

Farm Woodland News



**Farm
Advisory
Service**

The newsletter for participants in Farm Woodlands Schemes • Issue Number 29 **Autumn 2017**

In this Edition

Off-cuts
Foraging for Opportunities
Forestry and Water Scotland
Adding Some Glam to the Woods
Common Sense Tree Safety
Love Huts
Landowners to Join the Forestry
Industry Safety Accord (FISA)
Forestry Grant Scheme Update
The Sheep and Trees Grant Package
Shooting Rights and Deer Forests
Timber Market Report
Competition



This newsletter is produced and published by SRUC on behalf of FCS & FAS
SRUC is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC003712



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development
Europe investing in rural areas



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Editorial	2
Off-cuts	2
Foraging for Opportunities	4
Forestry and Water Scotland	7
Adding Some Glam to the Woods	9
Common Sense Tree Safety	12
Love Huts	14
Landowners to Join the Forestry Industry	16
Safety Accord (FISA)	
Forestry Grant Scheme Update	20
The Sheep and Trees Grant Package	22
Shooting Rights and Deer Forests - Rates	25
Timber Market Report - November 2017	27
Competition	28

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of Farm Woodland News.

As we prepared for this edition we became aware of a growing interest in woodland foraging, both at an amateur level and professional. That spurred the inspiration for one of the themes for this edition – alternative produce, and uses, of woodland and forests. SAC Consulting's Food and Drink Specialists have had direct experience with commercial foraging and provide a valuable insight to this enterprise. Another area growing in popularity is the staycation, with more and more people wanting to break away from the mod cons and busyness of our every day lives by going glamping. Similarly, there is an increasing interest in hutting, boosted by a recent relaxation in planning requirements, making it more accessible to those who wish

to holiday in the woods. I explored these two aspects of outdoor leisure and report back on how these can be a great alternative use and income-generator for your woods.

Earlier in the year saw the launch of the Forestry and Water initiative (following on from the Farming and Water initiative), and Julia Garrett of the Forestry Commission brings us up to speed on what this is. This sets the other theme for this edition – land owner responsibilities. We have a contribution from FISA (Forestry Industry Safety Accord) chair Gillian Clarke on what your responsibilities are, as a woodland or forest owner, when it comes to harvesting work. We also have an article on tree safety, looking at how to manage to manage your trees and what your responsibilities are; plus an article on shooting rates.

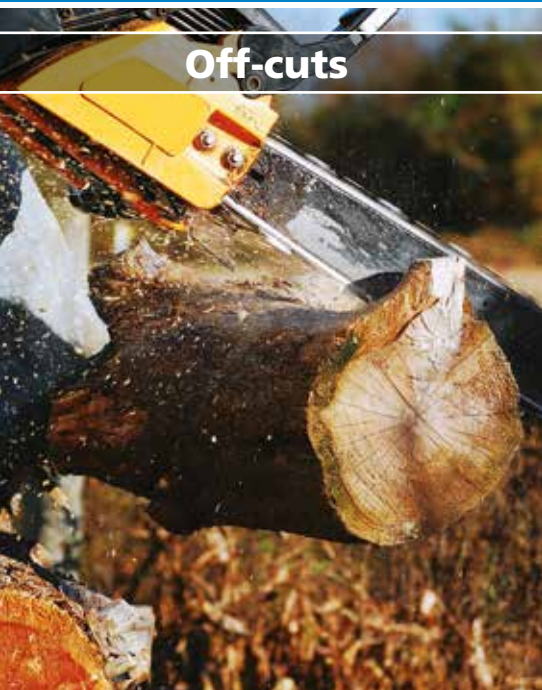
As always we bring you the timber market update and grants update (several recent changes, make sure you have a look).

We hope there's plenty of useful information there for you, and that even some seeds of thought may be sown! Many thanks once again to all our contributors. Enjoy the read!

Malcolm Young
SAC Consulting



Off-cuts



The Forestry Commission will shortly begin tackling Dothistroma Needle Blight (DNB) to protect ancient Caledonian pinewoods in Glenmore, near Aviemore. The work, which has been tried and tested in other plantations, involves felling of heavily diseased non-native lodgepole pine trees within the 308ha McAlpine Plantation, preventing the disease's fungal spores from spreading into the native pine wood. Felling will take place over a five year period, but will not cause any disruption to public access and, with the cleared areas being allowed to naturally regenerate with native species, will provide more good quality habitat for many species including Capercaillie.



SRUC's Barony Campus took delivery of an £80,000 forestry harvesting simulator, donated by John Deere Forestry. The simulators are being used to train harvester and forwarder operators attending the Forest Machine Operator's course, an intensive eight week course developed by the UK Forest Products Association and supported by John Deere Forestry and Forestry Commission Scotland. The first of three such courses has started; spaces are still available in the remaining two courses.

The UK Forestry Standard is now in its fourth edition, published in July 2017. The standard has helpfully been packed into one volume and provides legal and best practice guidance on all forestry activities, which is applicable to all who own or manage woodland.

The Forestry and Land Management Bill (Scotland) is currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament. The biggest shake-up in forestry since the Forestry Commission was formed in 1919, the bill, if implemented, will

see the transfer of forestry powers from the Forestry Commission (currently the statutory body with responsibility for forestry in Scotland) directly to the Scottish Government. The changes would include:

- [The set-up of a Forestry Division within the Environmental Directorate and a new agency to manage the national forest estate, improving accountability and transparency](#)
- [Duties to promote sustainable forestry and preparation of a forest strategy](#)
- [Bringing legislation up to date to better develop, support and regulate the forestry industry in Scotland.](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

In Tasmania two entrepreneurs have begun harvesting timber... under water. The trees, which are still standing, are at the bottom of reservoirs created for hydro power generation, with timber being sold at a premium, based on its unusual provenance.



There is an abundance of delicious and nutritious wild food that can be found in Scottish woodland, hedgerows and moorland. A growing interest in fresh, seasonal and local food is leading to a resurgence in wild-harvesting or foraging. There are upwards of over 300 different species of edible botanicals that are foraged in Scotland, from the well-known brambles, mushrooms and wild garlic through to dulse seaweed, sweet cicely and sea buckthorn. The vast majority of foraged foods are collected by people keen to reconnect with the land and learn more about indigenous, natural food and are collected for personal use to make jams, chutneys, soups etc.

In recent years foraged berries, herbs, mushrooms and edible plants have started to make an appearance in some of Scotland's most innovative restaurants and by forward-thinking food and drink processors, creating a diversification opportunity for woodland owners.

Due to the large abundance of different species available in Scotland, foraging can take place all year round.

- **Winter** – coastal regions are abundant with large varieties of seaweed. Currently in Scotland there are over 20 seaweeds foraged and eaten with five currently being picked for commercial use by large scale producers.

