

ANNUAL REVIEW 2013-14



SYLVA
FOUNDATION

reviving Britain's wood culture

Contents

Our people	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Report from the Chair of Trustees	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
About the Sylva Foundation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Science	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Education	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Forestry	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Wood	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Financial Summary	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Our thanks	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13

Our people: 2013-14

Trustee (chair)	Dr Nick Brown
Trustee	Mr Lucius Cary OBE
Trustee	Dr Peter Savill FICFor
Trustee	Lady Audrey Wood
Trustee	Sir Martin Wood
Chief Executive	Dr Gabriel Hemery FICFor
Chief of Operations	Mr Alistair Yeomans MICFor
Director for Forestry & Rural Enterprise	Mr Paul Orsi MICFor
Administration Manager	Mrs Lesley Best
IT Manager	Mr Richard Pigott
IT Apprentice	Mr George Kibble
Research Associate	Dr Gillian Petrokofsky
Education Associate	Mrs Jen Hurst
Media Associate	Mr Rob Penn
Artist-in-Residence	Dr Sarah Simblet
Sylva Scholars	Ms Kirsty Monk & Ms Louise Hill

Report from the Chair of Trustees

This, our fifth year, has been both fruitful and eventful.

We joined a consortium successful in gaining €1.95 million from the EU's Life+ programme to deliver NaturEtrade a web-based system that enables EU landowners to assess the provision of ecosystem services on their land. Our second Sylva Scholar started research on the consequences of Chalara ash dieback on ecosystem services. We gained funding for the Living Ash Project – to identify ash trees across Britain with tolerance to Chalara.



The Foundation has been developing its Education Strategy with expert advice from Jen Hurst. Sponsorship of an artist-in-residence in support of a book – The New Sylva - concluded. In partnership with several organisations we launched SilviFuture: a new network established to promote and share knowledge about novel forest species across Britain.

We welcomed Paul Orsi as our Director for Forestry & Rural Enterprise. In partnership with DIY retailer B&Q and sustainability charity BioRegional, we created the Good Woods initiative, delivering advice to 235 owners of under-managed woods, covering 10,900 hectares, across SE and E England. We also developed the Woodland Star Rating supporting 300 woodland owners in understanding ecosystem services and the public benefit derived from good woodland stewardship. Users of the myForest service continued to grow - at the end of the year we were supporting 1691 woodland owners, owning 2591 woodlands, covering 30,106ha.

A major donation was received of 8 hectares of land, including farm buildings, in South Oxfordshire. The gift was made to help secure the charity's long-term future, and specifically to assist in the development of a centre for innovation in home-grown wood under a new charitable object and associated work programme known as 'Wood'.

A major donation was received of 8 hectares of land, including farm buildings, in South Oxfordshire. The gift was made to help secure the charity's long-term future, and specifically to assist in the development of a centre for innovation in home-grown wood under a new charitable object and associated work programme known as 'Wood'.

Dr Nick Brown, Chair of Trustees

Sylva is working to revive Britain's wood culture by caring for woodland and promoting forest produce for a sustainable future. We were founded in 2009.



Land gifted to the Sylva Foundation in 2014

Based in Oxfordshire, our use of cutting-edge information technology and effective collaboration with a wide range of partners enables us to deliver public benefit across Great Britain, and beyond.

We are working to tackle these main challenges:

- 1. Britain's forests need to be managed in innovative ways to face unprecedented threats from a changing climate, from pests and diseases, and to meet the evolving demands of society.*
- 2. Society in Britain is removed from the realities of a working landscape, and people are unaware of the importance of forest management for mankind and nature.*
- 3. The vast majority (72% of area) of forests in Britain are in private ownership. About half of these are under-managed, meaning that they are failing to deliver public benefits to society, are in poor condition for wildlife, and may not be resilient to environmental change.*
- 4. Wood is an important raw material thanks to recent innovations, such as bioenergy and in nanotechnology, yet existing markets in Britain, even for basic home-grown timber products, are poorly developed. There is insufficient provision for education and innovation in wood.*

To address these challenges we operate through four main work programmes: *Science, Education, Forestry and Wood*, which reflect our charitable objects (see back cover). Under each we support a wide variety of activities to deliver public benefit.

Science ~ conducting & promoting research

- Forestry Horizons think-tank
- British Woodlands Survey
- Living Ash Project
- Oxford University-Sylva Scholarship
- NaturEtrade
- Forestry Evidence



Education ~ advancing education

- OneOak
- SilviFuture
- The New Sylva book and exhibitions
- Public talks

Forestry ~ supporting sustainable forest management

- myForest
- Good Woods
- Woodland Star Rating



Wood ~ education and business enterprise

- Wood Centre

Oxford University-Sylva Scholarship

Our support of the Sylva Scholarship at the Department of Plant Sciences, University of Oxford, continued this year. Our first scholar, Kirsty Monk, successfully completed her research into *The consequences of management and climate change for ecosystem function: a case study of cord-forming fungi in English woodlands*. She is aiming to submit her DPhil thesis next year. A number of research papers arising from her work have been published (see below). Trustees approved support for a second Sylva Scholar, Louise Hill, who started her research in Autumn 2013 on *The consequences of ash dieback Chalara fraxinea on ecosystem services in British woodlands*. Efforts continue to attract further funding to secure the scholarship in perpetuity.

