

Newton Wood a new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor, Northumberland

Consultation report and our response to key issues raised

July 2026



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1. Executive summary

Between 2 June and 28 June, we held a consultation on proposals for the designs of a new woodland, called Newton Wood, on land we recently purchased at Newton-on-the-Moor, near Morpeth in Northumberland.

This report focuses on the feedback we received to the consultation and our response to the key issues raised.

We received 35* responses to the consultation. Whilst we received many broadly supportive comments, some highlighted concerns, and others raised questions and made suggestions.

After carefully considering the responses, further design work, and in response to consultation feedback, we have updated our proposed designs for the new woodland to include the following change:

- We have reviewed the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and have sought to further align our woodland design with its objectives. As part of this, we have added two scrapes (a shallow wetland feature created by excavating a small depression in the ground so that it holds water either permanently or seasonally) - one in an area of the woodland to the north and the other to the south. These are indicated on the updated design plan.
- In response to initial feedback from Natural England, we have replaced the proposed conifer planting with a strip of broadleaf planting either side of the watercourse.
- In response to concerns about planting close to a neighbouring property, we have amended the woodland design so that the start of the planting is further away from the property boundary and associated outbuilding.

We will shortly be submitting our proposals to the Forestry Commission for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland.

This report outlines our approach to the consultation, a summary of the key issues and questions raised, and our response.

*Pending a formal response from Natural England

2. About the consultation

2.1 Introduction

Forestry England is creating a new 46-hectare woodland on land we have purchased at Newton-on-the-Moor in Northumberland. The new woodland, which we will call Newton Wood, will be planted with mixed conifer and broadleaf trees, specially selected to be resilient to future climate conditions.

The new woodland will be open to the public for people to explore and enjoy, whilst also being a valuable place for wildlife and producing sustainable timber for a greener economy.

The consultation invited views from the public and stakeholders on our proposals for the planting and design of the new woodland. Feedback will help shape and inform our final designs, which will be submitted to the Forestry Commission for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland.

2.2 Objectives of the new woodland

Our objectives for the new woodland are:

Future forest resources and resilience: plant a mix of trees for a lasting supply of sustainable timber.

Thriving habitats for wildlife: create a mosaic of habitats, including areas of low density planting, mixed conifer and small seeded broadleaved planting, to enhance biodiversity and benefit species including red squirrels.

Public access for health and wellbeing: create low-key public recreation opportunities with new green space for people to walk in the woodland.

Benefits for the wider landscape: capture carbon, supporting net zero emissions targets

2.3 Consultation purpose

The aims of the consultation were to:

- Provide the public and our stakeholders with sufficient information about our proposals to allow them to give informed responses and suggestions.
- Understand the reasons for any issues or concerns about our proposals.
- Identify any issues we might not already be aware of.
- Provide adequate time for people to respond.

- Consider all responses carefully ahead of making any changes to our proposals.

2.4 Early engagement

In early April, we contacted Newton-on-the-Moor Parish Council and wrote to our new immediate neighbours to let them know about our plans for the land we had recently purchased. We also informed them that we would be sharing our proposals as part of a consultation and inviting their feedback.

2.5 Who we consulted - public consultation

Our public consultation on the draft design proposals for the new woodland was open to anyone who lived or worked in the local area or had an interest in our proposals.

We focused our publicity on people living in the local area, as well as stakeholders (officers and elected local ward members) from Northumberland County Council, Newton-on-the-Moor and Swarland parish council, as well as wildlife interest groups such as Northumberland Wildlife Trust and Northern Red Squirrels.

We also told the statutory stakeholders we consult with when creating a new woodland, including Natural England.

The list of stakeholders we contacted is included in **Appendix F**.

2.6 Dates and duration

The consultation for the new woodland was open from Tuesday 2 June to midnight on Tuesday 28 June 2026.

2.7 What we asked

The consultation survey included one open question inviting written feedback or questions about our proposed plans for the new woodland at Newton Wood. We also asked respondents to give their name and email address and, where applicable, supply details of the organisation on whose behalf they were responding.

The survey we published on the website, is included in **Appendix C**.

2.8 Methods of responding

Respondents to the consultation were invited to give their views by:

- Completing the questionnaire included on our consultation portal at <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/newtonwood>

- Giving comments by email to Woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk
- Leaving comments at the public consultation drop in event at Jubilee Hall, Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth, NE65 9JY on Thursday 18 June from 4pm-7pm.
- Feedback received at the drop in event is summarised separately in section 3.6 of this report.

2.9 Consultation materials and publicity

2.9.1 Consultation materials

The consultation materials published on our website and available to view in person at our consultation drop in event included:

- An overview of Forestry England's Woodland Creation Programme and tree planting objectives.
- A site appraisal, with photographs and maps to give context.
- An overview of the surveys undertaken and our objectives and principles, which have informed our design proposals for the new woodland.
- An overview of different tree and shrub species included in the proposals.
- Visuals of how the new woodland might look soon after planting and in the future.
- Information on how to respond to the consultation.

2.9.2 Consultation activity

We publicised the consultation in the following ways:

- **Media release:** distributed to local news outlets.
- **Dedicated webpage:** on the Forestry England website at: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation-newton-wood>
- **Citizen space consultation portal:** <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/newtonwood>
- **Emails:** to stakeholders
- **Leaflets:** to addresses within 1km of the site boundary, including properties in Newton-on-the-Moor
- **Posters:** a poster publicising the consultation and drop in event was put up in several locations near the site. Posters were also shared with the local parish councils for inclusion on their noticeboards/websites and leaflets were posted through letterboxes to promote the consultation.

- **Consultation drop-in event:** Our drop in event at drop in event at Jubilee Hall, on Thursday 18 June, displayed the information already published on the website on large posters around the venue and Forestry England staff were available for people to talk to about the proposals, answer questions or queries, and listen to any concerns.

Those attending the event were also encouraged to leave immediate feedback on the comments board and to respond to the consultation formally via the online survey, by email, or by completing a hard copy of the consultation questionnaire. We also asked attendees to leave their contact details if they would like to be kept updated about the proposals.

2.9.3 Analysis of consultation responses

Consultation responses were analysed by assigning (or coding) the points made by each respondent to one or more codes within a code frame. Codes were organised by theme and separated into comments or suggestions, and concerns/negative comments.

Each code reflects a point raised by 1 or more individuals in a variety of ways. From this it was possible to count how many times the same or similar points had been raised by respondents.