- **Spring** – green botanicals are abundant. These include wild watercress, sweet cicely, wild garlic, wood sorrel, bitter cress and even a number of invasive species including giant hogweed.
- **Summer** – foraging in summer moves on to edible flowers, seeds, grains, nuts and berries. The majority of berries, which include brambles, sea buckthorn, rowan berries, lingonberries and bilberries, are picked for personal use to make jams, jellies and chutneys. Edible flowers including apple mint, sweet chamomile, elder and juniper are used by the restaurant trade and by distilleries, especially the gin producers who use juniper berries.
- **Autumn** – primarily for picking mushrooms and fungi. There are 20-30 varieties of fungi picked in Scotland with approx. five picked for commercial use. These include chanterelles, morel and ceps (porcini).

To make foraging a commercially viable activity, foragers will pick a variety of different products throughout the year, depending on what is in season. The price they can sell foraged foods for depends on the abundance of the product, the time taken for foraging and demand from the food and drink industry. Most foragers will sell directly to restaurants or will supply large wholesalers and are paid per 100g of product.

The best place to find foraged ingredients is in broadleaf woodland. The further south you are, the longer the seasons are for foraging, but most of Scottish woodland can be foraged for wild foods.

There are also geographical pockets in Scotland which have their own micro climate that are wonderful places to forage for a diverse range of natural foods. Broadleaf woodland with its diverse mix and age of species and with its variable habitats is the ideal place to find wild foods that can be abundant throughout the woodland.

Woodland near extensive farming areas can be affected by chemical drift which can have a negative effect on the quantity and variety of species available. Plantation woodlands where single species of trees are grown are not usually suitable for foraging unless you limit your picking to the edges of the plantations. Hedgerows are also excellent places for finding wild foods.

In Scotland, the "right to roam" under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 permits foragers to use all land, public or private, for recreation, education and access with only a few restrictions. This allows foragers the right to forage for materials for personal consumption and for teaching but not the right to uproot. It is recommended that foragers only pick 20% of a species at any one place to ensure each species is not

over picked. For foraging for commercial use, foragers need permission from the landowner.

For those interested in foraging, it is highly recommended that they attend a foraging tour or course. A good number of expert foragers offer courses on responsible foraging showing participants what to look out for, what to expect in each season and how to harvest sustainably. The following are a good source of information:

- The Scottish Wild Harvests Association (<http://scottishwildharvests.org.uk>) provides information about wild harvesting in Scotland.
- Association of Foragers (<http://foragers-association.org.uk>) provide a list of local foraging educators running courses, workshops and events.
- The British Botanical Society Code of Conduct leaflet (<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/3960531/code-of-conduct-botanical-society-of-the-british-isles>) gives a good overview of how to responsibly and legally enjoy wild foods.

With regard to commercial use, wild berries are becoming very popular in the drinks industry. A number of gin distilleries use foraged ingredients, in particular juniper berries, to flavour their gin products. The distilleries have agreements with local land owners to pick a certain amount of berries from local forests (with the necessary approvals in place).

Common practice is for woodland owners to get advice from foraging experts but pick the products themselves, or to hire local foragers to pick for them. It is also common for organisations to get a health analysis carried out on the juniper to check if it is suitable for use and if picking will be sustainable.

CONTINUED OVER

Elderberry is also becoming a very popular ingredient, with a whisky producer using it for production of elderberry whisky liquor. They pick approximately one tonne of elderberries from East Lothian themselves over the four week harvest. They then de-stem and process the fruits to produce a syrup which they freeze or use to make the liquor. The producer is looking for a guaranteed supply of high quality elderberries and, whilst they are considering planting and harvesting themselves, this can result in additional problems as wild products can be extremely difficult to cultivate.

There are a number of drink producers that use sea buckthorn in their products. An apple juice manufacturer adds foraged sea buckthorn to their juice which adds additional health benefits to the final product. There is also a sea buckthorn drinks producer from East Lothian that has a sustainable harvesting agreement with East Lothian Council. They harvest the berries themselves over the winter months and then pasteurise and bottle before selling to shops and restaurants in Edinburgh, Glasgow and London.

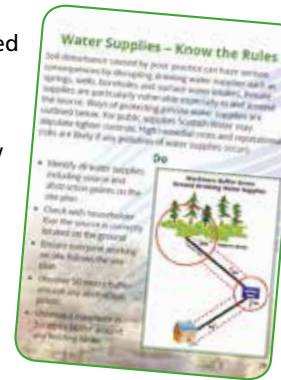
There are a number of ongoing issues in the foraging sector that may have to be overcome if the sector is going to expand and grow. At the moment there are no systems in place to check the quality and health of the foraged produce. The system completely relies on the trust between end users and the forager. Some of the well established foragers keep records of what and how much they pick which can help with traceability and standards of the materials.

An area that may also have to be revamped is the process of getting permission from landowners to forage on their land. If the sector is going to expand and thrive there needs to be a system where foragers can obtain long term permissions. Foragers are keen to point out to landowners that they can act as additional stewards of the land. It is in the forager's best interest to preserve the land and to ensure plants prosper and grow so they can go back and pick the following year. Foragers would encourage all landowners to learn about foraging and the benefits foraging can bring to their land.



Standard as well as the General Binding Rules which operate in Scotland, and the straightforward messages given by Forestry & Water Scotland remind all woodland workers what to do.

- An illustrated pocket book called Know the Rules, which gives straightforward messages on how to protect water quality during forestry activities such as ground preparation, drainage, storing and handling fuels and using pesticides and fertilisers;
- A handy vehicle sticker called Keep Your Distance, which sets out the minimum working distances from watercourses;
- Three videos, in which woodland managers from around Scotland showcase good practice, plus another video from Sweden;
- A library of key reference publications;
- Contact details to request copies of the booklet and sticker, seek advice, or report a pollution incident.



Earlier this year a new initiative was launched to help anyone who manages woodlands to minimise and mitigate the risk of their activities causing diffuse pollution. The initiative, called Forestry & Water Scotland, is a partnership between Scottish Government, Forestry Commission Scotland, SEPA and the forestry sector (Confor and the Forestry Contracting Association).

It was established following a similar successful project with the agricultural sector called 'Farming and Water Scotland', and focuses on prevention rather than cure to mitigate risks and keep a woodland manager's costs down.

A new webpage is available at www.forestrywaterscotland.com, offering a range of materials that explain how forestry operations should be planned, carried out and monitored to protect the water environment. Forestry operations on farmland must comply with the UK Forestry



Managers of farm woodlands will be able to make good use of this material. The Know the Rules booklet, for example, has guidance on ground preparation, protecting private water supplies, and installing silt traps and sumps.

