

Supplement 3 BWS2025 ENGLAND RESULTS

This supplementary report explores BWS2025 data received from respondents in England (i.e. excluding other countries). It is intended to provide additional information to the main BWS2025 report which focuses on Britain (and sometimes the UK). A [number] is included as a cross-reference from the main BWS2025 report, which should be consulted for full context, definitions and in-depth explanation of data.

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Citation

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Executive Summary

Among 299 Land Managers across England there was strong environmental awareness, but actions for resilience were less uniform. Financial limits, time, and wildlife impacts were dominant obstacles. While biosecurity and research engagement are improving, disparities by region, ownership size, and professional role suggest that targeted, regionally adaptive policy support will be crucial to achieving England's woodland resilience and expansion goals.

Results

Survey population

A total of 299 Land Managers in England responded to the British Woodlands Survey 2025, responsible for 59,122 ha of woodland. These were represented by:

- 261 Land Owners responsible for 17,074 ha
- 38 Agents responsible for 42,048 ha

Tree, Woodland and Forest Management

[1] Management plan rates did not differ markedly between regions in England. However, there were more obvious differences in UKFS-compliant plan status among Land Owners, with East of England (90%) and South West (36%) having relatively higher rates of UKFS-compliant plans, while North West (50%) and West Midlands (36%) were notably lower (Table E1).

Table E1 Presence of a management plan and proportions of UKFS-compliant plans among Land Owners in England by region (excluding London).

Region	Man. Plan Yes (%)	Among those with a Management Plan, proportion of those with UKFS-compliant plan			n
		Yes (%)	No (%)	Uncertain (%)	
East Midlands	50.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	12
East of England	59.5	90.0	5.0	5.0	20
North East	41.7	60.0	20.0	20.0	5
North West	44.4	50.0	12.5	37.5	8
South East	54.7	62.5	15.6	21.9	32
South West	50.0	78.6	7.1	14.3	28
West Midlands	37.9	36.4	36.4	27.3	11
Yorkshire & The Humber	33.3	80.0	20.0	0.0	5

In terms of ranking of Management Aims among Owners in England (n=221), these largely did not differ from those reported for the whole UK survey population. Among woodland owners in England, the presence of a woodland management plan was examined in relation to 15 stated management aims (scored 0–10). There appeared to be motivational differences between owners with and without a management plan (Figure E1). Owners with a plan scored consistently higher on aims linked to ecological and public benefits, including *Promoting public health and well-being* and *Protecting or improving water resources*. Smaller effects were observed for *Carbon capture and storage*, *Ecosystem service provision*, and *Protect/Improve nature*. The majority of Owners focussed on personal benefits (*Personal pleasure* and *My own health and wellbeing*) did not have a Management Plan.

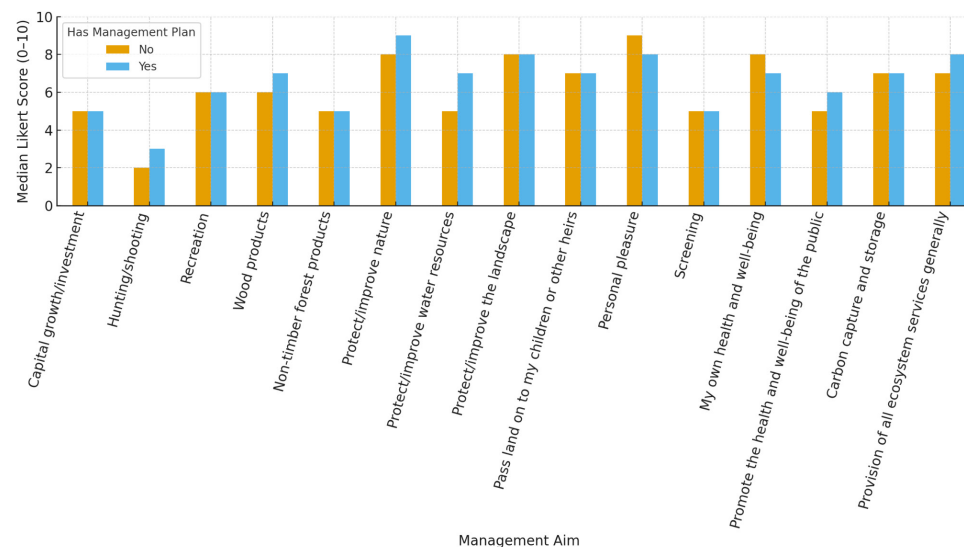


Figure E1 Median Management Aim scores by Management Plan presence/absence among Land Owners in England (n=221)