3. Consultation feedback

3.1 Consultation response overview

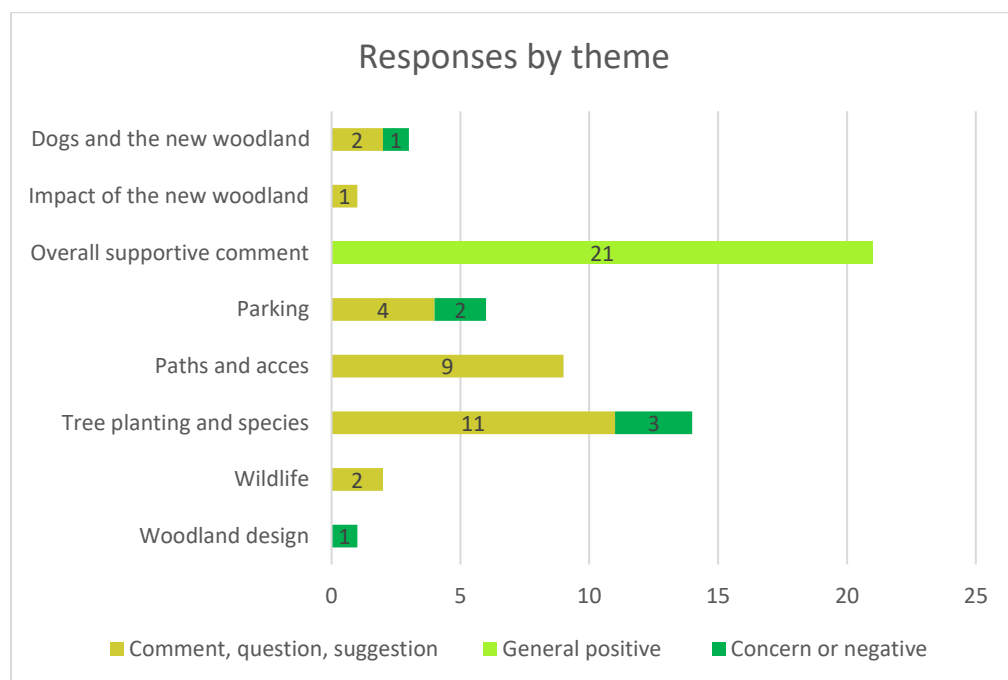
We received 35 individual responses during the consultation period. 30 responses were from local residents, and five from stakeholder organisations. Whilst some responses contained broadly positive supportive comments for the new woodland, some raised concerns and others asked questions or raised comments that were neutral in sentiment. The responses were categorised by sentiment and theme.

A full list of stakeholder organisations contacted is available to view in Appendix F. The organisations that responded were:

- Northumberland County Council - planning
- Northumberland Wildlife Trust
- Shilbottle Parish Council
- Swarland and Newton Action on Climate
- Natural England - Natural England submitted initial comments after the consultation closed. Their feedback is therefore not reflected in the analysis or graphs presented in this report. However the key points raised have been considered and are addressed in Section 5 of this report.

3.2 Consultation response by theme

The responses were categorised into themes and sub-categorised into concern, question, or comment/suggestion:



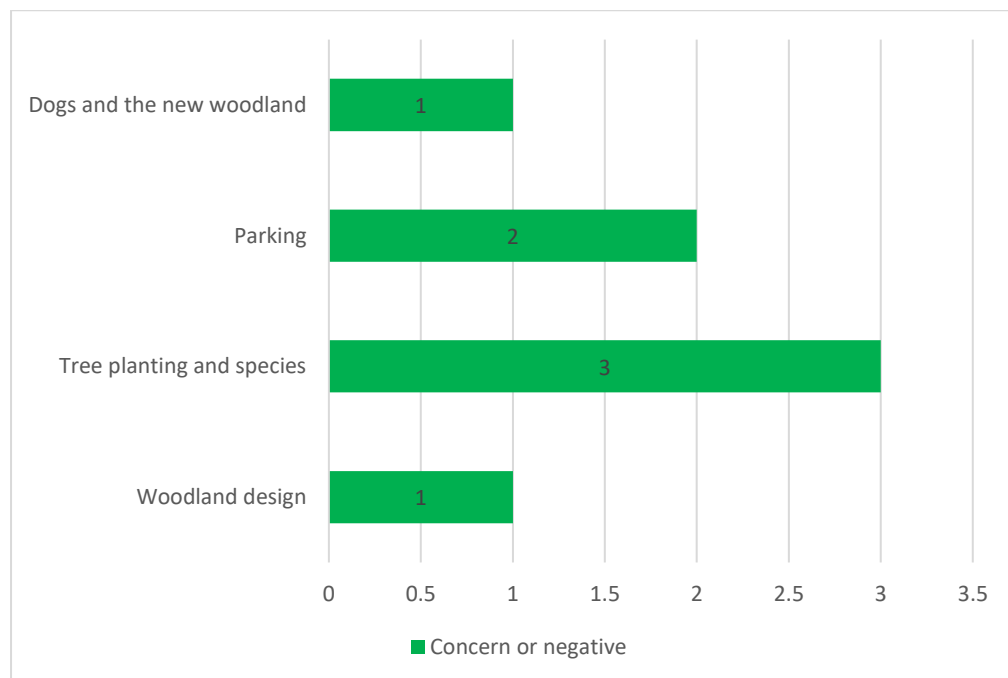
3.3 Supportive/positive comments

We received 21 general overarching positive/supportive comments. These included:

‘I think this is a jolly good idea’. ‘I totally support the initiative’. ‘I am particularly pleased to see that it will have public access’. ‘We strongly support this proposed woodland creation scheme’. ‘I support this proposal’. ‘We need more trees and areas for wildlife to live in peace’. ‘This is an exciting plan which should greatly benefit the local community in Newton-on-the-Moor and Swarland in years to come’.

3.4 Concerns/negative comments

We received 7 negative comments/concerns.



Dogs and the new woodland (1)

Concern that dog owners would fail to pick up dog mess or keep dogs on the lead near livestock

Parking (2)

Concerns about the lack of car parking and how this could lead to inappropriate parking in the village

Tree planting and species (3)

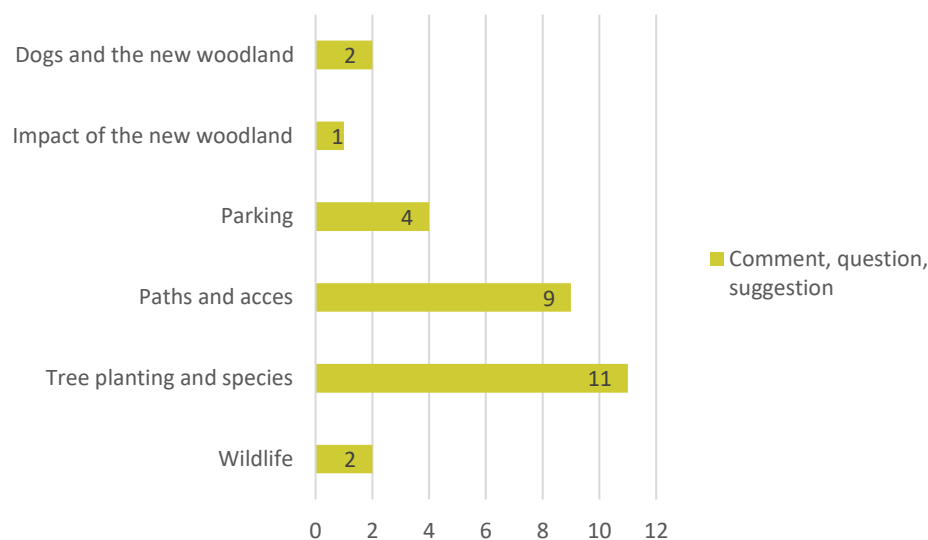
Suggestion to move conifer planting away from the roadside to reduce potential risks to wildlife on the road and concern that Northumberland already has a high proportion of conifer woodland and greater emphasis should be placed on native broadleaf species where appropriate. Concern about the use of tree guards, with suggestion to avoid using them or use biodegradable non-plastic alternatives.