The booklet explains and illustrates four easy ways to reduce the risk of diffuse pollution:

1. Identify and manage sites and operations that are high risk;
2. Ensure good site drainage;
3. Protect watercourses by using buffer zones;
4. Ensure everyone is aware of the rules.



“The Forestry & Water Scotland initiative shows how woodland managers can reduce costs and comply with legislation at the same time. These materials show how good planning makes it easy to stop soils, nutrients, pesticides and oil getting into watercourses. By aiming for prevention rather than cure when it comes to water quality, managers of farm woodland will avoid the costs of remediation and possibly fine, comply with legislation and the UK Forestry Standard, and showcase high quality stewardship of their local environment.”

Dr Julia Garritt Land Use Practice Advisor
for Forestry Commission Scotland

Adding Some Glam to the Woods

Malcolm Young
SAC Consulting



Relatively little is required in site preparation.



The interior of an en-suite Wigwam®.

Glamping: ‘a form of camping involving accommodation and facilities more luxurious than those associated with traditional camping’ (Oxford Dictionaries).

More and more people are looking for glamping holidays; cheaper than resorts and hotels, in touch with the outdoors but without the gutters and grime so often experienced with camping in Scotland. Tourism statistics, backed by anecdotal evidence, indicate increasing popularity of ‘staycations’ (not going abroad for holidays), and it’s an opportunity not to be missed for those wishing to diversify their land-based incomes.

Glamping sites have appeared in many parts of the country, either as independent businesses or as part of a franchise. One such franchise is Wigwam® Holidays. I spent a September morning at the Strathfillan Wigwam® Cabins near Crianlarich, in the presence of manager Rena Baillie who oversaw the set-up of the site on the farm 23 years ago.

The glamping pod concept was the brainchild of Charles Gulland, now Managing Director of Wigwam® Holidays. Looking to utilise timber from thinnings which at the time was otherwise going to go to waste, he was inspired to mill the timber and build the first ever glamping pod, with a view to finding locations for them along

the West Highland Way. A chance meeting in a pub led to a source of grant funding which kick-started the business, which now has 80 franchises across the UK.

The emphasis of the glamping pod holiday is on low impact; minimal electricity and mod-cons, minimal infrastructure, minimal landscape impact, local produce, low cost to customer, easy to install and low start-up and running costs.

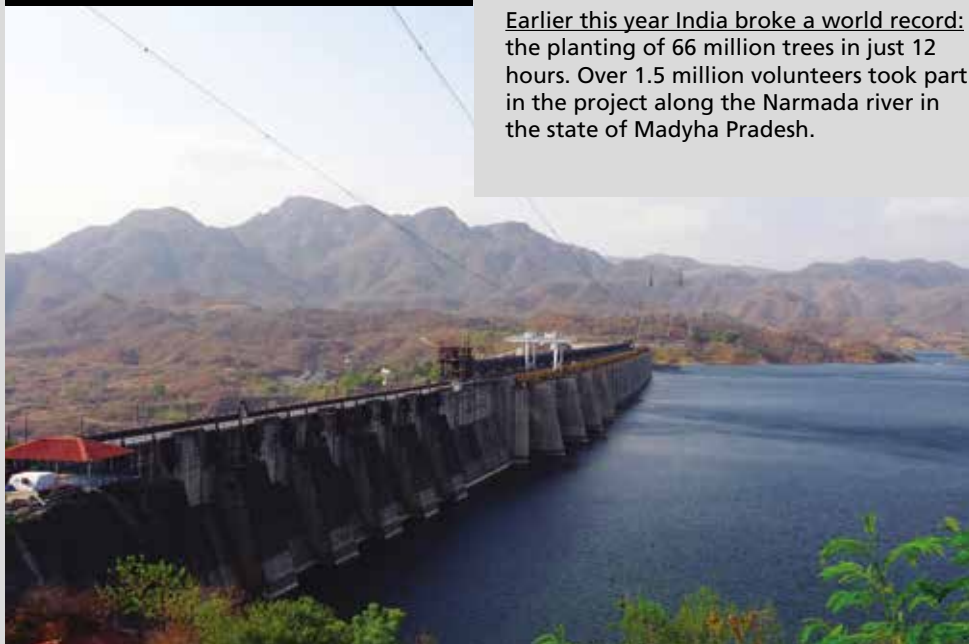
From Rena and farming husband Tom’s point of view there are two key advantages to trying out the glamping pod experiment. The first was diversification to boost income. Rena was already running a bed and breakfast and adding a couple of glamping pods seemed like a sensible extension of the hospitality venture. The second was to provide employment for shepherds’ wives who otherwise had little in the way of job opportunities by virtue of the farm’s location.

Site preparation was, and still is, very simple (one of the attractions of the glamping pod set-up), comprising minor site levelling, drainage, laying of hardcore on a footprint just slightly larger than the pod itself, and setting out of concrete blocks for the pod’s feet to sit on. The infrastructure that exists now (car access, power, shop etc) has been built up over the years.

CONTINUED OVER

DID YOU KNOW?

Earlier this year India broke a world record: the planting of 66 million trees in just 12 hours. Over 1.5 million volunteers took part in the project along the Narmada river in the state of Madyha Pradesh.



The Wigwam® design has evolved and there are now two types of pod: basic and en-suite, although there are other manufacturers working to an array of specifications. The dimensions are designed to allow easy transport by lorry, and the curved shape maximises standing room while maintaining a 'tent' feeling. Interestingly an early version that was based on a typical shed shape, even with en-suite, attracts fewer bookings, suggesting that there is a desire for a form of holiday accommodation which does not feel like 'just another' room.

Many of the pods are located in or on the edge of woodland. Rena confesses that she struggled to imagine the damp soggy hollow in the woods being anything other than a miserable hole, but after a few trees were removed to create some small clearings, a little drainage and some hard-core laid, the location was transformed and lent itself to glamping pods. In fact the pods located wholly within the woodland are the most popular amongst visitors.

The woodland setting is part of the success of the glamping pods. It's long been known that woodland can carry many more people than open ground can – not from a physical point of view but psychological; the trees simply hide the people from each other, reducing the perception of what would otherwise be considered a busy location. Families enjoy the woodland (and the river) because it's wild, providing ample opportunity for exploration for both kids and 'big kids'. There is no playground at Strathfillan; they don't need one when there's woodland. There is a nature trail and an all-abilities footpath through it.

Having started 23 years ago with only two pods, Strathfillan is thriving with 27 accommodation units. This includes 21 Wigwams, five lodges and a Mongolian yurt. The addition of the en-suite pods has widened the market for Strathfillan, bringing more people in, from further afield, for longer stays, at any time of the year. There are many repeat customers.

Now employing three full-time staff and eight seasonal staff, the enterprise provides a significant proportion of the farm's income, and continues to grow as demand increases.

