

IMPACT REPORT 2022



SYLVA
FOUNDATION

nurturing a wood culture, growing a future

Welcome message from our Chief Executive

The past year at Sylva Foundation has been one of steady growth and exciting development. We have worked with many people who share our vision for a society that cares for nature, while living with it in harmony. In this, our second Impact Report, I am proud to use it as an opportunity to recognise the hard work, willingness and dedication of all those who have contributed to our work.

Here at Sylva we sometimes describe ourselves as a small charity that punches above its weight, and in 2022 this has felt more apt than ever. In this Impact Report, we highlight one of Sylva's key values — collaboration. Through our many collaborations we can illustrate the diversity of our work, and just as importantly, shine a spotlight on our partners, and the impact we are making together. Indeed, you will read how these different partnerships ensure Sylva continues to reach across Britain.

From our Future Oak Project with Bangor University, to the volunteers working at our Future Forest in South Oxfordshire, from the continued development of NatureBid our innovative environmental funding platform, to supporting Defra's Resilient Treescapes Projects, all of these are exciting initiatives that we are working on to meet some of greatest environmental challenges facing modern society.



I would also like to use this opportunity to remember and celebrate Martin Wood. A Co-Founder and Patron of Sylva Foundation, Martin embodied the culture of our charity, not just through his commitment to the environment, but his willingness to share with others in an open and respectful way to get things done. Martin's generosity of spirit and innovative approach is at the very heart of Sylva's value of collaboration, and we will continue his legacy of respecting the knowledge and merit that others bring to all aspects of our work.

Dr Gabriel Hemery FICFor
Chief Executive
Sylva Foundation



Sylva in Numbers:

158 myForest users helped us develop our exciting new stewardship science project to be called Forest Lab.

300ha of new woodland has been planned in the past six months using the updated version of myForest.

Eighteen organisations have formed the Forestry and Climate Change Partnership and our collective vision is that Britain's trees, woods and forests are resilient to climate change.

Two-thirds of Sylva Wood School Professional course students secured jobs within the industry within 3 months of completing the course

160,000ha of woodland has been mapped and detailed across the UK by users of myForest.

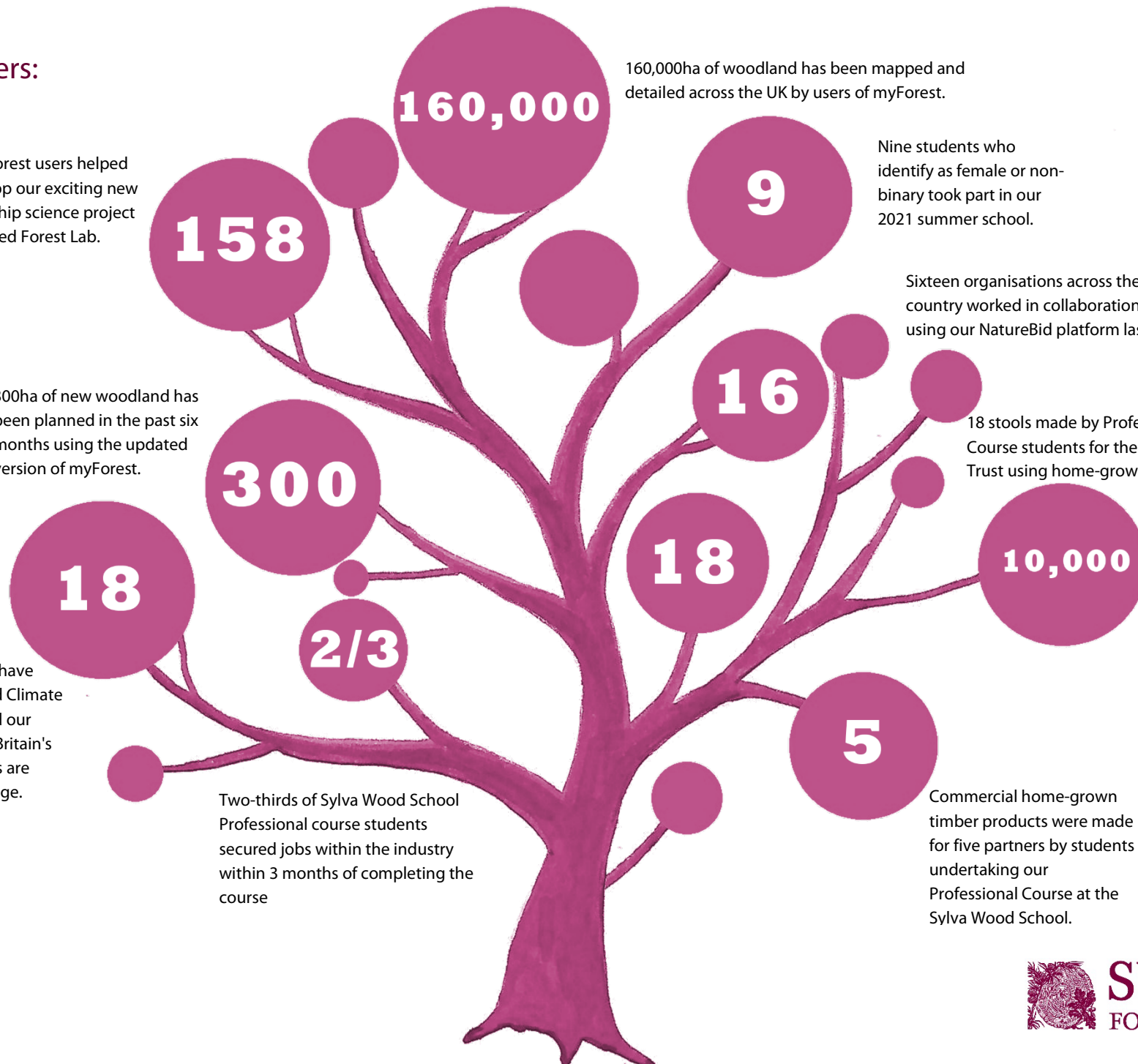
Nine students who identify as female or non-binary took part in our 2021 summer school.