Any effect of Woodland size on presence or absence of a Management Plan and compliance with UKFS was explored among Owners in England (n=185). Woodland area significantly predicted whether owners had a Management Plan or not ($X^2_3=15.56$, $p=0.001$), with owners of larger woodlands being more likely to have a Management Plan than those with smaller woodlands (Figure E2). The median area of woodlands with a Management Plan (n=116) was 11.8ha (mean 79.4ha), while woodlands without a Management Plan (n=69) had a median area of 4ha (mean 30.4ha). The same pattern was mirrored for UKFS-compliant plan status, where woodlands with a UKFS-compliant Management Plan were generally larger (median 19.6ha) than those with non-compliant management plans (median 4ha), although this could not be formally analysed due to sparse data in some categories.

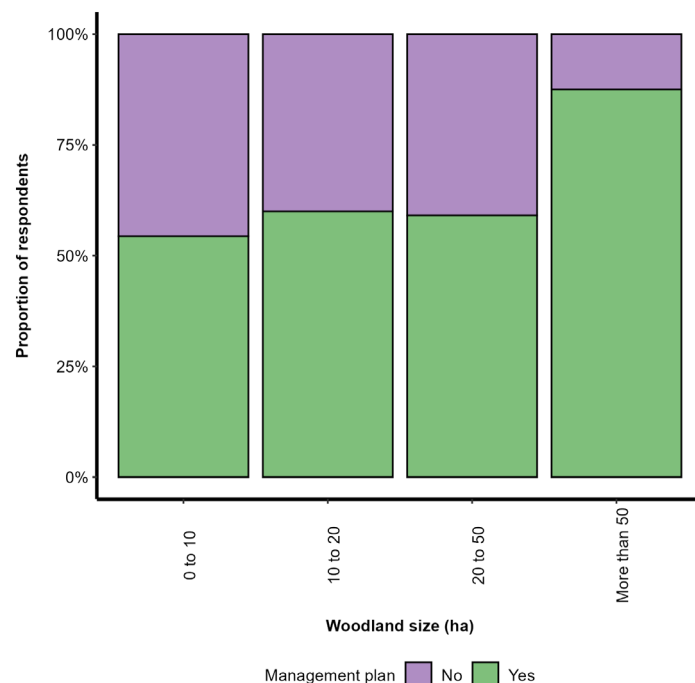


Figure E2 Proportion of Owners with a management plan in 2025 (England only), according to woodland size (in hectares). Only includes owners/tenants who provided information on woodland size, and also answered Yes or No when questioned about their management plan. Excludes owners/tenants who did not provide information on woodland size, did not answer the question about their management plan, or who were uncertain whether they had a management plan.

[2] Among 294 Land Managers England, a range of constraints to woodland management were reported as free text, which were subsequently categorised into seven themes (Table E2). Overall, financial constraints dominated, closely followed by personal limitations (e.g. personal ageing or lack of time) and wildlife issues such as deer or squirrels. The relatively low number citing bureaucracy or lack of information suggests that practical and ecological concerns outweigh administrative barriers. Almost one quarter (23%) said they experienced no significant barriers to woodland management. The results were also explored by regions within England but variation was minimal.

Table E2 Constraints to woodland management among England Land Managers (n=294), each respondent coded by up to three categories.

Constraint Category	n
Cost/time	165
Pests	104
Other	69
Information	27
No constraints	27
Wildlife	26
Bureaucratic	13

The results were further explored by investigating any relationship between woodland property size and constraints (Figure E3). Smaller woodlands (<10 ha) most often cited cost or time limitations, reflecting limited economies of scale. Larger properties (100–1000 + ha) more frequently reported pest, bureaucratic, and information constraints, consistent with the greater complexity of large-scale management. Mentions of wildlife or habitat issues—distinct from pests—were mainly associated with the largest holdings. The response ‘No constraints’ remained stable across all sizes.