The income doesn't just come from the sale of nights. The add-ons are a vital source of income. Payment for the privilege of a late check-out from four individuals could be the equivalent income of a one night stay. Wifi was a recent installation; within a year it has covered its cost three times over. Sale of firewood. Bike hire. A shop – which even sells kangaroo, camel and shark meat.

Wigwam® Holidays is now just one of several players in the glamping market, be they franchises or independent businesses. The success of the glamping holiday business lies partly in the simplicity of the set-up of a site. Most glamping pods are manufactured off-site and delivered on a flat-bed lorry with hiab. Relatively little is required in the way of site preparation.

There are of course a few things to be aware of if you're considering diversifying into glamping.

Economics

Understandably businesses are not keen to give away their figures. What can be used as a measure of the viability of a glamping pod venture is the pay-back period, which can be as little as two years. Further details can be found by talking to glamping pod suppliers and franchises.

Business Model

You can choose to set up as part of a franchise, or independently. The franchise option has the advantages of brand name, geographical exclusivity (within that brand), marketing, assistance with planning and even with set-up costs. Alternatively you can set up independently, giving you complete freedom (within the limitations of planning and affordability) as to type and number of pods.



The woodland gives more privacy to each Wigwam®.

Type of Pod

Wigwam® Cabins are constructed and clad with timber, with little required in the way of maintenance. But there are other options including shingle-clad and canvas-clad pods. The latter is perhaps closer to the camping experience and cheaper to purchase, but the canvas requires replacement about every three to four years and use will be more seasonal.

Unique Selling Point

What makes your location so special that customers would want to come to your site and not others? It may be something that already exists (and can expand from), or it may be something you can manufacture as part of the business. What market are you aiming at: basic, standard or luxury?

Power

Do you need electricity? Can you manage with solar-powered lanterns and/or 12v lighting? Can you install wood-burners for heating? If you do need power, consider the distance – and the cost – of running underground electric cables from source to pods, to supply power for lights, heating, fridges, microwave and kettle.

Planning

Glamping pods are classed as mobile homes so only require temporary planning permission. A building warrant will be

required if you plan to install any kind of grey-water drainage and/or septic system. Also consider how your site will be reached from the public road; is your entrance safe? You may need planning permission if the entrance needs widening or upgraded.

Access

Do you want customers to be able to park outside their pod, or to park centrally and walk to the pod to maximise the woodland feel? That will then have a bearing on what form of glamping pod you use – a pre-fabricated 'plug-and-play' unit, or a site-built kit. If delivered as a pre-fabricated unit then lorry access right to the plot will be required.

Insurance

Public liability insurance is an absolute must. Also important though are buildings insurance (make sure you find an insurer who will specifically insure wooden buildings), and woodland insurance.

Maintenance

There will always be a need for repairs and replacement of items as they wear and tear. The floor makes a large statement for the whole pod, always make sure its clean and in good condition; a scruffy floor can make the whole pod feel scruffy. Wooden pods should ideally be clad with pressure treated timber, requiring a coat of paint every couple of years. Canvas pods will require the canvas to be replaced every four years or so.



Risk is acceptable where certain conditions apply:

- where the likelihood of damage or injury is extremely low
- where the hazard (that is, the tree or branch itself) is obvious to all using the land adjacent to the tree
- the benefits of the tree are obvious
- removing the risks would result in the loss of the benefits
- there is no reasonably practicable way to deal with the risk.

At the most basic level of risk identification is risk zoning. This starts as a map-based exercise, identifying where people are in relation to the trees on your property, and the nature of use of the land they are on. Risk zones would typically range from 1 to 5, with 1 being high risk and 5 being low risk. High risk zones would include places where there are many people for sustained periods of time, or many people moving at high speed eg, schools or 'A' roads. At the opposite end of the spectrum, low risk zones are where there are few people on an infrequent basis or moving at low speed eg, quiet footpaths or quiet country roads. The risk zones should be clearly marked on a map.

Risk zoning alone is however not sufficient to fulfil the tree owner's duty of care. This must be followed up by a tree survey. There is no legal guidance as to the detail of a tree survey, but the standard of care demonstrated should be that of the 'reasonable and prudent land owner'. In carrying out their duty of care, a land owner does not guarantee the safety of a tree.

In being reasonable and prudent, the standard of care demonstrated by a land owner is expected to be the result of a

balance of the risk posed by the trees, and the cost of the type of tree inspection. The standard of inspection is indicated by courts to be proportionate to the 'size of and resources available (in terms of expertise) of the landowner'.

The duty of care differs where the land owner is in the business of growing and managing trees. In this case the duty of care falls under The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, whereby the land owner must 'make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking'.

Failure to exercise this duty of care can constitute legal criminality. But in going about their duty of care, employers are expected to do what is 'reasonable and practicable'.

In both circumstances above, a balance must be made between the risk posed and the resources required to assess tree condition. In carrying out tree inspections, the duty of care obligation requires 'obvious defects' to be recorded and acted upon. Obvious defects are considered to be those which can be identified by most people, regardless of specialist tree knowledge.

Whatever the method employed, it must be defensible. Where there is a relatively small tree population it may be entirely possible to inspect and record every tree. But where there are extensive populations of trees it would be acceptable to record the location and details of only those trees requiring remedial work. In the latter case, where there is also a high risk zone, the method of inspection can remain the same but the frequency increased.

Further reading can be found on Common Sense Risk Management of Trees, downloadable as a PDF here: <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/safetreemanagement>





Courtesy of Donald McPhillimy

In Scandinavian countries, many families have a summer house, which in reality is a wooden cabin or hut in the woods they retreat to at weekends or for holidays. In Sweden alone there are over 600,000 summer houses and more than 50% of the population have access to one through family or friends. It's a strong tradition that has continued for generations, with the summer house being passed down the family from one generation to the next. Being surrounded by nature, working with one's hands, completing simple tasks for the sake of just living from one day to the next, is an antidote to the high-paced artificial lives we live.

Huts and hutting, as it's known in Scotland, has been around since the First World War, when the Carbeth hut community was set up to accommodate returning soldiers in a peaceful environment. This and other hut communities grew over the following years near industrial cities as they offered cheap holiday accommodation for low-income families, peaking in the 1940s as emergency accommodation during World War Two bombing of the industrial cities. Traditionally the hutter owns the hut and pays a lease to the land owner for the use of the land.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in hutting. For the past 25 years the charity Reforesting Scotland has campaigned for a 'sustainable forest culture in Scotland', part of which was the launch of the campaign A Thousand Huts, in 2011. The aim of this campaign is 'to promote huts

and hutting – the building and enjoyment of simple structures (usually wooden) for living, working and recreation in the countryside'. The campaign took a major leap forward in 2014 when the Scottish Government recognised and included huts in Scottish planning policy. Until then there had been no definition of a hut, which proved to be a barrier to seeking permission to build one. The development of huts is seen as another way of stimulating the rural economy.