Woodland design (1)

Concern about proximity of the woodland entrance and tree planting to a nearby property and the potential for anti-social behaviour.

3.5 Questions, comments and suggestions

In addition to the 21 general positive comments (see section 3.3), we received a further 29 comments, questions and suggestions



All feedback is included in the code frame in Appendix E.
Key comments within each theme included:

Dogs and the new woodland (2)

Pleased to see that the new woodland would be available for dog walking

Impact of the new woodland (1)

Would like more information about the long and short-term impacts of the new woodland

Parking (4)

Suggestions to provide parking for a small number of cars, with a specific suggestion to consider the provision of a layby

Paths and access (9)

Comments highlighted the importance of creating an accessible and well-connected network of paths throughout the woodland. Suggestions included providing well-drained, surfaced routes suitable for all users, including mobility scooters and people with limited mobility¹, improving the condition of the existing bridleway within the site, and incorporating walking and cycling paths. Several comments focused on maintaining and enhancing connectivity, including retaining the existing bridleway, considering the diversion of Bridleway 127/5 along the

¹ Updated 2 September

western boundary of the scheme, and exploring the feasibility of a footbridge over the A1. There was also interest in providing waymarked routes to help visitors navigate the woodland and enjoy the site safely.

Tree planting and species (11)

Respondents raised a range of comments about woodland design, species selection and habitat protection. Suggestions included a request to undertake a peat survey before planting and to use locally native broadleaf buffers and corridors, particularly alongside watercourses. There were differing views on the balance of species, with some respondents concerned about the proposed level of conifer planting given the existing prevalence of conifers in Northumberland, while another suggested increasing the productive forestry element and sought clarification on the proportion of woodland that would be managed for timber production. Suggestions also included using a diverse mix of conifer species to support red squirrels, locating tree planting away from existing properties to reduce risks of storm damage, and providing more information on the proposed species mix and planting design.

Wildlife (2)

Suggestions included creating vegetation and tree corridors to link with nearby woodland habitats (Swarland), and a suggestion to include a wildlife corridor or green bridge across the A1 to enable the safe passage of wildlife helping to connect habitats on either side of the carriageway.

The code frames summarising the comments received to the consultation are included in **Appendix E**.

3.6 Feedback from the consultation drop in event

Around 25 people attended the drop-in event which displayed the information already published on the consultation website on large posters around the venue. Forestry England staff were on hand to talk about the proposals, answer questions and listen to any concerns from those attending.

Attendees were also encouraged to leave immediate feedback on sticky notes on the comments board. 15 sticky notes were posted on the board. Many of the comments mirrored those also received from the formal consultation responses. The comments are summarised below:

Community engagement and volunteering

- Scope for volunteer engagement for future management e.g. removing tubes etc, grey squirrel control if needed?
- It would be good to keep the local community informed about progress.

General positive

- Very Nice!

- It can only be positive for the surrounding area
- Great display, clear explanations, good species variety and good mixes of species for different goals
- This seems to be an excellent development for the village and local area

Parking

- Lack of parking may be an issue for Newton residents - there are already problems with parking in the village.

Tree planting and species

- A really good opportunity to plant productive conifers which will help to support local processors/jobs/investment in the rural economy.
- Pleased to see more trees being planted.
- Good to see a mix of species, including broadleaf. Also appropriate species along the Newton & Hampeth Burns.

Wildlife

- Good to see the result of the any wildlife/plant surveys
- Check for wildlife corridors between Swarland Wood and the proposed new woodland
- Wildlife Potential green bridge over A1 to link new woodland to existing wildlife rich areas?
- How can we work with Forestry England to connect wildlife corridors and Swarland Wood?
- Would be good to try and ensure joined up corridors to other areas.

4. Summary of stakeholder responses

We received formal responses from the following stakeholders during the public consultation period. The stakeholder feedback has been included in the analysis.

1. Northumberland Wildlife Trust
2. Shilbottle Parish Council
3. Swarland & Newton Action on Climate - Swarland and Newton Action on Climate
4. Northumberland Planning consultation response
5. Natural England - Natural England submitted initial comments after the consultation closed. Their feedback is therefore not reflected in the analysis or graphs presented in this report. However the key points raised have been considered and are addressed in Section 5.

Any additional feedback received from Natural England before submission of the EIA screening application will be incorporated into the final proposal and supporting documentation.

1. Northumberland Wildlife Trust

Confirmed that they were not aware of any notable species or habitats that would be adversely affected by the proposals but highlighted several opportunities to enhance biodiversity within the scheme.

Key suggestions included:

- Creating locally native broadleaf corridors, particularly along watercourses, and using native broadleaf or other non-invasive species as buffers to reduce the spread of Sitka spruce into adjacent habitats.
- Design broadleaf planting areas with soft, non-uniform edges to maximise wildlife benefits.
- Use biodegradable tree guards or have a clear programme for their removal and recycling.
- Incorporate a diverse mix of conifer species to provide a more continuous food source for red squirrels.
- Undertake a peat survey before planting plans are finalised where there is potential for peatland habitat.

2. Shilbottle Parish Council

General supportive statement - describes proposal as a welcomed improvement to the local environment and a valuable addition to the area's biodiversity and local community.

3. Swarland & Newton Action on Climate

- Swarland and Newton Action on Climate are supportive of the proposal, describing it as an exciting project with the potential to deliver significant benefits for the local community.
- They welcomed the low-key approach focused on local recreational use, particularly for walkers, but cautioned that even modest visitor numbers could exacerbate existing parking pressures in Newton on the Moor, especially during the summer months.
- The respondent also highlighted the importance of the woodland for red squirrel conservation and encouraged collaboration with neighbouring landowners to improve habitat connectivity, including through hedgerow creation and the establishment of tree and vegetation corridors linking to nearby woodlands such as Swarland Wood, helping to create a more sustainable landscape for red squirrels.

4. Northumberland planning

Confirmed no planning objections to the proposed woodland.

5. Natural England

Initial feedback from Natural England included the following points:

- Screening does not raise any major concerns so do not anticipate any significant issues.
- Ground preparation methods will need to minimise the risk of soil loss to the burns bordering the site to ensure water quality downstream is not impacted.
- There is a small water course evident running through the site from north to south which should have riparian planting.