The seven themed constraints were analysed by management aim among Land Managers in England (n=294). Pests and Wildlife constraints were highest among those with high environmental motivations (medians 9–10 for Protect/improve nature management aims) (Figure E4).

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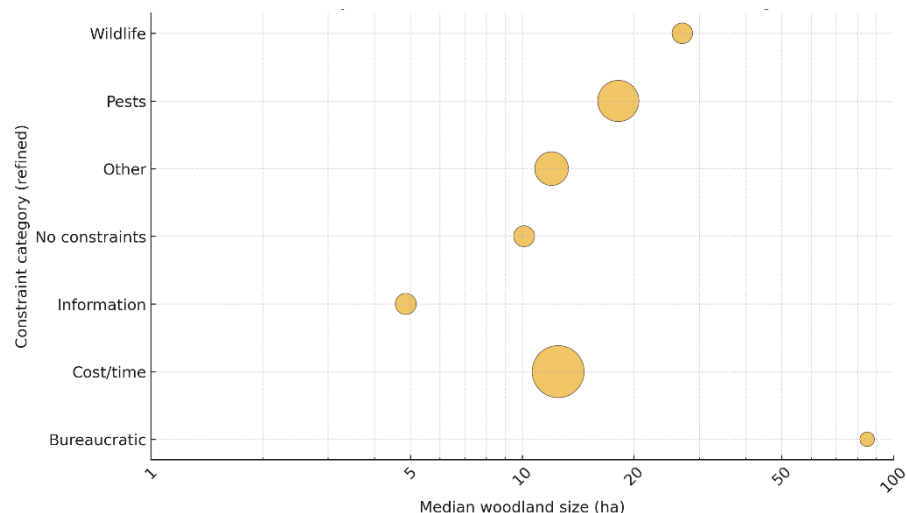


Figure E3 Count of constraints to woodland management by logscale of median woodland size (ha) among 294 Land Managers in England. Size of bubble indicates number of respondents.

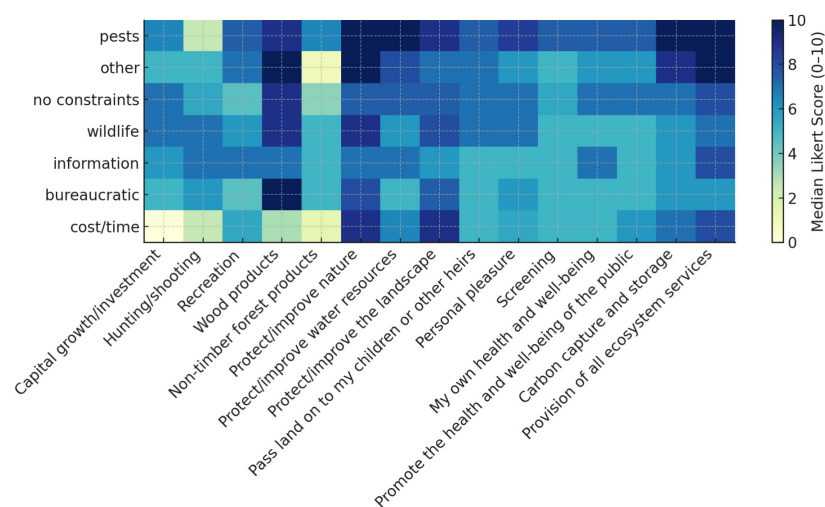


Figure E4 Seven themed constraints to woodland management by 15 Management Aims among Land Owners in England (n=294).

Tree Planting and Establishment

[3] Among Land Managers in England (n=226), about one-quarter (26%) reported that they were likely to be expanding tree cover in the next five years, while 17% were uncertain and 32% were unlikely. Exploring by region (Table E3), the South East had the highest share answering 'No' (58%), and relatively few responding 'Yes'. Conversely, the North West and South West showed stronger positivity toward tree cover expansion ('Yes' over 40%).