The whole ethos of hutting is centred on low impact, and this is reflected in the Scottish Government's definition of a hut: 'A simple building used intermittently as recreational accommodation (i.e. not a principal residence); having an internal floor area of no more than 30m²; constructed from low impact materials; generally not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage; and built in such a way that it is removable with little or no trace at the end of its life. Huts may be built singly or in groups.'

- Design, materials, construction, waste management and access should all be ecologically sustainable;
- Hut sites should be carefully chosen, avoiding those sites which are not suited to them;
- Decision-making should include the local community to ensure community cohesion;
- 'Robust and equitable tenancy agreements giving clarity to tenant hutters and landowners';
- Safeguards to prevent hut sites being further developed, with greater impacts, in the future.

Huts do require planning permission. But further recent developments in legislation (as of July 2017, and the result of public consultation) mean that building regulations for huts have been relaxed, making it

easier and cheaper to build them. Scottish Government have created a new building type especially for hutting, which exempts huts from many building regulations; those regulations which must be followed (relating to structure, stoves, barriers) will not need a building warrant but are still required by law to be followed. A building warrant is required for underground drainage, or if limitations are exceeded (eg. floor area, minimum distance to other buildings).

Reforesting Scotland has produced a guidance paper 'New hutting developments: Good practice guidance on the planning, development and management of huts and hut sites', which can be downloaded from the internet here: <http://www.thousandhuts.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/160215-Huts-Guidance-FINAL-screen-res.pdf>

Groups of huts are permitted, traditionally these have been up to 12 but usually far fewer. The number of huts at the Carbeth site (approx. 140) is unusual and would not be permitted under the current planning arrangements.

It is important to note when a hut is not a hut. Huts do NOT include fishing huts, climbing huts or bothies (due to their different use), shipping containers, caravans, portacabins, buildings made with breezeblocks etc, or holiday chalets (because they are fully serviced).



Courtesy of Donald McPhillimy

One of the main premises of hutting is its affordability. The construction of huts is based on low cost and low impact, with the land on which it sits being rented. And this is perhaps the single most important aspect that must be considered right at the outset, by both land owner and hutter.

History shows that informal agreements between the two parties have often ended in disappointment, typically because a landowner has sold the land and the hutter then finds they have no legal right to their hut. This can be avoided by making a mutually agreed formal contract between both parties, for which you should seek expert advice. In summary this should include:

- Lease period;
- Terms of lease;
- Notice periods;
- Who holds the rights to the hut during the lease period, and what happens to the land/hut and rights to each if the land or hut is sold.

The vast majority of hutters have a keen interest in the environment and their hut's surroundings. Part of an agreement may therefore include some aspect on woodland management, extending some way beyond the hut itself, providing firewood for the hutter (and perhaps the landowner) and low-impact management of what may be an otherwise non-viable wood in commercial management terms.

So why would you allow a hut development on your land? Additional income from the lease, low-impact management of your woods, spending in the local economy. And what should you look out for? Make sure you're satisfied with the character of the prospective hutters, and the location and design of the proposed hut. But most of all, make sure that you have a mutually agreed, formal tenancy contract in place.

More information can be found at www.thousandhuts.org

DID YOU KNOW?



Possibly one of the more unusual uses of wood was discovered caught in a fishing net off the Somerset coast in 1972. Because of its suspicious shape and size bomb disposal were called. On applying a stethoscope to the object, they reported hearing the munching of lots of marine worms. The object turned out to be a practice torpedo from the 1940s made of Douglas fir.

Landowners to Join the Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA) in Challenge to Improve Forest Safety

Gillian Clark *FISA*

In the five years up to March 2012, there was an average of 10.4 forestry fatalities per 100,000 workers. This is more than three times the fatality rate for the construction industry.

In 2012, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) called a safety summit, bringing together stakeholders from across the industry and continues to challenge the industry following the formation of FISA. The message is clear, things needed to change.

Everyone involved in forestry must work together in a coordinated and managed way to reduce the number of serious and fatal accidents.

FISA membership has grown steadily to over 900 members. For the next three years FISA, through strong and committed leadership, will:

- Provide the necessary strategic direction and impetus to raise health, safety and welfare standards throughout the industry
- Provide clear and proactive leadership to change attitudes and behaviour at every level in the industry
- Involve everybody working in the industry to ensure individual and collective responsibility for health and safety, avoiding unacceptable risks and challenging unsafe practices
- Develop ways for the industry to share safety statistics, data and information
- Maintain and improve safe working practices, through training and raising the competency of those working in the industry at every level
- Recognising that improvements to the industry's health and safety performance requires sustained commitment and action – being equitable and fair to all those involved

We have already had excellent support from a wide range of forestry sectors stakeholders who have signed the Accord and are giving it their full backing. We want everyone from across the timber supply chain – including farmers and landowners – to join by signing the Accord.

The landowner has a key part to play in forest safety. The landowner role includes the following key tasks, which you can use as a checklist as you prepare for felling work:

1. Co-ordination of the activities of the overall forest environment for health and safety.

The Landowner has the task of maintaining an overall responsibility of what is happening on their forested land and on land which provides access to forested areas.

The Landowner should plan forestry work and organise the work so that risks are avoided from the outset where possible. The following issues should be considered, ideally before a discussion of timber price is commenced in the event of a timber sale to a third party.

- What else will be happening in the forest or on the farm at the time the operations are scheduled?
- Can the work be timed to avoid public access peaks?
- What effect does the timing have on the ground conditions that contractors will have to deal with, such as seasonal implications?
- How will vehicles, plant and, or, timber be moved on and off the site, and how does that fit in with other vehicle movements in the forest or on the farm?
- How will this work affect the health and safety of people working in or visiting the forest or on the farm?
- Liaise with others for the forest operations (for example individuals or communities affected by timber transport) where necessary.

2. Gather information about hazards to, on and around forestry worksites, and communicate to the Forest Works Manager (FWM).

The FWM has to plan the work with any contractors on the site. To do this properly, they will require current detailed and specific information from the Landowner about hazards to, on and around the site that could give rise to health and safety risks. This is probably best presented as an up-to-date and effectively detailed map. Study the proposed site and the access to it and identify the location of hazards such as:

- routes or areas of public access;
- overhead power lines;
- underground utilities;
- areas of steep or particularly hazardous terrain, such as mine workings, cliff edges and hazardous topography; and
- areas of windblown or diseased trees;
- boundaries with neighbours.

The Landowner should also ensure that forest and access roads are fit for purpose with the FWM and haulage contractor. The Road Haulage of Round Timber Code of Practice sets out road specifications and the roles of each party for forest roads and access. A Landowner should only take on the role of FWM if they are able to demonstrate they are competent to do so.