5. Our responses to issues raised

We have considered all the feedback we received to the consultation, and our responses to the key issues raised are set out on the following pages.

We have grouped the issues into broad themes for a more readily understood overview of the issues. Many respondents made positive comments about the proposals, all of which have been noted. For conciseness, these have not all been included.

After carefully considering the responses, further design work, and in response to consultation feedback, we have updated our proposed designs for the new woodland to include the following changes:

- We have reviewed the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and have sought to further align our woodland design with its objectives. As part of this, we have added two scrapes (a shallow wetland feature created by excavating a small depression in the ground so that it holds water either permanently or seasonally) - one in an area to the north and the other to the south. These are indicated on the updated design plan.
- In response to initial feedback from Natural England, we have replaced the proposed conifer planting with a strip of broadleaf planting on both sides of the watercourse.
- In response to concerns about planting close to a neighbouring property, we have amended the woodland design so that the start of the planting is further away from the property boundary and associated outbuilding.

1. Consultation and community

What scope is there for volunteer engagement for future management e.g. removing tubes etc, grey squirrel control if needed?
Forestry England works with many 'friends of' societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. We have limited capacity to support long term volunteering opportunities on the site; however, we hope to host a community planting day as we create the new woodland for local people to join in creating this special place.

Please keep the local community informed about progress.

As our plans for the new woodland progress, we will update our website <https://www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation-newton-wood>

2. Dogs and the new woodland

Concern that dog owners would fail to pick up dog mess or keep dogs on the lead near livestock

Visitors will be welcome to walk their dogs in the new woodland and all dog owners must be responsible and keep their pets under control in all the forests and woodlands we care for, following signs and our [Forest Dog Code](#). We have no plans to include dog waste bins and owners are asked to always pick up after their dog, bag it and take it home with them.

3. Impact of the new woodland

Provide more information on the short and long-term environmental and visual impact of the new woodland

The creation of the new woodland at Newton Moor will bring both short-term and long-term benefits. In the short term, there will be a temporary period of activity as the site is prepared and trees are planted, with some localised disturbance from machinery and planting operations as the land transitions from agricultural use to woodland. These effects are expected to be temporary, and the project will begin delivering benefits from the outset through the creation of new habitats, increased tree cover and carbon capture.

The first five years of woodland management are particularly important, as this is when young trees become established. During this period, our management will focus on controlling competing vegetation, replacing trees that fail, and maintaining tree guards and fencing. These measures will help improve tree survival rates and support the successful establishment of the woodland.

In the long term, the woodland is expected to deliver significant benefits for biodiversity, climate resilience and the local community by creating new wildlife habitats, strengthening connections between existing habitats, storing carbon, improving soil health and water management, and increasing resilience to climate change. Importantly, the woodland will also provide a sustainable

source of timber and opportunities for people to access and enjoy nature, supporting health and wellbeing while helping to create a more diverse, resilient and sustainable landscape in line with the UK Forestry Standard.

4. Parking

Concerns about the lack of parking provision and the potential impact this could have on parking in the village, especially during the summer months.

Consider providing parking for a small number of cars, with a specific suggestion to consider the provision of a layby and parking signage.

While the new woodland will be open for the public to enjoy, our funding for this project does not extend to the creation of new car parking, visitor or other recreational facilities. We therefore do not anticipate a significant increase in visitors by car and expect that most visitors to the new woodland will do so on foot via the existing public rights of way, paths and grass rides.

For those visitors that would like to visit a woodland by car [Swarland Wood](#) is approximately 2km drive away and provides parking at the nearby Swarland Village Hall, horse-riding and walking trails. If inconsiderate parking does become an issue, we will consider signs in appropriate locations to discourage this.

5. Footpaths and access

Suggestions for improved access through and around the new woodland, including enhancements to bridleway 127/5, provision of accessible surfaced routes suitable for all users including mobility scooters and people with limited mobility, waymarked routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, and investigation of a potential footbridge over the A1?²

All existing bridleways and footpaths on the site will remain in place. We understand how important accessible surfaced paths, horse-riding and cycling is for some members of the community in this part of Northumberland and we have thought carefully about what provision we might be able to offer at Newton Wood. Our funding for the new woodland comes from the Defra Trees Programme, which does not cover the cost of additional infrastructure such as, surfaced accessible trails, mobility scooter-friendly routes, or new facilities for horse-riding and cycling such as bridle gates. As a result, we're unable to provide new or additional facilities at this location.

We do offer accessible facilities at a number of our woodland sites where funding, site conditions and visitor demand make this possible. Further

² Updated 2 September 2026

Information about Forestry England's approach to accessibility is available here: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/accessibility-information>

We also provide cycling and horse-riding routes at other Forestry England woodlands where funding allows. One example is nearby Swarland Wood. You can find out more here: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/swarland-wood>.

6. Tree planting and species

Avoid the use of tree guards or use biodegradable non-plastic alternatives, where unable to do so have a programme in place for their removal and recycling

We will use tree guards at Newton Wood where we need to, to protect young saplings that are extremely vulnerable to damage from deer and other wildlife. Wherever possible, we have used fencing instead so that only small areas require tree guards. Where we need to use tree guards, they will always be made from recyclable plastic and these will be removed and recycled after the trees become fully established. Tree guards need to protect trees from damage caused by browsing animals and support successful establishment. We continue to monitor developments in biodegradable alternatives.

Undertake a peat survey before planting to protect peatland habitats

A review of the site has confirmed there is no evidence of peat within the proposed woodland site. As a result, there is no requirement to undertake a peat survey, as this would not provide any additional information relevant to the site or the proposed works.

Ensure sufficient distance from existing properties to guard against storm windfalls/impact on view

A planting buffer between the woodland boundary and nearby properties has been included in the proposals to include tree and shrub planting along site boundaries to create a gradual transition, while ensuring sufficient separation distances are retained between new trees and neighbouring properties.

Provide more information about the types of trees you plan to plant

Our professional foresters carefully choose which trees to plant and where to plant them. They understand the local soils, how quickly the trees will grow, and the important habitats, species, and geographical features nearby. They also consider tree pests and diseases and future climate conditions to ensure our new woods are as healthy as possible. Creating diverse, resilient woods is important for timber, biodiversity and capturing carbon. At Newton Wood, tree species include Norway spruce, Aspen, Douglas fir, field maple, grey alder, small leaved lime, downy birch, eared willow, hornbeam, crab apple, bird cherry and Macedonian pine.

Design broadleaf planting areas with soft, non-uniform edges to maximise wildlife benefits

The proposed woodland has been designed with softened, natural edges creating a gradual transition between the woodland and surrounding habitats. Woodland edges will include a mix of native shrubs, scrub and lower-density tree planting, providing valuable habitat for wildlife and enhancing the appearance of the woodland within the landscape.

What percentage of the woodland will be managed to provide coniferous timber - opportunity to push productive element much higher

Conifers will make up around 50% of the new woodland planting however the broadleaf mixes will also be managed to produce timber.