Table E3 Proportions (%) of Land Managers (n=192) likely to expand tree cover in the next five years by region (excluding London).

Region	No %	Maybe %	Yes %	n
East Midlands	40.0	26.7	33.3	15
East of England	48.3	17.2	34.5	29
North East	37.5	25.0	37.5	8
North West	33.3	20.0	46.7	15
South East	58.0	30.0	12.0	50
South West	39.0	17.1	43.9	41
West Midlands	45.0	30.0	25.0	20
Yorkshire & The Humber	57.1	21.4	21.4	14

In terms of approaches taken to future tree expansion, among those Land Managers who answered 'Yes' or 'Maybe' (n=129), *Tree planting* was the most common route to expansion (50%), followed by *Natural regeneration* (36%) and *Hedgerow expansion* (28%). *Agroforestry* was relatively niche, with 14% mentioning *Silvopastoral* and 7% mentioning *Silvoarable*.

Managing Pests and Diseases

[4] Both Grey Squirrels and Deer were considered a ‘major’ problem to different degrees (Occasional, Frequent or Very Severe) by two-thirds of Land Managers in England (n=231). More than half of Land Managers cited ‘Frequent’ or ‘Very Severe’ problems for both pests. Land Managers who reported severe deer issues were very likely to also report severe grey squirrel problems.

Among Land Managers reporting on problems with deer, taking No action was rare except among those reporting *Minor Problems* (38%). Tree shelters or guards are widely used across all problem levels, peaking around 70–80%. Shooting and fencing use increased steeply with problem severity, for example among 52 Land Managers reporting *Very severe* problems, 90.2% reported Shooting.

Among Land Managers reporting on problems with grey squirrels, Shooting was overwhelmingly the dominant control method, used by 90%+ of those with *Very Severe* or *Frequent* problems. Trapping also increased with severity, from around 30% among *Minor* to nearly 80% among *Very Severe* cases. Poison and Contraceptives were rare among responses.

We asked the degree to which deer and grey squirrels affected future plans for woodland creation and/or woodland management (Likert scale: -5 Not at All | +5 Very Significantly). There was a clear relationship between deer and grey squirrel problems, where the worse the issue for either pest, the more respondents feel it constrains or influences woodland creation decisions (Figure E5).

In terms of woodland management, the relationship was also very clear. Those reporting *Very severe* problems with deer reported a *Very significant impact* (Mdn +4) on woodland management. Even moderate deer pressure was associated with measurable impacts, reinforcing that deer influence not just establishment but ongoing management decisions and outcomes across woodlands in England. Similar trends were true for grey squirrels, with a clear association between perceived pest pressure and how strongly grey squirrels constrain or influence woodland management.

[5] Land Managers in England (n=237) reported that they took a number of steps to promote biosecurity in their woodlands, or among agents, for their clients’ woodlands. Generally, undertaking inspections and risk considerations were consistently the most common activities. There were clear differences between Agents and Land Owners, with Agents reporting much higher implementation across every category—particularly around worker-related measures and inspections. This gap suggests that professional intermediaries (agents) were far more proactive in formal biosecurity practices, while owners focussed less on structured hygiene and monitoring. Among Land Owners (n=221), inspections and risk consideration remained the dominant actions, though still under 50% in most regions (London

is an outlier due to its small sample size). Visitor and worker cleaning facilities were rare to non-existent (Table E4).