CONTINUED OVER

3. Ensure that the work on a particular site does not affect the health and safety of other people.

This task relies on discussing and agreeing with the FWM, together, how to protect the health and safety of other people who may be affected by the work. These may include members of the public, other workers in the forest or farm, such as your own employees, the employees of others (for example tenants) and other contractors. This task is best carried out with a pre-commencement meeting and areas you will need to explore with the FWM include measures to control the risks on site affecting others, for example:

- levels of training and supervision the FWM and their workers will require on the site;
- restrictions on weekend or holiday working;
- measures to control access to the site, for example:
 - providing information to the public at the entrances to the forest;
 - applying for temporary diversion or closure of public footpaths;
 - arranging footpath permissions, and Overhead Power Lines (OHPL) switch-offs;
 - erecting warning and prohibition signs or barriers;
 - use of banksmen when working near areas of public access; and
 - directional routes for timber movement, diversions and weight restrictions, as well as restrictions on road use or diversions and way marking of routes;
 - agreeing who will check measures to ensure they are working;
 - agreeing what action to take if measures to protect members of the public are not working.

The landowner will also have additional responsibilities if they engage a company to both manage and carry out the forestry operation on their behalf. In this situation the Landowner must ensure that the company contracted to manage the operation is suitably qualified, experienced and have sufficient resource to manage the operations.

Where the Landowner contracts out the duties of the FWM, the terms and conditions of the contract should be in writing. This should also state the scope and limitations of the appointment. The Landowner must ensure that the company undertakes its own monitoring and supervision. The Landowner should also carry out periodic monitoring and auditing of the company's work.

FISA provides a one day course for Landowners, FWMs and Contractors to better understand the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the timber supply chain in relation to safety and their Duty of Care.

For more information, please visit our website www.ukfisa.com or get in touch at info@ukfisa.com



Case Study

From a small farm estate to a large clear-fell contract, pre-planning and good contract management is essential. Roadside felling can be just one of the many hazards and constraints that may be presented, that can pose potential risk to various interested parties. This is evident on a Scottish Woodlands 20,000t clear-fell contract near Leadhills, South Lanarkshire, which has 2.5km of public road frontage where trees are within striking distance of the road. The following points outline just a few of the steps and thoughts that have been associated with the roadside felling, thus ensuring that key health and safety responsibilities are met by the Land Owner, Agent, Forest Works Manager and Contractor:

- Assessing the risk zones and quantifying the time required to harvest the tonnage involved
- Costing the type and quantity of traffic management at time of budget
- Selecting a competent and qualified timber harvesting contractor to carry out the operation
- Consulting with the Local Authority to agree the appropriate method of traffic control and to avoid any potential conflict with another planned road occupancy
- Minimise impact on other road users by spreading traffic management out across the contract in planned, phased sections
- Engaging a competent traffic management company to apply for the permissions and supply and install approved traffic management apparatus.

DID YOU KNOW?

Trees are not usually as strikingly colourful as flowering plants, but there are a few exceptions. One of the most notable is the rainbow eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus delugata*), found in New Guinea, Sulawesi, New Britain and Mindanao (it's also the only Eucalypt that is native in the northern hemisphere).

The tree sheds its bark annually at different times revealing a bright green fresh bark. This then slowly changes to blue and progresses to purple, orange and then maroon. The result is a tree with multi-coloured stripes. Unfortunately the colours are not as intense outside the tree's native range.



Forestry Grant Scheme Update



There have been several recent changes to the Forestry Grant Scheme which affect the following options:

- Woodland Creation
- Agroforestry
- Harvesting and Processing
- Tree Health

Sheep and Trees

The Sheep and Trees grant package has been available since June and is part of the initiative which is aimed at identifying and raising awareness of the many opportunities woodland can bring to farmers and land managers. This grant package is available to upland livestock farmers where sheep are a major component. It combines the woodland creation 'Conifer' and/or 'Diverse Conifer' and Forest Infrastructure options, allowing a grant for forest road to be applied for at the same time as woodland creation.

Further details on woodland creation can be found here: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-creation/>

Further details on the infrastructure grant can be found here: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/publicsite/futures/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/forest-infrastructure/>

Gorse Removal

A new capital item for gorse removal has been added to the Woodland Creation option. This is available to all Woodland Creation applications submitted from 1 September 2017. It is a standard cost capital item of £720/ha and aims to encourage landowners with some gorse sites to apply for woodland creation. Please see the specification in the capital grant operations table for details.

Native Broadleaves in Northern and Western Isles

This option has been expanded so that elsewhere within the crofting counties it can be applied for where exposure is high and the local FCS Conservancy agrees that this is the best silvicultural option to establish a new native woodland.

This option cannot be applied for in association with other woodland creation options. Also, please note that on appropriate west coast sites Hazel will now be accepted as a native tree species under the Native Broadleaves option.

Agroforestry

Aspen has been added to the list of suitable productive broadleaf trees available for planting in this option.

Harvesting and Processing

We are expanding our Harvesting and Processing grant option to include support for: small scale secondary wood processing equipment, forest tree nurseries, and new specialised equipment for afforestation ground preparation.

Secondary Processing

Secondary processing equipment is now eligible for grant support. Grant support is 40 per cent of actual costs with a minimum grant award of £1,000 and a maximum of £6,000, per application.

Tree Nursery and Ground Preparation

Equipment for tree nurseries and ground preparation are included under this option. Grant support is 40 per cent of actual costs with a minimum grant award of £2,500 and a maximum of £35,000, per application.

Tree Health

Following discussions with communities on the west coast islands who are dealing with Ramorum outbreaks, changes are being made to the Tree Health and Forestry Co-operation options.

Uneconomic Felling of Larch for Islands – first 5ha

This new standard cost capital item is being introduced for island areas where FCS is

satisfied that the net cost of carrying out the operation exceeds the value of this capital item: £2,400/ha.

This capital item will be available from 1st January 2018, however for exceptional circumstances please contact your local Conservancy.

Forestry Co-operation and Tree Health

The Forestry Co-operation grant has been expanded to allow communities dealing with Ramorum outbreaks the opportunity to apply for funding in order to encourage landscape-scale collaborative projects. It is hoped that this will provide owners affected by Ramorum the opportunity to work together through a single agent in order to improve economies of scale.



The Sheep and Trees Grant Package

Stephen Adlard
SAC Consulting



The costs of putting in the road will vary considerably depending on the ground conditions, number of stream crossings, proximity of suitable stone to quarry etc. One road I was recently involved in cost about £30/metre but £40/metre is not unusual, although in a few situations you may make a profit on the grant.