Northumberland already has too many conifers

Conifers are included in the woodland planting because they play an important role in creating resilient, productive and sustainable woodlands. Different tree species provide different benefits, and a mixed woodland can support biodiversity, sequester carbon and produce timber more effectively than relying on a single type of tree. Forestry Commission and Natural England guidance supports the use of a range of tree species in woodland creation, including both broadleaved and conifer species, where they are appropriate to the site and the objectives of the woodland. Well-designed woodlands often include a mix of species to deliver benefits for biodiversity, climate resilience, carbon storage and sustainable timber production.

Use buffers of locally native broadleaf or non-invasive species to reduce the spread of Sitka across adjacent habitats

Sitka spruce will make up only a small proportion of the overall planting scheme and will be planted in just one compartment. Within this area, it will be mixed with Douglas fir and aspen rather than planted on its own. Shrub species will also be planted around the outer edges of the compartment to create a more diverse woodland structure and help blend it into the surrounding landscape.

Where planting commercial conifer, include a diverse mix of species that provide a continuous food source for red squirrel.

We have carefully considered species mix to support red squirrels. The conifer mix includes coastal redwood, Douglas fir, grand fir, Macedonian pine, Norway spruce, sitka spruce and western red cedar. In addition we have included a range of small seeded broadleaf trees to increase resilience of the woodland without providing a food source for grey squirrels. These include aspen, hornbeam, small leaved lime, downy birch and grey alder as well as a number of shrubby species.

Ground preparation methods will need to minimise the risk of soil loss to the burns bordering the site to ensure water quality downstream is not impacted.

Ground preparation will be kept to a minimum to reduce the risk of soil entering the burns that border the site. A shallow ripper will be used to relieve soil compaction, avoiding more intensive cultivation methods and helping to protect water quality downstream.

There is a small water course evident running through the site from north to south which should have riparian planting.

In response to initial feedback from Natural England, we have replaced the proposed conifer planting with a strip of broadleaf planting either side of the watercourse.

7. Wildlife

Request to see the result of the any wildlife/plant surveys

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) found that the site is made up of several grassland fields, most of which were being grazed by sheep at the time of the survey. The fields in the north are more agriculturally improved, including a recently sown field in the centre of the site. The fields in the south support more species-rich neutral grassland and are divided by a wet ditch or small watercourse that feeds into the Newton Burn.

Field boundaries are mainly formed by native hedgerows of varying heights, with occasional mature trees. As these hedgerows contain native species, they are considered Habitats of Principal Importance. The improved grassland areas are considered to be of low ecological value, while the neutral grassland, hedgerows and mature trees are of local ecological value.

The appraisal concluded that woodland creation would be suitable across most of the site, particularly on the improved grassland areas. The river corridors associated with the Newton Burn along the southern boundary and the Hampeth Burn along the northern boundary are lined with trees and support several ancient woodland indicator species. These habitats lie along the site boundaries and will not be directly affected by the proposal.

The site provides habitat for a range of locally important wildlife, including bats, birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. The PEA notes that woodland creation has the potential to enhance biodiversity over the long term by increasing nesting, shelter and foraging opportunities for birds, and by creating additional habitat for mammals and amphibians.

Suggestions to support and enhance wildlife connectivity and corridors between Swarland Wood and the proposed new woodland, and suggestion for wildlife corridor/green bridge for safe wildlife access across the A1

The design has been reviewed to improve habitat connectivity across the wider landscape. The two watercourse corridors will provide important wildlife links

through the site, supporting species movement and strengthening ecological networks beyond the woodland itself. While there is private land between the Newton Wood site and Swarland Wood, the proposals contribute to wider habitat connectivity within the area.

We have also reviewed the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and sought to align the design with its objectives. As part of this, scrapes have been incorporated into the scheme to increase habitat diversity and provide additional benefits for wildlife.

Work with neighbouring landowners to improve the habitat for red squirrel conservation - including through hedgerow creation and the establishment of tree and vegetation corridors

We will work to strengthen forest connectivity by retaining existing hedgerows and other habitat features wherever possible. Along the north-western boundary, we will explore opportunities for compensatory hedgerow planting to create and enhance wildlife corridors between woodland areas. These measures will support a range of species, including red squirrels, by improving habitat connectivity and facilitating movement across the wider landscape. Woodland design.

Neighbour concern about proximity of to property boundary

We have met to discuss concerns and made changes to the buffer between the woodland and the property boundary.

Appendix A: Our response to key themes from early engagement

Newton Wood - a new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor, Northumberland - our response to key themes raised when creating a new woodland

Access to the new woodland

Newton Wood will be a productive woodland, growing and supplying timber for decades to come. At the same time, it will support wildlife, store carbon and become a quiet green space for local people to enjoy. Once established, it will be dedicated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, allowing people to explore the site.

The new woodland will be easy to reach from Newton-on-the-Moor and nearby areas using the existing bridleway that runs through the site, along with the pedestrian entrances shown on the site plan. Once there, these routes, together with new grass paths, will give access for managing the woodland and for people to explore the area. We have no plans to add surfaced trails, cycling routes or additional facilities for horse riding.

Dogs will be welcome, but the woodland will not be fully fenced and we do not plan to install dog waste bins. We expect all dog owners to act responsibly and keep their pets in sight and close by at all times in the new woodland, following our Forest Dog Code¹.

Parking and traffic

We are designing the new woodland as a quiet space to enjoy nature and wildlife. It will be easy to reach using existing paths, tracks and lanes and we're not planning any visitor facilities. We expect most people will visit on foot, so have no plans to include public parking. This will help keep local roads free from extra traffic.

Our forestry vehicles need to access the new woodland from the road so they can manage and maintain the site. We plan to use the existing entrance into the woodland off the C106 road, supported by a new forest track. We will include barriers at this entrance to help prevent unauthorised vehicles and antisocial behaviour.

When harvesting eventually begins, transport routes for the sustainably managed timber will be agreed with the local highways authority as required.

Wildlife, landscape and views

We have done surveys to tell us more about the plants, wildlife and soil conditions at Newton Wood. These surveys, along with a landscape and visual appraisal, have guided our draft designs.

The new mixed woodland will enrich the landscape by creating more habitats for wildlife, including insects, birds and mammals, including red squirrels. Red squirrels will benefit from more joined-up woodland habitats within the wider landscape, helping to strengthen local populations. Woodland, scrub and trees will also improve the wider landscape by storing carbon, reducing flood risk, improving air quality and helping keep the local climate more stable.

We plan to plant wet woodland species, such as willow and alder, along the burn corridors to improve existing habitats and support species like the willow warbler, which has been recorded locally.

We have designed the woodland to take account of views from properties that overlook the site, nearby homes and public paths. Along the west and south edges, we will plant smaller broadleaved trees and shrubs, with larger broadleaf and conifer trees set further back. To the north, we have included open space and mixed planting along the bridleway to create a softer edge and a gradual change into the woodland.

