

Woodland area, planting and restocking

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This publication contains provisional statistics for the year to March 2008 on:

- UK woodland area;
- certified woodland area; and
- areas of new planting and restocking.

Estimates for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are included in addition to UK totals.

In total for the UK:

- The estimated woodland area is 2.84 million hectares (12 per cent of the surface area of the UK). Of this, 0.82 million hectares is owned or managed by the Forestry Commission (in Great Britain) or the Forest Service (in Northern Ireland).
- The total certified woodland area is 1.27 million hectares, including all Forestry Commission/ Forest Service woodland. Overall, 45 per cent of the woodland area is certified.
- Seven thousand hectares of new woodland were created, mostly with broadleaved species.
- Eighteen thousand hectares of woodland were restocked, mostly with conifers.

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Area of Woodland

Table 1 shows the total area of woodland. Most public sector woodland is owned and managed by the Forestry Commission (FC) in Great Britain and the Forest Service (FS) in Northern Ireland. Other public sector woodland (e.g. owned by local authorities) are included with privately owned woodland as 'non-FC/ FS'.

Table 1: Area of woodland, 2008

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	UK
	thousands of hectares				
FC/ FS					
Conifers	147	424	92	56	720
Broadleaves	55	28	14	5	101
Total	202	452	106	61	821
Non-FC/ FS					
Conifers	219	621	65	10	915
Broadleaves	706	269	114	16	1,105
Total	925	890	179	26	2,020
Total woodland					
Conifers	366	1,045	157	66	1,635
Broadleaves	761	297	128	21	1,207
Total	1,127	1,342	285	87	2,841

Note:

- (1) Areas as at 31 March 2008. Figures are currently provisional.
- (2) Non-FC woodland figures for England, Scotland and Wales are based on data obtained from the 1995-1999 National Inventory of Woodland and Trees and adjusted for new planting and sales of Forestry Commission woodland, but at present no adjustment is made for woodland converted to another land use. They include non-FC publicly owned woodland.
- (3) Broadleaves include coppice and coppice with standards.

Area of Certified Woodland

Table 2 shows the area of certified woodland. The certification of a woodland area requires that forest management practices in that area are assessed regularly against an agreed standard – the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. If timber from certified woodland follows a Chain of Custody from forest to retail outlet that is also certified, then it can be marketed with a label showing it to be certified.

Table 2: Area of certified woodland, 2008

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	UK
FC/ FS	202	452	106	61	821
Non-FC/ FS	139	288	15	3	445
Total	341	740	121	64	1,266

Note:

- (1) All certified woodland is under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) scheme.
- (2) The estimates are based on UK data published by FSC, supplemented by data from individual certificates and other sources. Where possible, figures are for the woodland area certified, rather than the land area certified.
- (3) The Forestry Commission areas are the latest areas, as shown in Table 1, rather than the areas shown on certificates.

New Planting

New planting is the creation of new areas of woodland. Table 3 shows the area of new woodland that has been created in the year to 31 March 2008.

Table 3: Area of new planting, 2008

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	UK
	thousands of hectares				
New planting by forest type					
Conifers	0.1	0.7	0.0	0.1	0.9
Broadleaves	2.4	3.4	0.2	0.5	6.6
All new planting	2.5	4.2	0.2	0.6	7.4
New planting by ownership					
FC/ FS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Non-FC/ FS	2.5	4.2	0.2	0.5	7.4
All new planting	2.5	4.2	0.2	0.6	7.4

Note:

- (1) Non-FC/ FS figures are based on areas for which grants were paid during the year, together with an estimate of areas planted without grant aid.
- (2) The planting season lies both sides of 31 March, and the weather can cause planting to be advanced or delayed.
- (3) Includes woodland formed by natural colonisation.
- (4) Figures are currently provisional.

Restocking

Restocking is the replanting of existing areas of woodland that have been harvested. Table 4 shows the area of restocking that took place in the year to 31 March 2008.

Table 4: Area of restocking, 2008

	thousands of hectares				
	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland	UK
Restocking by forest type					
Conifers	2.0	10.0	1.5	0.5	14.0
Broadleaves	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.0	4.0
All restocking	3.5	11.7	2.3	0.5	18.0
Restocking by ownership					
FC/ FS	2.1	5.0	1.9	0.5	9.5
Non-FC/ FS	1.4	6.7	0.4	0.1	8.5
All restocking	3.5	11.7	2.3	0.5	18.0

Note:

- (1) Non-FC/ FS figures are based on areas for which grants were paid during the year, together with an estimate of areas planted without grant aid.
- (2) The planting season lies both sides of 31 March, and the weather can cause planting to be advanced or delayed.
- (3) Includes woodland formed by natural regeneration
- (4) Figures are currently provisional.
- (5) Restocking by natural regeneration in non-clearfell areas may be under-represented in the above table.

Background

Figures in the tables are individually rounded, so the constituent items may not sum to the totals given.

Area of woodland:

The area of Forestry Commission woodland is obtained from the FC's administrative systems.

The estimates for non-FC woodlands in Great Britain are based on results from the 1995-1999 National Inventory of Woodland and Trees and adjusted for new planting and sales of Forestry Commission woodland. At present, no adjustment is made for woodland converted to another land use nor for changes between conifers and broadleaves resulting from harvesting and restocking.

Figures for Northern Ireland (Forest Service and non-Forest Service woodland) are provided by the Northern Ireland Forest Service.

Certified area:

The data on certified woodland areas are obtained from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), FC's administrative systems and contact with individual land owners and managers.

New planting and restocking:

New planting is the creation of new areas of woodland. Restocking is the replanting of existing areas of woodland that have been harvested. Both new planting and restocking can use planting/ seeding or natural colonisation/ regeneration. The figures here are for all types of woodland.

Information about Forestry Commission new planting and restocking comes from administrative systems. Non-FC information comes principally from grant schemes: the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS), English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS), Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme (SFGS) and Better Woodlands for Wales (BWW). For natural colonisation/ regeneration, the areas are those for which the second instalment of grant has been paid during the year – the second instalment is approved when woodland reaches a certain stage and density of growth, so this information corresponds approximately to the amount of new and restocked woodland created.

Local estimates for areas of planting and restocking which are not FC and which are not grant-aided are included for England, Scotland and Wales. These estimates are relatively small (around 900 hectares in total), and it has been assumed that all of this area is broadleaves.

Woodland area, planting and restocking

The use of natural regeneration in non-clearfell systems is increasing substantially - particularly with regard to broadleaves in England. These systems are not satisfactorily represented by measuring 'restocking area' within any given year, and so broadleaf planting is likely to be under-reported in this First Release and subsequent statistics.

Figures for Northern Ireland (Forest Service and non-Forest Service woodland) are provided by the Northern Ireland Forest Service.

Other publications:

Statistics for previous years are available in Forestry Statistics 2007 (October 2007) and Forestry Facts & Figures 2007 (September 2007). Forestry Statistics 2007 also contains additional information about the sources and methodology, which also applies to the statistics in this First Release. Final results for the year to March 2008 will be published in September 2008 in Forestry Statistics 2008 and Forestry Facts & Figures 2008.

National Statistics:

This is a National Statistics publication. For more information about National Statistics and the UK Statistics Authority visit www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/.