Under the package the forest infrastructure grant is available in addition to most of the woodland creation grants such as the initial planting grant and associated woodland creation capital grants such as for fencing and tree shelters. Please note, however, that if you are lucky enough to be in the Central Scotland Green Network area (central Scotland, Ayrshire and parts of Fife) and therefore eligible for the CSGN contribution you cannot claim both the CSGN contribution and the Forestry Infrastructure grant but have to choose between them. In nearly all cases you will be better off with the CSGN contribution.

There are a number of restrictions with regard to whom and what kind of schemes will be eligible for the grant package. Some details of this scheme are still emerging and so it is important to speak to your advisor who should be liaising closely with your local Forestry Commission Conservancy office at an early stage.

Firstly, you need to be a livestock farmer where sheep are a major component of the enterprise and you will continue to farm. For most farmers it will be obvious if they meet these criteria but for some you may need to seek clarification from the Forestry Commission.

Secondly, the new woodland must be between 10 hectares and 50 hectares of productive conifer woodland using the 'Conifer' or 'Diverse Conifer' options.

The Sheep and Trees grant package was launched at the end of June 2017. It is an initiative aimed at upland livestock farms encouraging the planting of significant areas of productive conifer woodland while maintaining the farming enterprise.

It brings together two different elements of the Forestry Grant Scheme - Woodland Creation and Forest Infrastructure. Previously the Forestry Infrastructure support was only available for landowners with areas of mature woodland where some harvesting was due within 5 years of the application. The Sheep and Tree grant package means that you are now able to put in a road to access the woodland at the time of planting.

The level of the forest infrastructure grant is set at £25.80 per metre of road with an additional £6.60 per square metre for reasonable areas of loading bays, lay-bys and turning areas. The road has to be constructed to full Forestry Road specification with suitable material, on a properly graded base and appropriate depth of pavement (the appropriate depth will depend on the soil conditions). There will need to be suitable roadside drainage and the stream crossings properly culverted.

This package is therefore limited to 50 hectares per application.

The length of road you can claim is limited to 30m for every hectare of productive conifer woodland (including diverse conifer) planted. So you can claim for a grant for between 300m and 1500m of forest road depending on the area of woodland planted. Turning circles, loading bays and lay-bys can be claimed in addition to this.

There are a number of points worth emphasising here:

- 1. To be eligible for the grant package each individual block of woodland needs to be at least 10ha in size. For example, if you are planting 20ha of productive conifer but in 4 blocks of 5ha each spread across your farm to maximise the effective shelter, you will not be eligible for the Sheep and Tree grant package.**

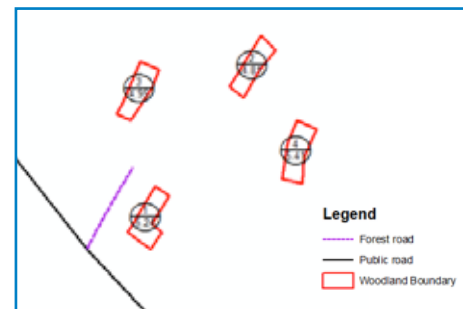


Figure 1: This is an example of planting that would not be eligible for the Sheep and Trees package due to the individual blocks being less than 10ha each.

- 2. Only those woodland blocks that are serviced by the road and are over 10ha are eligible for infrastructure support. For example, if you intend to plant 40ha of woodland in two blocks with one 20ha block being served by the road and another 20ha block on the other side of the farm**

not being served by the new road you would only be able to claim for 20ha x 30m = 600m of new forest road under the grant package, not 1200m. Even the vision of a road 'spine' with outlier blocks of productive conifers that are harvested to the road in 40 years, is not accepted, the road needs to go to the block or blocks.

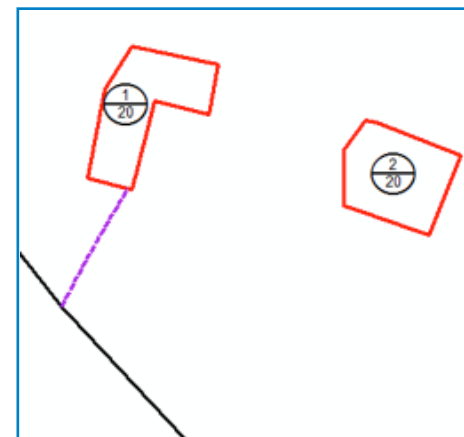


Figure 2: With this arrangement only compartment 1 would be eligible for the Sheep and Tree Package which would fund 600m of forest road.



CONTINUED OVER

3. If you are planting a variety of woodlands under a number of different woodland creation options found in the Forestry Grant Scheme at the same time and want to apply for The Sheep and Tree Package you will need to make two different applications. For example, if you are planting a 20ha block of productive conifer serviced by the forest road funded under the Sheep and Trees package, plus 5ha of riparian woodland in 2 blocks under the native woodland option, you will have to make two separate grant applications.

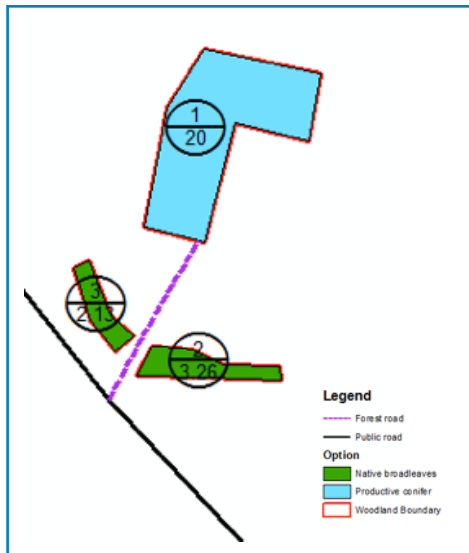


Figure 3: In this situation only the productive conifer will be eligible for The Sheep and Tree grant package and planting under the native woodland application will require a separate FGS application.

Planting woodland on eligible areas of land under The Sheep and Tree grant package, as with other types of woodland planting funded under the current Forestry Grant Scheme, will not impact the applicant's Basic Payments.

Applicants will also be able to graze the new woodland once the trees are mature enough to avoid browsing damage.

The application process is fairly complex and in the supporting information required you will need to demonstrate that the road construction will meet best practice guidelines and also set out what measures will be taken to minimise any risks of polluting watercourses.

If the application involves any road construction or bell mouth junction within 25m of a public road (road categories A, B & C) then planning permission will be required. For the construction of forest roads, an application to the relevant Local Authority for prior approval will be required before the grant application can be made.

The scheme is clearly aimed at encouraging farmers to plant reasonably sized woodlands that have the potential to provide significant amounts of timber in the future and be commercially viable thereby justifying the expense of putting in a forest road. It recognises that areas under 10ha are usually of limited commercial viability although they may bring many other potential benefits to the farm.