While our planting will keep some views open, we need to balance the desire for open space and visual connectivity with the creation of a new productive woodland.

The trees we will plant

We are using years of experience and the latest scientific evidence to choose the right trees to plant in the new woodland. Our surveys help us to choose the trees most suitable for the site now and as the climate changes. Our professional foresters carefully choose what trees to plant and where to plant them. They understand the local soil, how quickly the trees will grow, and the important habitats, species and geographical features nearby. We also consider tree pests and diseases and future climate conditions to keep woods as healthy as possible.

The species will be a mix of broadleaf and conifer, often planted together in mixtures, with groups of shrub species along edges to increase the variety and provide seasonal colour and texture. Species have been chosen to produce a future source of sustainable timber. This supply of homegrown wood products will support the wider British timber and forestry industry, helping to reduce the demand for imports from other countries.

Species at Newton Wood might include Douglas fir, small leaved lime, grey alder, wild cherry, field maple, Norway spruce and western red cedar, among others.

Establishing and managing the new woodland

We aim to plant the new woodland in winter 26/27. Maintenance is especially important in the first five years to help the woodland thrive in the long term. The woodland will be managed by the Forestry England team and our contractors. Longer term, Forestry England will develop a Forest Plan to make sure that future timber production is sustainable.

Newton Wood will be a productive woodland once the trees have grown to a suitable height. As part of our ongoing management, we will begin to remove some of the trees after about 20-25 years to provide a sustainable supply of timber and help the woodland to continue to grow healthily for many years to come. When done responsibly, tree felling can be good for the health of forests, as well as providing other benefits such as helping to tackle climate change.

Community Involvement

Forestry England works with many ‘friends of’ societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. Whilst we have limited resource to support long term volunteering opportunities on the site, we will monitor use and interest at our new woodland sites in the area as part of our wider engagement plans across the district.

Protecting the new woodland from deer

The UK is home to six species of deer. As their natural predators (bears, lynx and wolves) are no longer present in the UK, our wildlife management team have to manage the deer populations. Without predators or management, deer populations become unnaturally large, and their browsing can damage or kill young trees and wildlife habitats, reducing the resilience of the new woodland to the effects of climate change and lowering the carbon captured from the atmosphere.

We will use deer fencing to protect larger blocks of new planting and tree tubes in smaller areas. Rabbit and deer fencing will protect young trees from browsing, while tree tubes will safeguard smaller, widely spaced areas. After the woodland has become established, deer fencing and tree tubes will be removed and recycled where possible. This usually happens after approximately 10 years.

Forestry England is part of the Deer Initiative², a partnership that promotes sustainable deer management in England and Wales. Our highly skilled wildlife management team will safely and humanely control deer populations in our woodlands, working to the highest standards. More information about how Forestry England manage deer can be found on our website³.

Why are you planting agricultural land?

We understand concerns around food security, and we want to keep the best-quality land in agricultural production. This is why we do not create woodlands on the most productive land (grades 1 & 2). The land at Newton Wood has been found to be grade 3 and is not considered to be of high agricultural quality.

Forestry England's role is to manage and expand the nation's forests to ensure they are healthy and sustainable and benefit wildlife, people, and the economy. The new woodland will capture carbon, connect existing woodland habitats for wildlife to move between, and provide a sustainable source of timber, which is crucial for the UK's green economy.

References:

1 <https://www.forestryengland.uk/dog-code>

2 <http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/>

3 <https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/managing-deer-the-nations-forests>

Appendix B: Consultation information -

<https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/hagworthinghamw/>



Forestry England

Growing the nation's forests

Newton Wood - a proposed new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor

Forestry England are planting new woodlands to expand the nation's forests

We are planning new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor in Northumberland. We would like your comments on our initial ideas. Your input will help shape our final designs.

Working with public and private landowners, we're choosing the right places for woodlands to grow and flourish, carefully planting a mix of tree species to be resilient in our changing climate.

Every new woodland will have public access so you can explore and enjoy them to support your health and wellbeing.

They will be valuable places for wildlife, often linking other woods to provide green corridors for wildlife to move and thrive across the landscape.

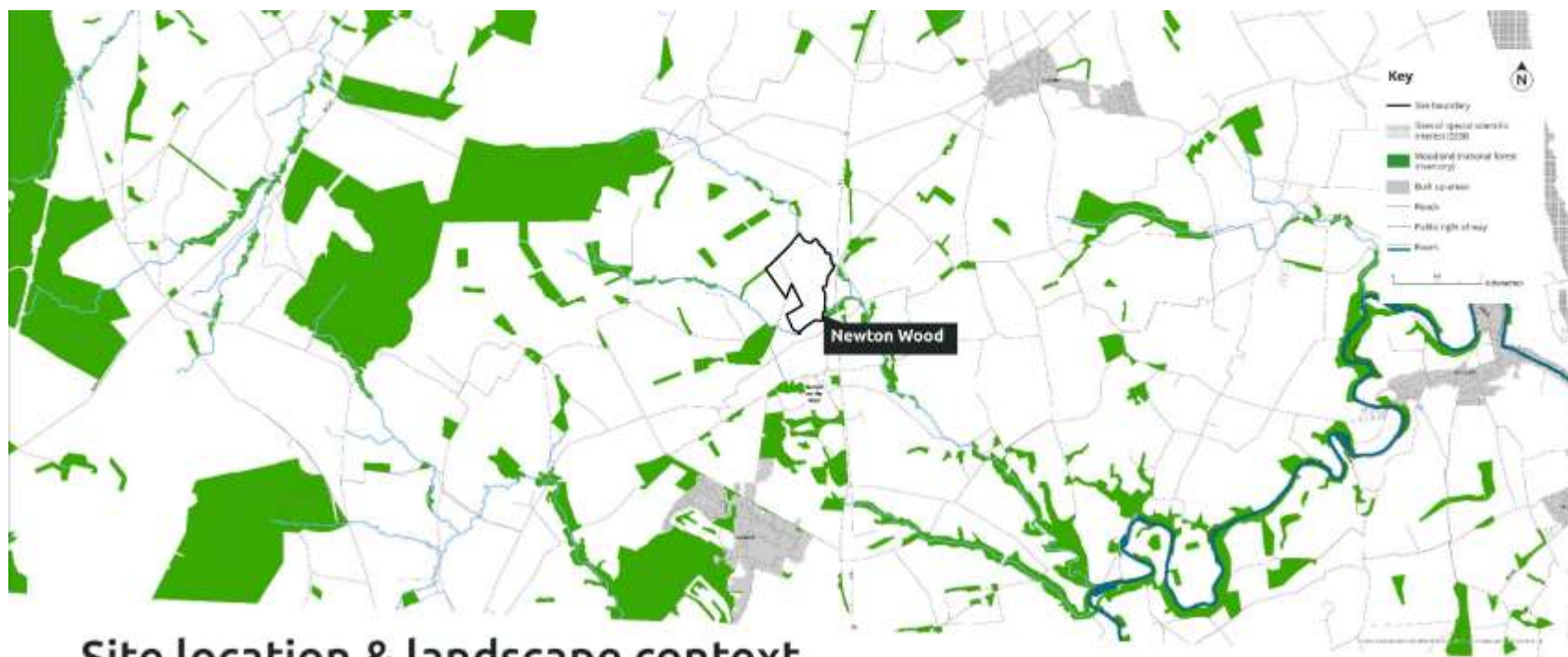
In time, each new woodland will provide sustainable timber, contributing to a green economy and they'll have wider environmental benefits including absorbing carbon, improving soil health and air quality, and water management.