Sixteen organisations across the country worked in collaboration using our NatureBid platform last

18 stools made by Professional Course students for the National Trust using home-grown ash.

10,000 woodland owners and managers used myForest to care for woodlands across the UK.

Commercial home-grown timber products were made for five partners by students undertaking our Professional Course at the Sylva Wood School.



Our Vision and Mission



nurturing a wood culture, growing a future

Our vision is for a society that cares for nature while living in harmony with it.

We envisage a wood culture where people understand and promote the good stewardship of woodlands and are mindful of their utility, while being conscious of their fragility.

Future society will recognise the creative and productive value of forest products which can be derived from growing well-managed forests, and at the same time enhance their wider benefits for people and for nature. This will help result in a halt in the loss of biodiversity, a reduction in climate change, and a human society that can sustain itself.

Our actions today will be tangible in the love and respect that future generations afford our trees and forests.

Our Mission:

- To use our forestry knowledge and information technology skills, supported by state-of-art evidence, to provide **innovative** solutions to some of the greatest environmental challenges facing modern society.
- To work extensively and selflessly with others, recognising that **collaboration** is necessary to overcome the challenges of halting biodiversity loss and reducing climate change, while supporting the transition to a sustainable human society.
- To deliver the **training** and education necessary to support the transformation of society, focussing on the stewardship of our forests and the utility of home-grown timber.
- To undertake **advocacy** to inspire one another, raise awareness, and endow people with knowledge, passion, and the shared ambition for a better and more sustainable society.

INNOVATING

COLLABORATING

TRAINING

ADVOCATING

Our collaborations during 2021-22:

INNOVATING	COLLABORATING	TRAINING	ADVOCATING
Defra RESILIENT TREES PROJECT	Forestry and Climate Change Partnership (FCCP) 18 PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS	Activate Learning RYCOTEWOOD CRAFTSPERSON-IN-RESIDENCE AT SYLVA WOOD CENTRE	Forestry Commission MYFOREST ASSESSOR
Bangor University FUTURE OAK	Forestry Commission/ Scottish Forestry myForest	Soundabout charity - “ <i>working with children with profound learning difficulties</i> ” SYLVA WOOD SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL COURSE	Key stakeholders across the woodchain HOME GROWN TIMBER SUMMIT
Defra/ Forestry Commission/ Woodland Trust WOODLAND CREATION	Forest Canopy Foundation/ Grown in Britain Defra PIES	University of Oxford, Botanic Garden & Arboretum SYLVA WOOD SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL COURSE	Volunteers, 'Forest Friends', Forest Schools FUTURE FOREST
Environment Agency NATUREBID	RSPB/ Woodland Trust + multiple environment partners WOODLAND WILDLIFE TOOLKIT	JOINED + JOINTED SYLVA WOOD SCHOOL PROFESSIONAL COURSE	
	National Trust SYLVA WOOD SCHOOL STOOLS	Oxford Brookes University SYLVA WOOD CENTRE BRIEF FOR 160 ARCHITECTURAL STUDENTS	
	Wood Centre Community MULTIPLE BUSINESSES AT THE SYLVA WOOD CENTRE	Grown In Britain SYLVA SUMMER SCHOOL	

