

Good Woods

for people, for nature

Targeting support where it is needed:

In its inaugural year, *Good Woods* has provided forestry advice to more than 200 woodland owners in the SE and E of England, covering over 10,000 hectares of woodland. With ongoing advice in the form of a report from a professional forester and guided access to the myForest service, an innovative online woodland management tool, Good Woods has provided owners with the inspiration and wherewithal to manage woodlands sustainably, in line with the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS).

Feedback from Forestry Commission England is that there has been both new and renewed contact with woodland owners in the region and that a number of management plan applications have been submitted as direct a result of the *Good Woods* visits. This has addressed directly **recommendation 11 of the Independent Panel's report – to increase the area of woodland with a current UKFS compliant management plan.**

Our nation's woodlands - the Challenge:

In January 2013 the Government released a Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement in which it agreed with an Independent Panel on Forestry view that **'as a society we have lost sight of the value of trees and woodlands'** and in order to address this we need to **'grow a new appreciation for woods and forests'**.

In England alone, around 47% of woodlands are considered either un-managed or under-managed. Bringing these woodlands back into good condition through sustainable woodland management will be integral to growing a new **'wood culture'**, providing more jobs in the forestry sector, improving woodland habitats for nature and creating more places for people to exercise and enjoy the countryside.



A target for Good Woods - neglected ancient woodland in Surrey

Good Woods - a new approach:

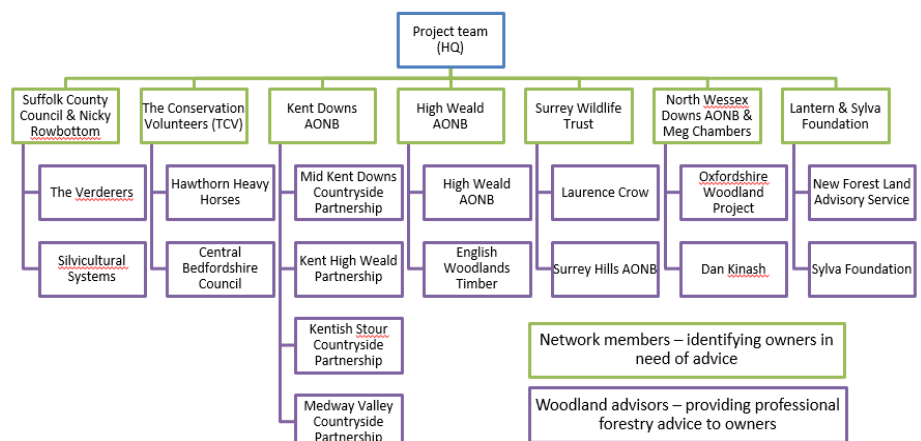
Good Woods is a ground-breaking joint initiative between DIY retailer B&Q, sustainability charity BioRegional, forestry charity The Sylva Foundation and delivery partner Lantern. It was established in January 2013 to:

- Provide professional forestry advice and woodland planning tools to owners of under-managed woods;
- Strengthen links between communities and woodlands by communicating the benefit of working woodlands;
- Improve the markets for woodland products and thereby grow the woodland economy.

Good Woods established a network of organisations ranging from AONBs to Wildlife Trusts, to assist in identifying owners in need of assistance.

Professional forestry advisors were allocated to each network member to deliver on the ground advice to the woodland owners.

Identifying existing stakeholders who have the necessary local knowledge and providing them with forestry resources



The Good Woods network – bringing together the forestry sector to advance Sustainable Forest Management

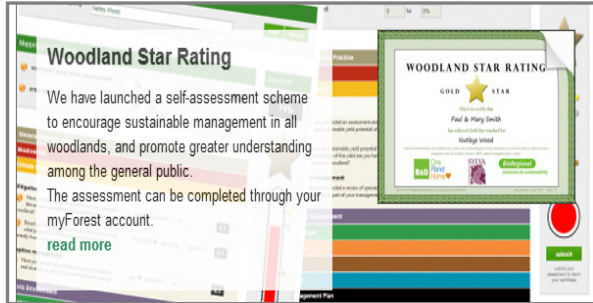
has been central to the inclusive ethos of the Good Woods approach.

The Woodland Star Rating:

Woodland management planning can be a slow process and some owners don't immediately recognise why it is needed for their woodland. To tackle this the **Woodland Star Rating** was developed within Good Woods: a light touch approach to forest management planning that enables woodland owners to get a feel for what the UKFS involves. It provides a

simple checklist and the ability to measure how their woodland management activities match up to the UKFS. It then guides owners to improving their woodland conditions by identifying what further actions they can take. It also helps them promote their achievements publicly.

A UKFS-compliant management plan is required to achieve a gold star. The rating scheme is available to all woodland owners on myForest. Alvecote Wood (7 ha) was the first woodland to



receive a gold star, closely followed by Blenheim Palace Estate (500ha +)

Community engagement – promoting the benefits of forest management

A vital part of growing a thriving wood culture is to facilitate greater levels of community engagement with woodlands across all age groups. *Good Woods* has achieved this by running workshops and providing access to resources to increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of carrying out woodland work.

Good Woods is also further developing the Community Engagement Toolkit. This toolkit provides clear information and resources to support woodland owners and managers to understand how they can build and sustain good community relations. Real case studies will be documented and included in the new version of the toolkit demonstrating where community involvement has improved the management of local woodlands.

These community engagement approaches are aimed at advancing the general public's understanding of a 'wood culture' and thereby support **recommendation 1 of the Independent Panel – 'We urge Society as a whole to value woodlands for the full range of benefits they bring'.**

Forestry - growing the UK's green economy

Good Woods will present a road map of the current UK wood supply chain, from our national woodland resource through to woodland products in national chains. This process will help identify the potential for bringing more timber from British woodlands to market and how B&Q, as one example, could access a greater volume of home-grown timber.

A producer pack is being developed for woodland owners to help them assess the timber species, volumes and product potential from their woodlands. This element of the *Good Woods* project is about emphasising the productivity potential of woodlands and will contribute to **recommendation 18 of the Independent Panel by contributing to industry led action.**

The future

Good Woods provides a scalable model for targeting support to UK woodlands. This approach is coupled with a vision for strengthening the national supply chain to bring more responsibly produced, home-grown timber into our homes and workplaces. The ultimate aim of *Good Woods* is to invigorate the current generations' appreciation of trees and woods and realise the potential that British woodlands can play in all of our lives, both now and in the future.



Woodland owner guidance - Assessing the volume and quality of timber in an oak tree

Good Woods - breathing new life into UK Woodlands

www.myforest.org.uk/goodwoods

BioRegional
solutions for sustainability