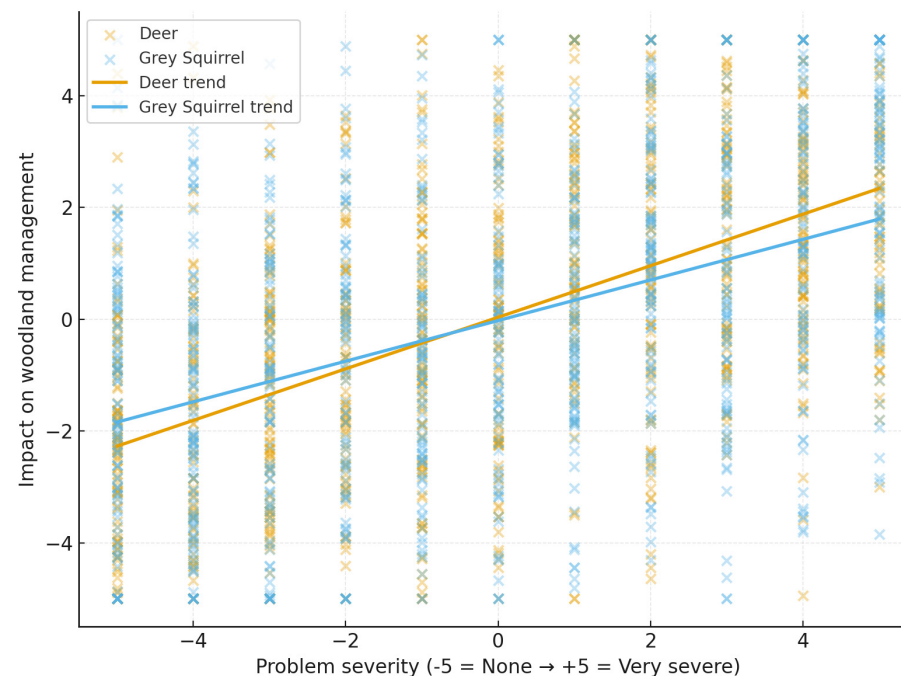


Figure E5 Scatterplot showing the relationship between deer and grey squirrel problems (Likert scale: -5 to +5) and impacts on woodland management (Likert scale: -5 to +5) among Land Managers (n=231) in England.

Table E4 Percentages of Land Owners in England (n=221) who currently take various steps to promote biosecurity by region (excluding London). Results are shown with highlight inactions which are illustrated with darker tones.

Region	Info for visitors	Clean (visitors)	Info for workers	Clean (workers)	Inspections	Consider risks
East Midlands	17.4	21.7	4.3	8.7	43.5	21.7
East of England	6.2	6.2	15.6	9.4	34.4	31.2
North East	20.0	0.0	20.0	10.0	20.0	30.0
North West	25.0	8.3	0.0	25.0	50.0	41.7
South East	12.0	0.0	14.0	4.0	46.0	30.0
South West	7.3	9.1	14.5	5.5	36.4	32.7
West Midlands	8.3	0.0	4.2	0.0	29.2	16.7
Yorkshire & Humber	14.3	0.0	28.6	0.0	35.7	14.3

Genetic Resources

[6] Overall, Land Managers in England (n=175) stated a mean preference for native tree cover of 67% (Md 70%). There was a clear difference (Mann-Whitney U Test: p<0.001) between the preferred percentages of Land Owners (M 68.8%, Md 70%) and Agents (M 56%, Md 60%) (Figure E6).

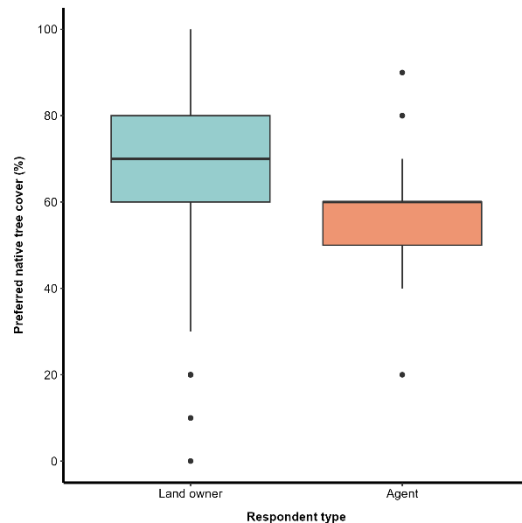


Figure E6 Preferences for native tree cover between Land Owners (n=150) and Agents (n=25) in England. Dark lines denote the median, and boxes denote the interquartile range.

