

Shaping the future of Forestry Commission England

New Area Directors confirmed

Background

Forestry Commission England is making good progress moving towards new structures in response to the Government's challenge to become a more efficient organisation focused on protecting, improving and expanding England's woodlands.

Following internal staff consultations, we announced our initial management decisions for restructuring Forestry Commission England in May 2011. Since then we have been working as quickly as we can to confirm who will be in which role in the new structures, beginning with senior management.

While we have reduced the number of office bases, we have remained focused on maintaining a first class service to our customers and continuing to provide the expertise to help our partners manage forests sustainably in line with government policy.

New Area Directors

We have now confirmed the Area Directors responsible for providing our grants and regulatory functions locally to woodland owners and managers in England. They are:

Area Director North West and West Midlands	Keith Jones
Area Director York & North East	Crispin Thorn
Area Director East & East Midlands	Stephen Scott
Area Director South West	Brendan Callaghan
Area Director South East & London	Alison Field

A new boundary map follows this briefing.

All the new Area Directors bring with them many years of experience as former Regional Directors. There have also been no redundancies as a result of this process: other former Regional Directors are taking up business-critical roles in the national team responsible for grants, regulations and policy support.

We expect the new structures to be fully operational for the new financial year 2012/13. Until then we will work closely with partners and stakeholders to introduce our new Area Directors, explain the new working arrangements, and respond to any questions.

Stakeholder Briefing – The Way Forward to 2015

In the meantime, we will continue to carry out statutory functions to help protect woodlands against new threats, to manage grant schemes and to provide expert advice. We will also continue our work on new or increasing activities such as biosecurity, engagement with Big Society, the Big Tree Plant and the work of the Woodland Carbon Task Force.

Simon Hodgson, Chief Executive, Forestry Commission England said:

“The Forestry Commission is an organisation built on the commitment and experience of people who really know and care about trees. For years we have made sure forests benefit people, the economy and the environment, and worked very hard at getting this balance right. Building on this, we shall continue to draw on the experience of our partners and customers to develop better ways of doing things.”