NaturEtrade

We were part of a successful consortium, led by Oxford University, which gained €1.95 million funding from the European Union's Life+ programme. The five year project called NaturEtrade is setting out to create a marketplace for ecosystem services, which will be trialled across four European countries.

Living Ash

Sylva joined a consortium that was successful in receiving funding from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The five year Living Ash Project aims to identify a large and diverse number of ash trees across Britain with good tolerance to Chalara ash dieback, to secure this material for further breeding work, and to make it available to industry. Our project partners are Earth Trust, Future Trees Trust and Forest Research. As part of this work Sylva is working closely with Adapt Low Carbon Group at the University of East Anglia.

Forestry Horizons think-tank

Our online depository for forestry-related science, Forestry Horizons, continued to attract good numbers of visitors, with publications provided via a free access (where copyright permits) library linked to the Global Forest Information Service.

Collaboration with a BBSRC-funded project, studying enthusiasm in environmental volunteering continued this year, led by Dr Hilary Geoghegan (appointed as Lecturer at University of Reading during the year). A report presenting the full results of the British Woodlands Survey 2012, sponsored by RICS Education Trust, was published in the summer and made freely available online.

Technical Publications 2013-14

Hemery, G., 2014. In retrospect: *Sylva. Nature* 507, 166–167. doi:10.1038/507166a

Hemery, G., Jinks, R., Lloyd, S., Ralph, J., 2014. SilviFuture: promoting and sharing knowledge of novel forest species. *Quarterly Journal of Forestry* 108, 43–47.

Kinash, D., Walmsley, J., Hemery, G., 2013. The British domestic firewood supply chain. *Quarterly Journal of Forestry* 107, 303–8.

Monk, K., Bass, D., Brown, N.D., Hemery, G.E., 2014. Post-clearance effects of rhododendron on the fungal communities of the eastern sidelands of Lundy, Bristol Channel. *Journal of the Lundy Field Society* 4, 57–70.

Monk, K., Hemery, G., 2013. Cord-forming fungi in British woodlands: what they are and what they do. *Quarterly Journal of Forestry* 107, 197–202.



Nicholls, D., Young, M., Hemery, G., Petrokofsky, G., Yeomans, A., 2013. British Woodlands 2012: a national survey of woodland owners. Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Pollegioni, P., Woeste, K.E., Chiocchini, F., Olimpieri, I., Tortolano, V., Clark, J., Hemery, G.E., Mapelli, S., Malvolti, M.E., 2014. Landscape genetics of Persian walnut (*Juglans regia* L.) across its Asian range. *Tree Genetics & Genomes*. doi: 10.1007/s11295-014-0740-2.

The trustees commissioned a new education strategy in Autumn 2013, which reflected on achievements to date and set clear goals and strategies for the next five years that will enable us to deliver our education objectives effectively. In summary we aim to revive a wood culture by working with people of all ages to:

- introduce people to forests and their sustainable use.
- demonstrate and explain the benefits of sustainable forest management.
- complement existing forest education programmes, work in partnership with other organisations and play a significant role in furthering forestry learning and development in the UK.

The New Sylva

Our support for the creation of a book continued during the year, with the aim of promoting to a general public audience the theory and practice of sustainable forest management. The New Sylva is being written jointly by our Chief Executive Gabriel Hemery and artist Dr Sarah Simblet, and will be published by Bloomsbury Publishing in April 2014 to coincide with the 350th anniversary of John Evelyn's Sylva, first published by the Royal Society in 1664.

As part of this initiative Sarah Simblet was appointed as our Artist-in-Residence and this year, the second of her two-year residency, she completed 200 drawings celebrating Britain's trees and forests.



Sylva artist-in-residence Sarah Simblet talking to the publishing team at Bloomsbury about one of her drawings for The New Sylva.

Exhibitions and trails, hosted by arboreta and botanic gardens, are planned for 2014 based on drawings and text from the book. Sylva will receive income from book sales and associated marketing activities, and we own eighty of the original drawings made for The New Sylva.