Shooting Rights and Deer Forests - Rates

Kara Craig SAC Consulting



In recent weeks (September 2017) local Councils around Scotland have been sending out Valuation Notices to landowners and occupiers. These are "notices" of rateable values (RV) for Shooting Rights and Deer Forests which may be subject to non domestic rates.

Shooting Rights and Deer Forests have been exempt from revaluations and non domestic rates since 1995. This exemption was removed as part of the Land Reform Act 2016 resulting in the re-entry of Shooting Rights and Deer Forests in local valuation rolls from 1st April 2017.

Shooting rights, in rating terms, are defined as the right to occupy the land for the purpose of shooting game. Game normally refers to wild birds and animals such as deer, pheasants, partridges, black or red grouse, ptarmigan, wildfowl, snipe, woodcock and hare. The right to shoot game relates to whether there is a potential to exercise the right to shoot.

In most cases this right is granted through ownership of the land or by the owner granting lease, licence or permission to shoot to another party. This can mean that shooting rights have a RV in all instances whether shooting occurs for vermin control for agricultural purposes or for sport and even if no shooting occurs.

A shooting rights form was sent to each occupier of agricultural land in November/December 2016. This form asked for details of the area of the land and the land types as well as the types of species and numbers shot.

Rental information and financial information related to shooting was also asked for and this enabled an analysis of those rents. As not everyone returned a form, information was also taken from the Single Application Form (SAF) 2015 supplied by the Scottish Government Rural Inspections Directorate (SGRPID).

CONTINUED OVER



As and when rates bills become available and in order to obtain relief, land owners and occupiers will need to apply for SBBS through local councils by completing a simple one page application form. The form may vary slightly between different authorities, but will ask for a property reference, address, ratepayer name and RV of the business property.

Following the data gathering exercise above, the Valuation Notices are being sent to the person/s considered to hold the shooting rights. The RV stated on the Valuation Notice has been calculated using the area over which shootings may be exercised and multiplied using the following rates for the different land types. Some adjustments may also have been applied.

Land Type	£/ha
Arable	4.00
Unimproved Grassland	4.00
Improved Grassland	3.50
Deer Forest/Hill/Moor	2.00
Woodlands/Forestry	5.00
Mixed Types	5.00

The RV is not the amount that will be required to be paid. The rates bill will be issued in the next few weeks/months and will be calculated by multiplying the RV by the rate in the pound. Where the RV is less than £51,001, the multiplier is 46.6p. If above £51,001, the multiplier is 49.2p. However, where eligible, the RV can be subject to relief.

Business rates relief is available by application through the Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS). Relief is based on the combined RV of all business premises, the following reliefs are available:

- RV up to £15,000 - 100% relief (ie no rates payable)
- RV £15,001 to £18,000 - 25% relief
- If you have more than one business property, with a combined RV of between £18,001 and £35,000, you will get 25% relief on each individual property with a RV of under £18,000.

It may also ask for details of other commercial (non domestic) properties in Scotland and information on de minimus state aid that has been granted over a 3 year period. The form is available as a paper copy or in online format.

In some cases the person being sent the Valuation Notice will disagree with the RV or they may not believe that they are liable for the RV as they do not hold the shooting rights, e.g. a tenant farmer farms land where the shooting rights are held entirely by the landlord and/or another party. If a farmer/land occupier disagrees with a Valuation Notice or believes that they do not have shooting rights on the land occupied, an appeal of the entry in the Valuation Roll can be lodged within 6 months from the date of the notice. Evidence, e.g. tenancy agreements, would be required to support any appeals.

It is thought that most farm businesses (where there are no additional non domestic businesses/diversifications operating) will be subject to full relief on Shooting Rights and Deer Forest rates. Each case should be assessed for its own circumstances.

More information can be found at the websites below and for more specific cases advice should be sought by the Assessor in the relevant local council.

<https://www.saa.gov.uk/re-entry-of-shooting-rights-to-the-valuation-roll/>

https://www.saa.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Shooting-Rights-Deer-Forests_R2017_MPC35.pdf



Timber Market Report - November 2017

Matt Cope *RTS*



It is pleasing to report a good news story across all markets for round timber products. Historically it was unusual to see buoyant demand from all market sectors simultaneously with associated strong prices. It was previously the position that when sawmills were using increasing volumes of round timber the demand for virgin fibre from the board manufacturers dropped. These manufacturers were instead utilising the cheaper sawmill co-product i.e. wood chips. However the ready supply of wood chips is currently being gratefully received by the major biomass power plants and wood based panel manufacturers in conjunction with high volumes of virgin round timber. Strong demand across the board!

As the UK is a significant net importer of timber, prices are largely pegged to the European market and moderated by the prevailing exchange rate. The weakness of Sterling against the Euro, in evidence since the Brexit referendum, has greatly improved the competitiveness of, and demand for, Scottish sawn timber in the domestic market place. Sawmills across the board are reporting increased sales and associated throughput. Competition for standing timber is strong reaching peaks not recently experienced. Some sawmills report a slight shortage of Forest Stewardship Council certified timber, a common occurrence when demand is strong and buoyant prices bring additional standing timber into the market place. Sawn timber prices are perhaps not as high as sawmills would like given the raw material price, however this is partly a product of the competition for market share between the domestic sawmills. Sawmills producing solely sawn timber for the manufacture of pallets are in a particularly

challenging position. With sale prices considerably lower than those of carcassing timber and production costs higher this is a difficult sector to deliver strong profits.

Every report of this nature mentions the contribution of the biomass markets and these developments continue apace. There are both entirely new markets and plant improvements across the country which are delivering increased demand and strong prices. With many of these markets and plant improvements only just bedding in, continued pressure on supply is anticipated, great news for growers.

The prices being paid for biomass material have led to an increased interest in brash recovery, with a significant increase in the volume of brash harvesting being undertaken across the country. This material tends to be economic only within range of an end user (circa 60 miles) but can lower restocking costs to growers in addition to yield from the harvesting operations.

All in all a great time to own or manage woodland at all scales, with current high prices even smaller operations are delivering value.

www.rtsforestry.co.uk



Competition

Last edition's question was: When was the first chainsaw made and what was it used for?

Congratulations to Robert Erskine of Milnathort, Kinross, who correctly answered the question. The first mention of a chainsaw was in 1894 in The Medical Times and Register. It was referred to as an osteotome and was used by surgeons for removing bone.

This edition's question is: Near Melville Castle, Dalkeith, there exists a 450 year old sweet chestnut. Who planted it and what for?

The prize is a variety of 12 cell-grown trees.

Please email or post your answer, by 31 January 2018 to the address below. All correct answers will be entered into a lucky draw for the prize.

Email: tracey.mcintosh@sac.co.uk

Tracey McIntosh
15 Hay Street
Elgin
IV30 1NQ