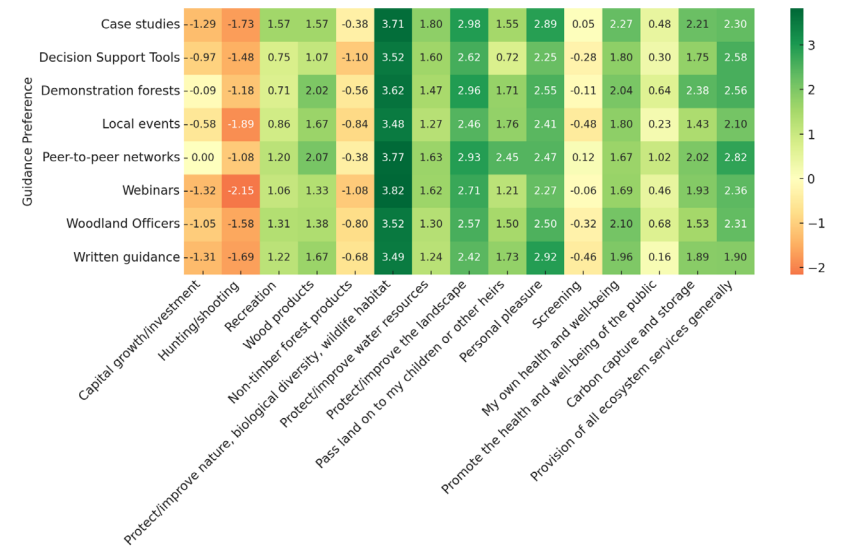
Collaboration and Learning

[7] Preference for eight different forms of advice and guidance were explored for Land Managers in England. The highest preference was for *Woodland Officers* (n=113), followed by *Written Guidance* (n=105) and *Webinar* (n=85). The same results were generally similar across all England regions, while *Local Events* were particularly popular for London, South East, South West and West Midlands.

Responses to preference for advice and guidance in England were explored by woodland property size. The result indicated a difference in average woodland area among the different preferred guidance types, with Land Managers of larger woodlands tending to favour *Demonstration Forests*, *Peer-to-peer Networks*, and *Decision Support Tools*, while Land Managers of smaller properties leaned more toward *Written Guidance* and *Case Studies*.

Responses to preference for advice and guidance in England were explored by Management Aims (Table E5). The strongest positive values for aims for *Biodiversity protection*, *Carbon capture*, and *Ecosystem services* all shared high priorities across most guidance types. *Peer-to-peer networks* and *Demonstration forests* were favoured among Land Managers with pro-environmental and legacy-oriented aims. *Written guidance* and *Case studies* were stronger for those emphasising *Personal pleasure* and *Recreation* slightly more than commercial aims. *Decision-support tools* were relatively neutral to mildly positive across all management aims.

Table E5 Preferences for advice and guidance by Management Aims among Land Managers in England.



Surveillance and Monitoring

[8] Observations of eight different damage factors were assessed among Land Managers in England (n=222). The strongest perception of increase was for Pathogen damage (n=175) and for both Pest categories (n=125–130). Wind and Drought also stand out with many ‘increase’ responses (Table E6). Flooding and Pollution had the most ‘same’ responses, suggesting these were seen as relatively stable. ‘Decrease’ responses were negligible throughout.

Table E6 Counts for observations of eight different damage factors among Land Managers in England (n=222). Colour coding emphasises ‘unwelcome’ results (red and orange) under Increase and Same, and conversely ‘welcome’ results (green) under Decrease.

Damage Type	Increase	Same	Decrease
Fire damage	90	107	0
Wind damage	128	79	2
Pest (invertebrate)	126	75	0
Pest (vertebrate)	130	85	1
Pathogen damage	175	36	4
Drought damage	124	79	0
Flooding damage	53	134	4
Pollution damage	27	147	7

Across all England regions, only *Drought damage* was markedly different between regions. The East of England and London had the strongest perception of increasing *Drought damage* (near or above 90%), consistent with their drier climates and greater exposure to heat stress. South West and North West regions report far fewer ‘Increase’ responses of about 30%.