Forestry England is creating this new woodland through the government's Trees Programme.

Scan the QR code to find out more:

forestryengland.uk





Site location & landscape context

The proposed new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor is within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 12: Mid Northumberland. The Mid Northumberland NCA is an intermediate plateau of gently undulating farmland which forms a transitional area between the Northumberland Sandstone Hills to the west and the low-lying coastal plain to the east. A series of ridges and enclosed river valleys in the northern part of the area open out into a broader, flatter landscape in the south. Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site forms the southern border to the National Character Area. Woodland cover is variable, with the well-wooded valleys of the rivers Font, Wansbeck and Coquet containing semi-natural and ancient woodland, mixed woodlands and parklands within the country estates, and small coniferous blocks and belts of trees on the more open farmland to the south. The conifer blocks support populations of red squirrel. (Natural England, 2013)

The proposed new woodland is approximately 5km from land Forestry England manages at Edlingham Woods, and 3km from Swarland Wood.





The existing site

The site comprises a series of fields enclosed by hedgerows and field boundaries, and includes areas of existing woodland associated with recent planting schemes. The site lies within a gently undulating landscape, with land levels varying gradually across the site. Hampeth Burn and Newton Burn run along the north-eastern and southern boundaries, and, together with smaller watercourses within the site, provide important natural features which contribute to the local landscape character. A brideway runs through the northern part of the site. Views of the site are experienced from nearby public rights of way, residential properties on the northern edge of Newton-on-the-Moor and individual properties in close proximity to the site.

1: View southwards, towards recent tree planting and Newton-on-the-Moor. 2: View southwards, with topography falling towards Newton Burn. 3: View south over the watercourse leading to Newton Burn. 4: View eastwards from the brideway. 5: View east over Hampeth Burn and towards the A1.





How Newton Wood could look

We are designing the new woodland to benefit people, wildlife and the wider landscape (natural capital approach). Our design meets the UK Forestry Standard, which takes into account the following elements (Forestry Commission, 2021):



Detailed desktop surveys, site surveys and analysis will inform our design. This includes:

- Local environment record review
- Preliminary ecological appraisal
- Historic environment records review
- Landscape and visual appraisal
- Soil mapping
- Ecological site classification
- Utilities searches

Objectives for the new woodland



Future forest resources and resilience: plant a mix of trees for a lasting supply of sustainable timber.



Thriving habitats for wildlife: create a mosaic of habitats, including areas of low density planting, mixed conifer and small seeded broadleaved planting, to enhance biodiversity and benefit species including red squirrels.



Public access for health and wellbeing: create low-key public recreation opportunities with new green space for people to walk in the woodland.



Benefits for the wider landscape: capture carbon, supporting net zero emissions targets.

Types of woodland we could plant





31 | Newton Wood consultation report and our response to issues raised July 2026



Forestry England

Newton Wood - a new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor, Northumberland - our response to key themes raised when creating a new woodland

Access to the new woodland

Newton Wood will be a productive woodland, growing and supplying timber for decades to come. At the same time, it will support wildlife, store carbon and become a quiet green space for local people to enjoy. Once established, it will be dedicated under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, allowing people to explore the site.

The new woodland will be easy to reach from Newton-on-the-Moor and nearby areas using the existing bridleway that runs through the site, along with the pedestrian entrances shown on the site plan. Once there, these routes, together with new grass paths, will give access for managing the woodland and for people to explore the area. We have no plans to add surfaced trails, cycling routes or additional facilities for horse riding.

Dogs will be welcome, but the woodland will not be fully fenced and we do not plan to install dog waste bins. We expect all dog owners to act responsibly and keep their pets in sight and close by at all times in the new woodland, following our Forest Dog Code¹.

Parking and traffic

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Establishing and managing the new woodland

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Community Involvement

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Protecting the new woodland from deer

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References:

1 <https://www.forestryengland.uk/dog-code>

2 <http://www.thedeerinitiative.co.uk/>

3 <https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/managing-deer-the-nation's-forests>



Forestry England

Your views are important to us - let us know what you think

Responding to this consultation

We encourage you to submit your response online. You can view our plans and submit your views by completing the online feedback form at:

- <https://bit.ly/newtonwood>
- If you are unable to do this, you can respond via email at woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

All views should be received by 11:59pm on Sunday 28th June 2026.

What's next ?

- Review of consultation feedback
- Further design work to refine our proposals
- Application to the Forestry Commission for permission to create the new woodland
- Planting (Winter 2026/27)

Scan the QR code
to find out more:

forestryengland.uk





Forestry England



New Woodland near Newton- on-the-Moor

Come along to our public consultation event

Thursday 18 June 4:00pm - 7:00pm
Jubilee Hall, Newton-on-the-Moor,
Morpeth, NE65 9JY

Forestry England is planning to create a new woodland called
Newton Wood near Newton-on-the-Moor, Northumberland.

Please drop-in at our local consultation event to view our proposed
designs and speak to members of our team. You can also share
your views with us online by scanning the QR code or visiting
<https://bit.ly/newtonwood>



You can also contact us at:
woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

forestryengland.uk



[New woodland Newton Wood | Forestry England](#)

 Forestry England

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New woodland: Newton Wood



Growing the nation's forests

We're planning to create a new 46-hectare woodland just north of Newton-on-the-Moor in Northumberland. Newton Wood is being carefully designed as part of our work to increase tree cover across England and create lasting benefits for wildlife, people, and the climate. It will also be a productive woodland, growing and supplying sustainable timber for decades to come.

Northumberland is one of the last strongholds for red squirrels in England, and one of the key aims of the new woodland is create new, much-needed habitat to help support their recovery.



Work in progress...

At the moment, we're still developing our plans for Newton Wood. We recently hosted an online public consultation, where we invited local communities to share their thoughts and ideas with us. We'd like to thank everyone who got involved, as your feedback will help shape the final designs for Newton Wood. Right now, we're working through the comments from the public consultation, and we'll be sharing our final designs later this year.

Supporting red squirrel recovery

As one of the last strongholds for red squirrels in England, Northumberland has an important part to play in their recovery. Many of the trees we will be planting at Newton Wood will be conifer species, which make ideal habitats for red squirrels. This is because these tree species are less suitable for the invasive grey squirrel. By offering new conifer woodland in an area where red squirrels have been recorded, Newton Wood could play a role in supporting their recovery.



