forestry</p> <p>(22) communities should become involved in woodland creation</p>
Weblink	<a href="http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/WEAGFinalReport.pdf">http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/WEAGFinalReport.pdf</a>







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