Planning for the Future

[9] Land Managers (n=242) believed that both Planting Trees and Managing Existing Woodland were moderately important for habitat connectivity (Likert scale: -5 Not Important | +5 Important). Managing Existing Woodland was deemed most important (M 3.8; Mdn 4), while the mean score for Planting Trees was 3.1 (Mdn 3).

[10] In terms of the extent to which threats from environmental change had caused an alteration of woodland management in the last five years with respect to a range of environmental changes, generally, Land Managers (n=228) in England shifted in response from *No Change* currently to *Likely* in future. The largest future increases (percentage point difference) in *Likely* were for *Drought Tolerance* (43% difference), *Pest (vertebrate) control* (42%) and *Planting Seasons* (34%), as shown in Table E7.

Table E7 The extent to which a range of threats were impacting current woodland management (left) and the likelihood that these might impact future woodland management among Land Managers in England (n=228). Numbers indicated percentages of responses which are colour-coded to aid interpretation, with darker tones indicating higher percentages.

Threat	CURRENT			FUTURE		
	No change	Minor change(s)	Major change(s)	Unlikely	Unsure	Likely
Fire management	76	22	2	40	34	25
Wind tolerance	69	25	6	43	30	27
Pest (invertebrate) control	71	21	8	36	38	26
Pest (vertebrate) control	57	32	12	27	31	42
Pathogen control	69	19	12	26	42	32
Drought tolerance	61	30	9	26	31	43
Flooding tolerance	84	12	4	64	21	15
Pollution tolerance	91	8	1	64	30	6
Planting season	65	29	6	41	25	34

[11] Land Managers in England (n=180–200) were asked about the extent they had altered silvicultural practices in response to these threats (no change -5 | major change +5). Land Managers tended to be positive toward diversification (especially species and regeneration)

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but negative toward some actions including firebreak installation and contingency planning. The variation suggests mixed attitudes — likely reflecting diverse ownership goals and management types (Figure E7).

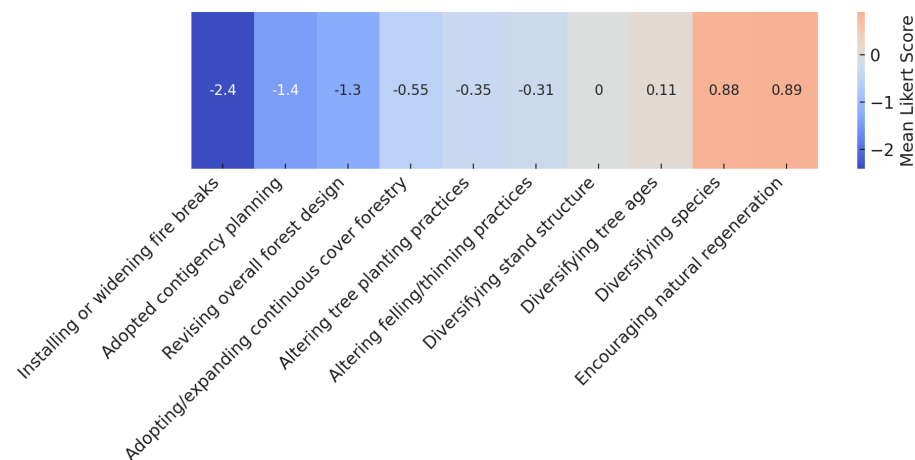


Figure E7 Changes in silvicultural practices (no change -5 | major change +5) in response to environmental threats among Land Managers in England (n≅180–200).

[12] Land Managers in England (n≅165-174) were potentially interested in supporting research. Combining 'Yes' and 'Maybe', 90% might Offer a site to support research, 83% Collect data, and 80% Help researchers interpret findings (Table E8).

Table E8 Interest among Land Managers in England (n>=165) in supporting research activities.

Activity	Yes	Maybe	No	n
Offering my site to support research by others	45.4 % (79)	44.8 % (78)	9.8 % (17)	174
Collecting data myself and sharing it with researchers	30.1 % (52)	53.2 % (92)	16.8 % (29)	173
Helping researchers interpret findings	27.4 % (45)	52.4 % (86)	20.1 % (33)	164

[13] In terms of subjects relating to research on resilience, Land Managers (n=168 min) were asked to rank a number of subjects. Land Managers were most interested (rank 1) in supporting research on *Pests and Diseases*, followed by *Biodiversity* (rank 2), and *Climate Change* (rank 3).

