



## FORESTRY COMMISSION FORESTRY AND WOODLANDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### Role

The Forestry Commission is a government department responsible for the delivery of the Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement forestry in England. The Commission works with others to protect, improve and expand our nation's forests and woodland, increasing their value to society and the environment. England's trees, woods and forests are a vital national asset providing multiple economic, social and environmental benefits. The Government's objective is to ensure that this asset is protected, managed and enhanced so that these benefits can be both maximised now and realised in the future.

Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committees will advise the Commission, through our Area Directors, on the implementation of Government's forestry and woodlands policy in each Area and its constituent regions.

### The Committee & Remit

Chairs and members are appointed by the Forestry Commissioners under Section 37 of the Forestry Act 1967. However, the working title of the Regional Advisory Committee has now been amended to Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committees to better reflect the remit, which has been refreshed to:

- Advocate and champion forestry interests and woodlands partnership working at local level for woodland resilience and sector development, providing independent insight into local needs and priorities;
- Provide advice, expertise and challenge on the application of national policies into Area and local programmes, and assist in aggregating local priorities into national programmes;
- Support the Government's interests by engaging with and developing strong local connections and networks to enhance synergies across the diverse forest and woodland sector, including the public forest estate;
- Conciliate in disputed applications for grant aid, felling licences, or approval of forest plans where there is a sustained objection by a statutory body.

The term of office for FWAC Chairs and members will commence on 1 December 2013 for a term of three years. There is the possibility of reappointment for a further term subject to satisfactory performance. The statutory functions of the committees are subject to any changes in legislation which Parliament may make.

Chairs and members are appointed as individuals and not as representatives of a particular organisation. While acting as an independent Chair, they will also be allocated to one of three chambers of interest that make up the spread of membership of the Committee: forest industry and land ownership; social, access and environment expertise; and local communities, economy and government interest.

## Policy and Delivery Advice

The nine FWACs will advise on a range of issues, including the implementation of policy in the regions, local landscapes and places. The [Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement](#) (2013) is designed to ensure England's forest and woodland asset is protected, improved and expanded to provide multiple economic, social and environmental benefits, in ways that increase its resilience. The clear hierarchy of protect, improve and expand is informed by the Government's wider key principles, which include recognising local places, businesses and communities being best placed to decide their local priorities and the imperative of partnership working within the forestry and woodland sector.

FWACs will provide advice, expertise and challenge on the application of national policies as well as feeding local priorities through to national programme development. They will advocate and be part of a group of partnerships and organisations that support local networks concerned with developing the sector alongside wider nature and economic interests. This will include a new urban forestry network for FWAC members with this expertise background, facilitated by the London FWAC. FWACs will add value to the FC's enabling of forestry and woodland priorities through providing independent insight into local needs and priorities, increasing citizen engagement and ensuring links to national woodland partnerships where appropriate. FWACs will also benefit from a strong commitment to a voluntary approach in the way they operate, which is in tune with Government's preferred approach to see the sector enabled to pursue its woodland interests with regulation and state intervention only where and to the extent necessary.

FWACs will have an informal role in furthering the interests of forestry in the community. However, their role is advisory and supporting FC communications, not promotional, lobbying or executive.