

Key Woodland Trust achievements - selected highlights below (for the full version see our Annual Report and Accounts which will be available very shortly).

Protect

- We purchased, in partnership with the National Trust, Fingle Woods in Devon, a complex of 334 hectares (825 acres) of planted ancient woodland
- In conjunction with FC, FERA and the NT we helped to secure a 1.9Million Euro LIFE bid for the Observatree project to create an early warning process for tree disease using citizen science
- We made ancient woodland the number one conservation issue for the HS2 project
- We held an expert seminar in June to discuss the concept of resilience in the context of tree diseases

Improve

- We secured a total of 1200 hectares of restoration of planted ancient woodland sites through partnerships with land owners and forest managers

Expand

- Celebrated with the Prime Minister and HRH Princess Royal the completion of the Jubilee Woods project to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee
- Directly delivered on our own estate or directly inspired others including through Jubilee Woods and MoreWoods the creation of a total of 1311 hectares of new woodland in England
- We have placed new guaranteed long term contracts with several nurseries for future supply of our planting needs, 3 million saplings to be grown in Britain from UK sourced seeds
- Successfully campaigned in part thanks to 30,000 signatories to retain woodland creation grants during the transition period from the old RDP to the new RDP in what would otherwise have been a two year gap.

Lessons learned in 2013

We must recognise that there is a diverse range of threats to our ancient woods – climate and change and disease remain critical issues as noted in the strategy but development pressure is unceasing especially in the context of economic growth being a driver for planning decisions and government policy.

There is some good evidence of forests and forestry beginning to feature on the agendas of other sectors including the water industry and farming, but there remains a lack of engagement and lack of recognition by other government departments of the value of trees and woods to society at large. Planning is a key example of this.

Action on developing woodland resilience needs to be debated, defined and communicated to support the objectives of the government's forest policy and emerging plant health strategy

The use of a 'national moment' to act as catalyst for public interest and support for tree planting and woodland creation and therefore as a way of developing a cultural link with trees and woods should not be underestimated.