[14] Land Managers in England (n=186) were most interested in *Supporting researchers in sampling material* with 86% indicating either 'Yes' or 'Maybe'. In terms of *Registering woodland as a seed collection stand*, 'Maybe' was the most common (42%) response, whilst 46% of Land Managers answered 'No' to involvement in *Providing land for research*.

[15] Land Managers in England (n=199) ranked interventions by government that they would most value in the event of their woodland(s) being impacted by a significant environmental disturbance or event. The leading concern, ranked 1 by two-thirds of respondents, was *Immediate financial relief to deal with the aftermath*, followed by *Short-term advice/guidance*, while *Long-term financial and advisory support* clustered more around ranks 2–3

Summary

This supplementary report explores responses to the British Woodlands Survey 2025 by 299 Land Managers in England, the majority of whom were Land Owners (261) responsible for 17,074 ha, providing details beyond the main BWS2025 Britain-wide findings.

Woodland Management and Compliance: Roughly half of English Land Managers reported having a woodland management plan, but presence of a UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) varied sharply by region—ranging from 90% in the East of England to 36% in the West Midlands. Regional differences in having a plan were not significant. Presence of a Management Plan (including a UKFS plan) was strongly correlated with woodland area, with smaller woodlands much more likely to have a plan and for this to be UKFS compliant.

Constraints to Management: Among 294 respondents, the most common barriers were financial limitations and personal/time constraints, followed by impacts from vertebrate pests (deer and grey squirrels). Bureaucracy and information gaps were rare. Nearly one-quarter (23%) reported no significant barriers. Constraints were strongly related to woodland size, with smaller woodlands it was cost and time, larger ones were for vertebrate pests and bureaucracy

Tree Planting and Expansion: Of 226 Land Managers, 26% planned to expand tree cover in the next five years, while 32% were unlikely to. The North West and South West showed the most enthusiasm for expansion; the South East the least. Among those considering expansion, tree planting (50%) was the dominant method, followed by natural regeneration (36%) and hedgerow planting (28%), with agroforestry remaining niche (7-14%).

Deer and Grey Squirrels: Two-thirds of Land Managers reported serious deer problems, and a similar share reported serious grey squirrel issues. Severity levels for the two pests were strongly correlated. Control methods increased with problem severity: shooting and fencing for deer; shooting and trapping for squirrels. Pest pressure significantly influenced both woodland creation and management decisions.

Biosecurity Practices: Agents were far more proactive than landowners in implementing formal biosecurity measures, such as inspections and worker hygiene. Among owners, fewer than half routinely conducted inspections or considered risk; visitor cleaning facilities were virtually absent.

Genetic Resources: Land managers preferred an average of 67% native tree cover, with landowners favouring higher levels (69%) than agents (56%).

Collaboration and Learning: The most valued guidance sources were Woodland Officers, Written Guidance, and Webinars. Managers of larger estates favoured demonstration forests

and peer networks, while smaller owners preferred written advice. Pro-environmental aims (biodiversity, carbon, ecosystem services) aligned most strongly with these preferences

Surveillance and Monitoring: Land managers most often observed increases in pathogens, vertebrate pests, and invertebrate pests. Only drought impacts showed statistically significant regional variation—highest in the East of England and London, lowest in the wetter North West and South West.

Planning for the Future: Managing existing woodland was rated more important for habitat connectivity than new planting (mean scores 3.8 vs 3.1). Future priorities show major increases in attention to drought tolerance, pest control, and phenological shifts. Managers tended to support diversification over reactive measures such as firebreaks. Around 90% expressed willingness to support research, especially on pests, biodiversity, and climate change. Immediate financial aid ranked as the top priority for government support after any potential major disturbance.



For full context, definition and depth explanation of data, please refer to the main BWS2025 report and other supplementary materials, available from: www.sylva.org.uk/bws