SilviFuture

We developed a new knowledge-sharing online database to record data and help expand knowledge about less well-known forest species growing across Britain. Named SilviFuture, its aim is to help inform woodland



Gabriel Hemery during filming in Scotland to promote SilviFuture to woodland owners.

owners about possible species choice, with a view to diversifying and increasing the resilience of our forests in the face of climate change and the changing needs of society. The freely available database was uploaded with several hundred records from government research agencies in England, Scotland and Wales, and contributions encouraged from private woodland owners. By the end of the year some 850 records were on the database. During the year several talks about the project were delivered by our staff. SilviFuture is run in a partnership with Forestry Commission England, Forest Research, Royal Forestry Society and the Silvanus Trust.

Other educational activities

During the year we delivered talks across the country to a wide range of audiences. In November we ran an event hosted by the Oxford University Department of Continuing Education, including talks from our own staff, our Sylva scholar and invited speakers. Sylva's staff contributed to 11 workshops held across England, with Forestry Commission England, to promote management planning to woodland owners.

In England alone, around 47% of woodlands are considered under-managed. Bringing these woodlands into good condition through sustainable forest



management is core to much of Sylva's work. It is integral to reviving a new 'wood culture' to deliver public benefits, including providing more jobs, improving woodland habitats for nature and creating more places for people to exercise and enjoy the countryside.

Sylva's main ongoing activity in supporting these aims is the myForest Service. We continued to deliver this as a freely-available online service that provides mapping and management tools for woodland owners. During the year we launched a new 'sandbox' account (an online testing environment) to allow students to use the service.

myForest activities by March 2014 ...

383 businesses registered

1,691 woodland owners supported

2,591 woodlands registered

30,106 hectares of woodlands mapped

Collaboration with Forestry Commission England continued to ensure that woodland owners were encouraged and supported in drawing up management plans that were compliant with the UK Forestry Standard. A new management planning template was embedded within the myForest site, and new mapping tools provided.

Work continues to ensure, via working with a wide range of partners, that we will support more woodland owners in bringing woodlands into good condition.

In 2013 we worked with DIY retailer B&Q, and sustainability charity BioRegional, to create the Good Woods partnership.

Funding was gratefully received from B&Q for the development of the Good Woods partnership, enabling the support of a network of partners comprising Wildlife Trusts, Areas of Outstanding Beauty, woodland charities and small businesses to provide forestry advice and woodland planning tools.

We exceeded our targets, delivering advice to 235 owners of under-managed woods, targeted within the SE and E of England, covering an area of approximately 10,900 hectares. As part of this work we developed the Woodland Star Rating that supported over 300 woodland owners in understanding ecosystem services and public benefits that can be achieved through good woodland stewardship.

Furthermore as part of this initiative we strengthened links between communities and woodlands, holding woodland management workshops which supported 20 woodland community groups.

We improved the markets for woodland products by producing and disseminating guidance to over 1000 woodland owners on the sustainable production of timber from their woodland.

Good Woods

for people, for nature



Diana MacMullen professional agent and one of a network of woodland advisors for Good Woods

“ I wasn't sure what to expect from the visit but, despite all the training days I have engaged with, I can see that one can't beat a more tailored approach than a visit from a forestry expert to a woodland. In this respect the Good Woods program is inspired and I am delighted to have been an early recipient of that support from a forestry professional like Paul [Orsi].”

Sonia Hutton-Taylor: an owner of a 4 hectare woodland in the South East of England.



The trustees approved a new work programme, known as 'Wood' , to deliver public benefit defined under a new charitable object.

A group of professional craftspeople, wood businesses and educators was convened to help advise the formation of the Wood programme. The trustees are very grateful to all those who gave their time so generously.

We aim to promote excellence and innovation with home-grown wood by:

- promoting the use of home-grown wood sourced from well-managed British forests to stimulate sustainable forest management and the rural economy;
- providing skills & enterprise education in designing and making in wood to create successful home-grown wood businesses across Britain;
- stimulating an innovative culture in the design and use of home-grown wood.





A major development in the programme was the donation to the charity of 8 hectares (12 acres) of land, including farm buildings, in South Oxfordshire. The gift was made to help secure the charity's long-term future, and specifically to assist in the development of a centre for innovation in home-grown wood.

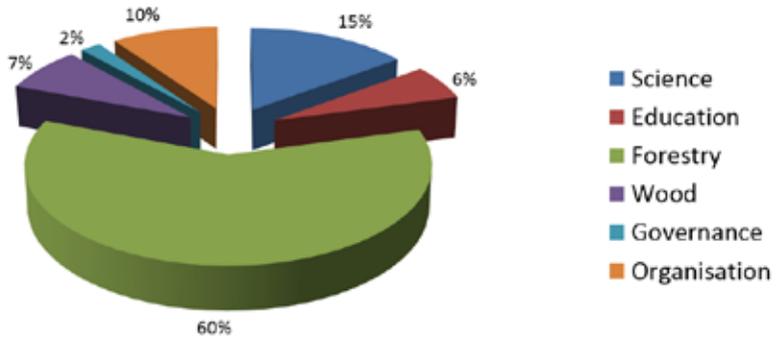
Sylva Wood Centre

Plans are underway for the redevelopment of a number of the old agricultural buildings to create the *Sylva Wood Centre*. The centre will be filled with small businesses and craftsmen, all of them working and designing in wood. We will also provide business incubation for fledgling wood businesses, and aim to support apprenticeships and training in wood craft. We anticipate that the centre will open in early 2015.