Coloured cells indicate features in impact report case studies

‘The combination of everything is what made it a fantastic experience for me - the location, the people, the resources, the materials. There are a lot of home-grown timbers at our disposal, they have many potential uses and we should be using them more!’

Beth Meehan, Participant, Sylva Summer School 2021

Collaboration Case Studies:

myForest ~ developing together

Overview of myForest

myForest is the flagship project of Sylva Foundation, bringing the latest technology to people who manage and create our forests. myForest provides comprehensive online mapping, digital tools, and the latest resources to sustainably manage and create new forests.

In Britain, there are hundreds of thousands of hectares of woodland considered under-managed. In addition, as one of Europe's least forested countries, the country needs to fulfil better its potential in providing a meaningful contribution towards its timber needs.

In August 2022, Sylva Foundation launched the new enhanced version of myForest. It provides the latest in technology and guidance to sustainably manage forests, and support the creation of new forests across Britain.

myForest Collaboration

The new version of myForest brings together our learning and expertise around managing forests over the last ten years. It provides an important link to the Forestry Commission and Scottish Forestry, and helps overcome barriers to sustainable forest stewardship.

One of the innovative enhancements of myForest v4.0 is the ability for users to now plan new forest creation projects in Britain, and this is a result of our successful Defra Creation Test and Trial, and our Scottish Creation Pilot. This means the two years of research, development, user testing, and feedback is providing the backbone to the latest enhancements for supporting new forest creation across the country.

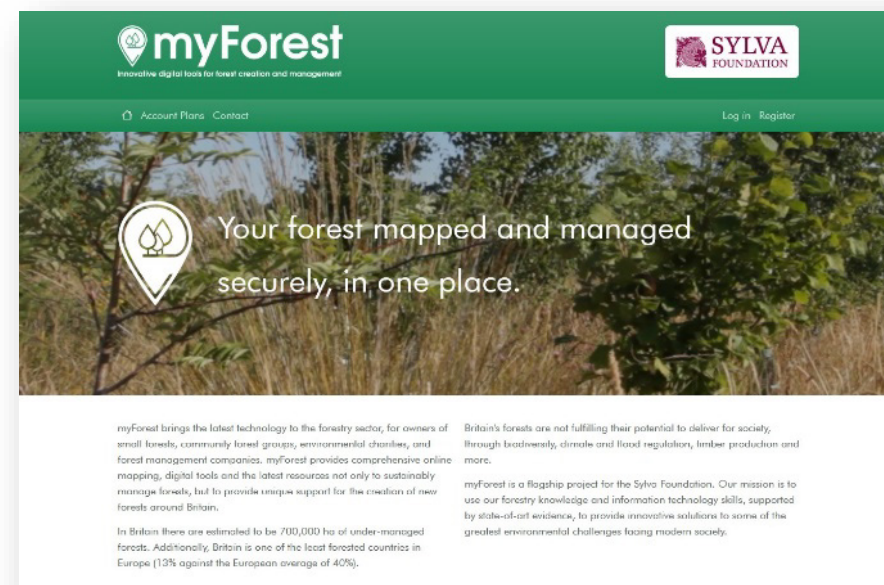
Impact of myForest

There are more than 9,000 myForest users across Britain, including:

- 8,000+ Forest owners
- 1,500+ Forest agents

Since the launch of v4.0 of myForest, more than 300ha of new woodland has been designed using our web application.

More than 160,000ha of woodland has been mapped across Britain using myForest.



