

NFI survey report of the incidence of *Chalara fraxinea* infection of ash in Great Britain, 15 February 2013

Questions and Answers

1. How does this report help us?

This survey used the statistically designed field sample of the National Forest Inventory to sample sites containing ash in order to establish a statistical estimate of the current incidence of *Chalara fraxinea* in British woodlands.

It is different in nature from other recent systematic survey and reporting work on this disease, which has been more extensive and has consequently found many more locations of infection, but which was not based on a statistically randomised sampling design. An example is the map of confirmed locations published at www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara and updated regularly.

This other work has provided information on the spatial pattern and current spread of *C. fraxinea*. The information in this report therefore complements this information by supplying estimates of the average incidence of the disease in British woodlands containing ash.

This survey report gives us a robust baseline against which to measure future changes in the level of Chalara and the effectiveness of management and containment measures.

It forms part of the overall scientific research and information-gathering work under way to inform our efforts to do all we can to minimise the impact of the disease as much as possible.

2. Doesn't the map of confirmed infected sites on your website www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara give you this same information / What's the difference between the two?

As explained in (1) above, the confirmed-sites map on our website only provides the locations of sites where *C. fraxinea* infection has been confirmed. It does not give us any data about the level, or proportion, of Chalara infection across Great Britain, which this survey report does.

3. What are its key findings?

The survey found a Great Britain average of 0.6 per cent of surveyed one-hectare (2.5-acre) squares containing woodland ash trees had trees with symptoms of *Chalara fraxinea* infection.

4. How accurate is it?

This is the first statistically based estimate of *Chalara* infection of ash in Great Britain. The standard error attached to the GB estimate tells us that this estimate, when rounded, is probably correct to the nearest

percentage point (i.e. 1%). The estimate is based upon a relatively small sample, and is only intended to provide an estimate of the overall level of Chalara in British woodland. It did not cover all areas where Chalara has been identified.

5. When was the survey done?

During the last three months of 2012.

6. How many plots were surveyed and how big were they?

469 plots of one hectare (2.5 acres) each across England, Scotland and Wales were surveyed.

7. Does it cover ash trees in all situations such as hedgerows, parks and gardens etc as well as woodland?

No, it only covers ash trees in woodland and forests.

8. Why not other trees?

National Forest Inventory surveys only cover woodland and forest, and surveying for Chalara within the NFI framework enables significant efficiencies. And although it does not cover non-woodland ash trees, it still gives us sufficiently accurate data with which to monitor the progress of the disease overall.

9. What was the survey methodology?

The [report](#) includes an explanation of the methodology used.

The NFI routinely looks at the condition of Britain's woodland trees, and will build up our baseline knowledge across all species, but this was a targeted re-survey focusing on Chalara.

10. Will the survey be repeated, and if so, when and how often?

Yes, we are continuing to visit Ash sites every day as part of the ongoing NFI field survey exercise, and this will provide information from an estimated 1000 one-hectare sample squares containing Ash per year. The option to conduct another resurvey of previously visited squares, as per this exercise, is an option still available to the Forestry Commission in the management of Chalara, which may be taken if judged to be necessary.