Frequently asked questions

 Close all

When will the woodland be planted?

Will the woodland be used for timber?

What types of trees will you plant?



Appendix C:

Consultation questionnaire



A proposed new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor

Overview

Forestry England would like to share with you our proposed plans for the new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor.

Why your views matter

Your feedback, as well as site surveys, will help shape the design proposal for how the new woodland could look. Forestry England value your comments and feedback, and welcome you to our consultation event.

Introduction

Thank you for taking part in this consultation on the design proposals for a new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor.

You can submit information without completing the name and email details, but if you choose to do so they will be held by Forestry England as per our privacy policy [Privacy Policy | Forestry England](https://www.forestryengland.uk/privacy) (<https://www.forestryengland.uk/privacy>)

1. What is your name?

2. What is your address?

3. What is your postcode?

4. Are you responding as:

- ☐ A local resident
- ☐ A local business
- ☐ A elected official
- ☐ Other stakeholder: Please name below

5. If you're responding on behalf of an organisation, what is the name of your organisation?

6. What is your e-mail address?

7. Would you like to be notified about future consultation on these new woodland proposals?

- ☐ Yes (please make sure you have provided your e-mail address above)
☐ No

Feedback

8. Please use this space to add feedback or questions on the proposed plans

Appendix D: Letters/emails

Leaflets sent to neighbouring properties



New woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor

Share your views in our public consultation

We're planning to create a new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor, and we'd love to hear your views. Newton Wood will support wildlife, store carbon, produce sustainable timber, and become a new green space for local people to enjoy. We've been busy carrying out local surveys to understand the soil, wildlife, and mix of trees we can plant, and now we'd really love to hear what you think.

Read about our plans and have your say by midnight on Sunday 28 June by scanning the QR code, or by visiting <https://bit.ly/newtonwood>



Scan me

I'm double-sided!



Community consultation event

Find out more about our plans to create a new woodland at our community drop-in event

Join us on Thursday 18 June from 4pm to 7pm at Jubilee Hall in Newton-on-the-Moor to find out more about our plans to create a new woodland near you. You'll be able to speak to members of our team and ask any questions you have.

📍 Address: Jubilee Hall, Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth, NE65 9JY

🕒 Time: Drop in any time between 4pm to 7pm

Read about our plans and have your say by midnight on Sunday 28 June by scanning the QR code, or by visiting <https://bit.ly/newtonwood>



I'm double-sided!

Example of emails sent to stakeholders:

From: Woodland Creation <woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Newton Wood - public consultation on proposals for a new woodland near Newton-on-the-Moor

[REDACTED]

We are writing to let you know that we have launched a public consultation for Newton Wood, a new woodland we are planning to create near Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth in Northumberland. We're inviting comments on our draft design proposals for the new woodland - these can be viewed and commented upon by following this link: <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/newtonwood/>

The consultation is open from today until midnight on Sunday 28 June.

While we continue with our detailed planning for Newton Wood, we are inviting views on our initial designs. This new woodland is one of many we're creating across the UK to grow the nation's forests. It will become a valuable habitat for wildlife and an important carbon store. In time, it will also provide a source of sustainable timber and become a new green space for people to explore and enjoy.

Public drop-in event

As part of the consultation, we will also be holding a drop-in event where visitors can view our initial designs in person and talk to members of the Forestry England team. This will be held at Jubilee Hall, Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth, NE65 9JY3 on Thursday 18 June from 4pm-7pm.

Responding to the consultation

We encourage you to submit your response online. You can view our plans and submit your views here: <https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/newtonwood/>

Next steps

The consultation will close at 23.59 on Sunday 28 June. All responses will then be summarised and included in a consultation report, along with our response to the key issues raised, and published on our website. Consultation feedback and further surveys will help shape the final design proposal we will submit for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland. We will update our website as our plans for the new woodland progress.

You can see the latest information here: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation-newton-wood>

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Kind regards

The Woodland Creation Team

Forestry England

Email: woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

Website: www.forestryengland.uk



Forestry England

Growing the future

Appendix E: Code frame

Theme	Comment
Woodland design	Neighbour concerns about proximity of planting and access to the new woodland
Wildlife	Include a wildlife corridor/green bridge for safe wildlife access across the A1
Wildlife	Include vegetation/tree corridors to link to nearby woodlands (Swarland)
Tree planting and species	Planting mix is important
Tree planting and species	Carry out a peat survey ahead of planting to support peatland habitats
Tree planting and species	Where planting commercial conifer, include a diverse mix of species that provide a continuous food source for red squirrel
Tree planting and species	Use buffers of locally native broadleaf or non-invasive species to reduce the spread of Sitka across adjacent habitats
Tree planting and species	provide local native broadleaf corridors, particularly along any watercourses
Tree planting and species	What percentage of the woodland will be managed to provide coniferous timber - opportunity to push productive element much higher
Tree planting and species	Provide more information about the type of tree planting
Tree planting and species	Ensure sufficient distance from existing properties to guard against storm windfalls
Tree planting and species	Move conifer planting away from the road to avoid danger to wildlife
Tree planting and species	Species mix - Northumberland already has too many conifers
Tree planting and species	Avoid the use of tree guards or use biodegradable non-plastic alternatives
Paths and access	Create a well drained walking route
Paths and access	Will the existing bridleway be kept
Paths and access	Improve the surface of the bridleway within the woodland boundary
Paths and access	Divert bridleway 127/5 inside the western boundary of the scheme along the edge of the large west field
Paths and access	Include surfaced paths for access for all
Paths and access	include walking and cycling paths
Paths and access	will there be waymarked routes
Paths and access	Footbridge over the A1
Paths and access	Accessible footpaths
Parking	Knock on impacts on the village due to lack of parking
Parking	Lack of parking
Parking	Parking for a small number of cars?

Parking	Provision of layby and signage for parking
Overall supportive comment	Overarching supportive comment
Impact of new woodland	Provide more information about the long and short term impacts of the new woodland
Dogs and the new woodland	Dog users (concern)
Dogs and the new woodland	Pleased dogs allowed

Appendix F: Stakeholders contacted

Northumberland County Council
Elected representatives: Shilbottle Ward Councillor Officers: • Public Protection ○ Local Access Forum ○ Public Rights of Way ○ Private Water Supplies; ○ Local Nature Recovery (natural environment); ○ Conservation and Ecology • Central Planning • Highways
Parish Councils
• Newton-on-the-Moor Parish Council (woodland site is within parish council boundary) • Shilbottle Parish Council (woodland site borders the woodland boundary)
Other
• Natural England
Wildlife groups
• Northumberland Wildlife Trust • Butterfly conservation • Red Squirrels - Northern England
Special interest
• National Farmers Union (NFU) • North East Community Forest • Confederation of Forest Industries (CONFOR)
Utilities
• Northumberland Water