'From its inception, myForest has been a collaborative project. It has been developed with the help of different government bodies, charitable trusts, corporations and donors, ensuring we can support a community of users who are sustainably managing and creating woodlands across the country. Together, we are providing the forestry sector with the latest technology, helping bring woodlands into good condition for the environment, society and the economy.'

*Paul Orsi, Director of Operations,
Sylva Foundation*

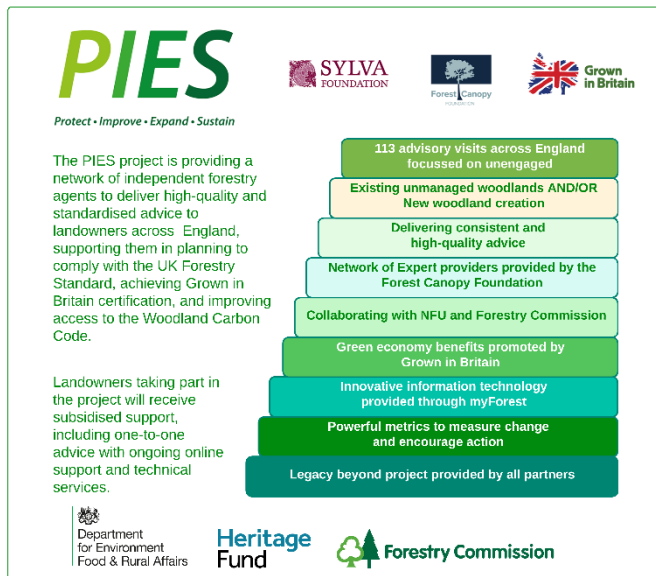
Protect, Improve, Expand, Sustain

making an impact together

Overview of PIES

In 2022, we launched an innovative new project known as PIES (Protect, Improve, Expand and Sustain) to help with the creation and management of woodlands across England.

The aim of this project is to help woodland owners and managers who want to care for their land. With PIES we are providing guidance, not only on how to enhance the environmental condition of their land, but to help deliver goods and services for the benefit of their community and wider society.



PIES is providing a network of independent forestry agents to deliver high-quality and standardised advice to landowners across England. It supports landowners in planning to comply with the UK Forestry Standard, achieving Grown in Britain certification, and improving access to the Woodland Carbon Code. Recipients benefit from subsidised support, including one-to-one advice, with ongoing online support and technical services.

PIES Collaboration

The PIES team combines the strategic work and information technology provided by Sylva Foundation, with the network of independent forestry managers supported by the Forest Canopy Foundation, and the work of Grown in Britain in supporting the green economy. We will also be working closely with the Forestry Commission and the National Farmers' Union to deliver the project for the next three years.

"We are delighted to be working with our partners to deliver this innovative approach to supporting landowners across England. The PIES project will help meet many of the key elements of the England Trees Action Plan, including expanding and connecting woodlands, promoting the green economy, and protecting and improving existing woodlands"

*Dr Gabriel Hemery, Chief Executive,
Sylva Foundation*

Together, the partnership will provide a joined-up approach, supporting landowners in meeting the objectives of the government's England Trees Action Plan.

"There have never been so many opportunities for land owners and managers to provide nature-based solutions for the economy, planet and people. We are excited to be part of this project that will build and sustain vital connections between different parts of the supply chain, for timber, carbon, and the array of benefits that woodlands can provide."

*Dougal Driver, Chief Executive
Grown in Britain*

Impact of PIES

PIES launched in May 2022, and will be opened for applications in November 2022.

"This project will revolutionise the way that we are able to engage with landowners and will open up the critical dialogue needed to address key government targets on bringing woodland back into management and increasing woodland cover. These key natural capital assets can only be enhanced when we have strong collaboration between private landowners and government agencies, and this project will allow for that to happen."

*Justin Mumford, Director,
Forestry Canopy Foundation*

Sylva Wood School & Sylva Summer School

Wood School ~ unique opportunities for students and partners

Overview of Sylva Wood School

The Sylva Wood School was established to bridge significant gaps which exist in formal wood education. Our Wood School is not only supporting the next generation of designers and makers in wood, but also educates consumers and woodland owners in the value of home-grown timber.

