



Forestry and Climate Change Working Group

Forestry Climate Change Working Group All England Woodland Resilience Awards 2021

What are the awards?

Trees and woodlands can play a major role in combating climate change through carbon sequestration and in mitigating some of its worst effects such as extreme rainfall events. All this in addition to the existing well-known benefits woodlands provide for maintaining and increasing biodiversity, producing sustainable timber and for simply being a wonderful place for people to enjoy.

But for trees to deliver these benefits they need not only to be able to survive but to thrive in a potentially very different climate to the one we currently experience. They must adapt to expected rapid environmental change. This will only happen with careful management.

As part of the preparations for the United Kingdom hosting the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in October in Glasgow, the Forestry and Climate Change Working Group (FCCWG), a cross-sector forestry body in England, will make two awards that showcase woodland resilience with regard to climate change in England.

The Climate Change Accord, signed by over 35 forestry organisations, states that:

Managing climate change risk is now a critical part of managing our woodlands, and we must make significant changes to widely accepted and practised forest management in England.

We will make two awards which show best evidence of adopting climate adaptation principles and practice, one each for:

- **Existing woodland management:** focus on adaptive management
- **New woodland creation:** focus on adaptation and nature recovery/biodiversity

The winner of each category will be presented with an award in the autumn at an event to be announced.

Who can enter?

We encourage entries from any woodland owner or agent on behalf of an owner, in England, from the private, public or voluntary sectors.

- For existing woodlands the area covered by the management plan.
- For new woodland creation, areas must be newly planted (less than 5 years old) or sufficiently advanced in the planning stage.
- For both categories a minimum size of 1 hectare applies.



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- Landowners with multiple properties/estates in England may make a maximum of three entries across both award categories provided they are from different properties.
- Woodland entered into the competition should conform to the UK Forestry Standard requirements and guidelines and UKWAS requirements but need not be certified or under any grant scheme. All entries must conform to all legal requirements such as felling licences.

Judging criteria

Entries will be assessed by a panel of three independent judges for each award on the basis of the following principles of forest climate adaptation as set out in [Managing England's Woodlands in a Climate Emergency](#):

1. Woodlands have a UKFS-compliant management plan that clearly states objectives for the woodland and includes contingency plans.
2. Management plan evidences the land manager's understanding of what environmental change will mean for their particular site.
3. Changes are made before the impact is observed, as this offers the highest potential gains for forest resilience.
4. Accept that adaptation has an element of risk and evidence of how that risk is being managed.
5. Actions accommodate the more extreme climate projections up to the end of the century specific to that site.
6. Recognise the diversity of woodland types in England and that appropriate actions will vary with woodland type and management objective.
7. Work with nature and natural processes to enable successive generations of trees and shrubs to adapt to climate change and enhance biodiversity.

Judging process

Due to the ongoing uncertain nature of the Covid19 restrictions the judges may not be able to undertake any site visit although reserve the right to do so should they wish (particularly the short-listed sites).

Therefore, a UKFS compliant management or creation plan will be the principle basis on which entries will be assessed. The [British Woodland Survey 2020](#) highlights weaknesses in planning and thought processes and identified areas that required improvement in the management plan process.

Your entry should address these weaknesses and evidence the decision-making process that underpins your planned management interventions to make the woodland resilient to climate change and facilitate nature recovery.

The management plan should show elements such as planning for a change in silvicultural systems in response to concerns such as drought periods and heavy rainfall, the use of alternative species and genetics within species to reflect projected



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increases in temperature and moisture deficit stress, the use of mixtures for stand health and as an “insurance” element, nursing crops or something else that you believe strongly helps adapt your woodland to potential future climate threats.

We would encourage you to add maps, photos or other evidence which might assist the judges in a fuller evaluation.

For each category of award, a short list will be created. Short-listed entries will either be visited by the judges at a pre-arranged time or a videoconference arranged to discuss the entry in more detail with the owner/agent. Any site visit by judges must be accompanied by the owner or agent.

Short-listed entries may be widely publicised including publication of a case study for wider dissemination of the learning. The owner/agent will approve copy in advance.

In making the selection, the judges will seek to ensure that all woods are given equal opportunity regardless of their size and composition, and that each property is evaluated in its own context. The judges’ decision is final. Judges will not enter into correspondence on individual entries. Brief written feedback may be given for short-listed entries.

No member of the judging panel or their respective organisation may enter their own woods for an award. Any potential conflict of interest will be declared in advance.

The FCCWG reserves the right to:

- a) suspend the competition at its own discretion;
- b) decide against making any awards if it feels they are not warranted.

The judges

The **Woodland Management award** will be judged by:

Dr Gabriel Hemery, FICFor, CEO Sylva Foundation
Simon Lloyd, former Chief Executive, RFS, Chair FCCWG
Chris Sorensen, MICFor, Woodland Resilience Officer, Forestry Commission

The **Woodland Creation Award** will be judged by:

Ian Baker, CEO Small Woods Association
Dr Keith Kirby FICFor, Department of Plant Sciences, Oxford University
Ian Tubby, Principal Advisor for Business and Markets, Forestry Commission

Application process

To enter the competition please complete the entry form which can be downloaded from the RFS web site and send it together with your management plan and any maps and photos to forestryclimatechangewg@gmail.com



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The application form includes a statement up to 500 words to show how your wood is or will be managed for resilience to climate change.

The final deadline for all entries is midnight on Saturday 17 July 2021. Entries received after this date will not be accepted. An email will be sent to acknowledge that your application has been received and will be considered.

Please contact forestryclimatechangewg@gmail.com if you require clarification.

Awards presentation

A certificate of achievement will be presented to the winning and highly commended entries at a high profile event later in the year at a date and venue to be announced.

The Forestry Climate Change Working Group

The purpose of the Forestry Climate Change Working Group (FCCWG) is to promote measures which enhance the adaptation of trees, woods and forests to environmental threats. At a time when evidence may be insufficient or contrary, the group has a particularly important role in presenting a balanced view while highlighting areas where such evidence is contentious and any risks associated in taking or not taking practical action.

The FCCWG is:

- a cross-sector unincorporated body that represents the collective view of the sector on climate adaptation
- the custodian of the Forestry Climate Change Accord (2015) and the action plan which seeks to translate the principles of the Accord into tangible progress on adaptation
- seeks to influence adaptation policy, research and practice
- the collective voice of the forestry sector on climate adaptation

FCCWG members:

CLA, CONFOR, DEFRA, Forestry Commission (England), Forest Research, Future Trees Trust, Institute of Chartered Foresters, Natural England, National Trust, Forestry England, Pryor and Rickett Silviculture, Small Woods Association, Royal Forestry Society, Sylva Foundation, Tilhill Forestry, Tree Council, Woodland Heritage and Woodland Trust.