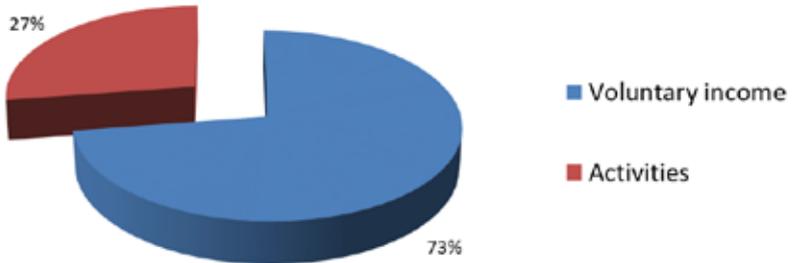
We would welcome donations and contributions from anyone who shares our desire to promote good practice in everything to do with wood, from the management of forests to maximise their amenity and the economic value of the timber they produce, to the use of locally grown timber for all applications. There are many naming opportunities, including the opportunity to name the main building of the *Sylva Wood Centre*, rooms within it, and its equipment.

Financial Summary

Expenditure



Income



Expenditure totalled £362,084; reflecting an increase in our operational activities, notably the delivery of the Good Woods initiative (see page 10). The costs of running the organisation were 10% of expenditure.

Our income was £807,407; a significant increase from last year, largely due to a major donation of land and buildings valued at £380,000 to assist in the development of our Wood programme (see pages 11-12). Funding provided by B&Q for the Good Woods initiative was another major source of voluntary income.

Full audited accounts are available on request or from the Charity Commission website.

Our thanks

We are indebted to many individuals, partners, funders:

Adapt Low Carbon Group, University of East Anglia; B&Q; Biodiversity Institute, University of Oxford; BioRegional; Bloomsbury Publishing; Caroline Neubert; Central Bedfordshire County Council; Dr Chris Dixon; Dan Kinash; David Rees; Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge; Department of Plant Sciences, University of Oxford; Dr Derek Nicholls; Earth Trust; English Woodlands Timber; Forest Education Network; Forest School Association; Forest Research; Forestry Commission East of England; Forestry Commission England; Forestry Commission South East of England; Future Trees Trust; Dr Gillian Petrokofsky; Hawthorn Heavy Horses; High Weald AONB; Hilary Geoghegan; Institute of Chartered Foresters; Jim Matthews, HG Matthews; Kent AONB; Kent High Weald Partnership; Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership; Lantern; Laurence Crow; Mary Young; Medway Valley Countryside Partnership; Meg Chambers; Mercer Lewin Chartered Accountants; Mid Kent Downs Partnership; National Botanic Garden of Wales; National Forest; Natural England; New Forest Land Advice Service; New Forest National Park Authority; Ninevah Charitable Trust; North Wessex Downs AONB; Oxford & Cherwell Valley College; Oxford Long-Term Ecology & Resource Stewardship Lab; Oxfordshire Forest School Service; Phillip Koomen; Richard Hicks; Rob Penn; Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; Royal Forestry Society; Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors; RSPB; Sandra Charitable Trust; Dr Sarah Simblet; Scottish Forestry Trust; Silvanus Trust; Silvicultural Systems Ltd.; Small Woods Association; Suffolk County Council; Surrey Wildlife Trust; TCV East England; The Verderers Ltd.; University of Oxford, Harcourt Arboretum; Westonbirt National Arboretum; Woodland Trust.

The charitable objects of the Sylva Foundation are to promote the conservation of the environment for the public benefit consistent with sustainable development principles by:

1. promoting and conducting research for the public benefit about effective sustainable forest management and the dissemination of the useful results of such research;
2. advancing education for the public benefit in the theory and practice of sustainable forest management;
3. supporting the development and application of sustainable forest management for the public benefit;
4. advancing education and business enterprise in the design and production of home-grown wood products for the public benefit.

Charity registered in England and Wales (1128516) and Scotland (SC041892)

Please consider supporting our initiatives and the general work of the charity. We welcome donations and other forms of support.

We welcome enquiries from people who have time and skills they may wish to offer to Sylva on a voluntary basis.



SYLVA
FOUNDATION

Little Wittenham, Oxfordshire, OX14 4RA, UK

tel: +44 (0)1865 408018

email: info@SYLVA.org.uk

www.sylva.org.uk