Based at the Sylva Wood Centre in South Oxfordshire, our Wood School provides access to a multi-purpose teaching barn and a large workshop with industrial-quality machinery. This allows students, not only to experience working with wood in a stimulating learning environment, but to achieve a professional standard of practice.

Through our programme of accessible professional and short courses covering a wide range of topics and skills, our Wood School is creating inspiring opportunities for young people and disadvantaged adults to experience working with home-grown timber.

The Sylva Wood School is bridging the gap between education and the wood industry. It is inspiring and supporting the next generation of designers and makers in wood.

Sylva Wood School Collaborations

The Sylva Wood School is collaborating with a diverse range of educational institutions, non-profit organisations, and commercial partners. This innovative new approach provides not just inspiring experiences for students, but also unique opportunities for collaborating partners. Together, we are working to highlight the importance of using home-grown timber, and the value of reviving Britain's wood culture.

'Big thanks to Joe and Sylva's Class of '22 for producing an excellent batch of 'Frame' tables for us. This has been such a meaningful project for me - it's been a joy to see your skills flourish and your passion for our craft. Look forward to our next collaboration.'

*Samuel Chan, Founder
Joined and Jointed*



Joined and Jointed tables made by students at the Sylva Wood School

In 2022, we launched a new collaboration with the National Trust to design and make furniture from ash trees felled at one of its estates. The three stools were designed by our Head of Wood School, and later made by students on our Professional Course. The stools were sold by the National Trust in summer 2022.

Wood School Impact

'The space and the equipment here - you can't compare it to anywhere else, it's just excellent. The fact the course is centred around machining skills, sets it apart from others. Although you do hand-tools work, the machining skills is what people in industry want, and is a bit more realistic. Also, Joe is an excellent teacher, just the way he teaches really shows his experience...'

Fergus Hooper, Sylva Wood School Fellow 2021

Two-thirds of Sylva Wood School Professional course students secured jobs within the industry by students within 3 months of completing the course.

Commercial home-grown timber products were made for five partners, including 18 stools for the National Trust by students on our professional course. 370 trays were manufactured for University of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum.



The three stools made for The National trust by students on our Professional Course.

A whiskey presentation box made for University of Oxford Botanic Garden & Arboretum by students at the Sylva Wood School using timber from the gardens, highlighting the value of the local wood chain.



Sylva Summer School ~ learning for everyone

Overview of the Sylva Summer School

In 2019, Sylva Foundation established an annual Summer School in collaboration with Grown in Britain. Our aim is to explore home-grown timber that is under-utilised yet has lots of potential. The Sylva Summer School is for those who have an interest in wood as a material, and see forests and woodlands as a place for learning and growing.

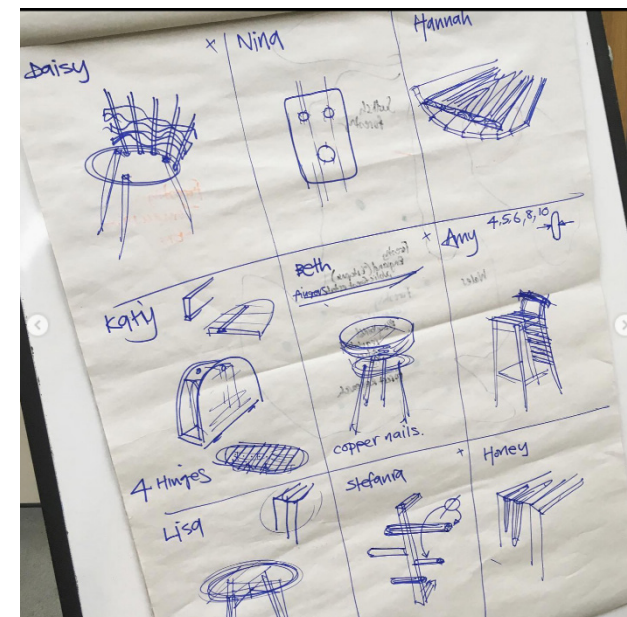
Sylva Summer School Collaboration

Last year we welcomed students who identified as female or non-binary to design and create with

less-commonly used timbers. The students reported how much they appreciated the opportunity to work together as a group, supported by a significant proportion of female tutors, expressing how their experiences in higher education or industry had been overwhelmingly male-dominated.

Sylva Summer School Impact

'We have experienced the biggest increase in confidence in the shortest amount of time.'



'Unique to be in a workshop environment with only females present. Very comfortable, very supportive, very happy and very nice.'

'What a fabulous week! This is an amazing course. I needed this course so very much. My memory of it will stay with me forever. Thank you. So much.'

'I had the best four days at the summer school, I've never learnt so much in such a short period of time!! So inspiring to be in a workshop full of women.'

'The enthusiasm, energy and camaraderie of this course was amazing from start to finish. It felt like the woodworking version of 'Bake off' - fast-paced, challenging, hilarious, exhausting and hugely satisfying. An incredible learning experience, thank you Sylva for the opportunity.'

Forestry and Climate Change Partnership

exceptional collaboration to meet an immense challenge

Overview of the FCCP

The Forestry and Climate Change Partnership (FCCP) brings together forestry, conservation, and government organisations to reaffirm their commitment to work together to promote the importance of adapting trees, woods and forests to climate change.

The Forestry and Climate Change Partnership (FCCP) has published the Forestry and Climate Change Adaptation Accord - a collective vision that England's trees, woods and forests are resilient to climate change.

There is an urgent need to improve the resilience of both newly created and existing woodland to climate change. This requires significant change to widely accepted and practised systems of woodland and land management.

Greater awareness is needed for the importance of adopting a broader range of species, diversity of genetics, age and stand structure, and improved connectivity in the landscape.

The FCCP is working to communicate the case for adaptation, to provide training and education, inform research priorities and contribute to policy development.

Impact of FCCP

Sylva Foundation is taking a leading role in supporting the FCCP, and helped with the drafting of the new Forestry and Climate Change Accord. Thanks to funding received from a private donor, we were able to support the partnership in the design and creation of its first website:

www.forestryclimatechange.uk

'The recently renamed Forestry and Climate Change Partnership represents an unusual level of collaboration and a powerful agreement to work together to make change happen, fast. Our trees, woods and forests are faced with unprecedented rates of climate change and increased environmental threats such as pests and pathogens. Only by working together, and with the support of individual woodland owners and professionals, will we be able to rise to meet these challenges, with an ambition to bounce back better.'

*Dr Gabriel Hemery, Chief Executive, Sylva Foundation
and Chair of the FCCP*



Forestry and Climate Change Partnership

FCCP Partners

- ❖ Confor
- ❖ CLA
- ❖ DEFRA
- ❖ Forestry Commission
- ❖ Forest Research
- ❖ Forestry England
- ❖ Future Trees Trust
- ❖ Institute of Chartered Foresters
- ❖ National Trust
- ❖ Natural England
- ❖ Royal Forestry Society
- ❖ Savills
- ❖ Small Woods Association
- ❖ Sylva Foundation
- ❖ Tilhill
- ❖ Tree Council
- ❖ Woodland Trust
- ❖ Woodland Heritage

Sylva Future Plans

Sylva Foundation continues to grow, and we are looking forward to working on a number of new initiatives to support our vision for a society that cares for nature while living with it in harmony.

We will:

- ❖ Focus on the development of myForest suite, providing users with innovative online software, including technical enhancements as well as improved support and guidance.
- ❖ Expand Sylva's Wood Centre, building the links between forestry and wood.
- ❖ Continue to build evidence through the British Woodlands Survey, giving a voice to all stakeholders.
- ❖ Support Sylva's team of people so they continue to develop and thrive.
- ❖ Embed research across all of our activities to ensure we can show Sylva's impact throughout our work.
- ❖ Develop our approach to stewardship science (Forest Lab).
- ❖ Expand NatureBid impacts through its business and technical capability.
- ❖ Continue to support diversity in our Summer Schools.
- ❖ Develop new business partnerships for our Professional Course.
- ❖ Progress the capital development project at the Wood Centre.



Trees growing in the young Future Forest surround the wooden-clad buildings of the Sylva Wood Centre.

'[I am delighted that the Sylva Foundation supports] a modern-day clarion call for the creation of a new wood culture that may help to ensure a sustainable and enjoyable future for us all.'

Extract from the foreword of The New Sylva (2014)

*Sir Martin Wood, Co-Founder and Patron,
Sylva Foundation*



Visit our website today to learn more about us, read our latest news,
and to find out how you could get involved in our work:



www.sylva.org.uk