

This is my third and last of these newsletters, as I'm delighted to introduce Confor's new National Manager for Wales Anthony Geddes.

It's been a real privilege to get to know many of you over the past five months, and to ensure Martin's work to keep forestry and timber on the Welsh political agenda at this crucial time is continued.



I'm tremendously grateful to the Confor Wales Committee – Mike Harvey, Andrew Bronwin, John Searle, Dave Edwards, Charles Gittins, Ashley Williams, Dai Jones, Mark Price, Roger Cooper, George Johnston, Tim Kirk, Kyle Williams, Andrew Sowerby and Hugh Jones – who have attended dozens of meetings on Confor's behalf and kept me right on numerous occasions. I've left them and Anthony with the challenge of finding at least one woman to join the committee – so if you could be she, please step forward.

Many people have put in a huge amount of work to ensure the sector continues to be represented strongly in Wales: Andrew Heald, Stuart Goodall and Roland Stiven at Confor head office deserve particular mention. There's also been great support and encouragement from members of the Welsh Assembly and staff at Welsh Government, demonstrating how much they value Confor's weight of support for the sector, and constructive, expert input into policymaking.

This all bodes well for the future of Confor and for forestry and timber in Wales. We are also looking forward to joining forces with UKFPA when we merge on 1 January.

I look forward to continuing to work with Anthony and all of you as Confor's Policy Researcher, and to seeing you at next year's Royal Welsh Show, if not before.

Eleanor Harris

## Introducing Anthony Geddes, Confor Manager for Wales



Anthony Geddes will be known to many of you, not least thanks to his sharing the Confor tent at the Royal Welsh Show in recent years. Hopefully you will all have a chance to get to know him better in the coming months, but to speed the process up I tackled him with a Q&A – starting with some easy ones:

**Favourite music?** Tough choice as I'll listen to everything except punk but

folk/country - everything is better live!

**Favourite drink?** At work tea; after work red wine

**Favourite tree?** Broad leaf - Ginkgo biloba, they cast an amazing silhouette. Conifer - Douglas fir lovely soft needles and it's such a diverse building material too.

**Favourite film, book or TV show?** Italian job, what's not to love amazing scenery, great soundtrack and awful British cars!

**Favourite sport?** To watch it has to be Rugby.

**What did you want to be when you grew up?** A vet, as a real youngster I was captivated by James Herriot's tales.



**How did you get into forestry?** Professionally it was all the fault of the RFS: I met John Clegg at their offices one day and the rest is history. Personally, I grew up in the Wye Valley and

have been walking dogs in woods for as long as I can remember.

### What did you do before you joined Confor?

I'm fortunate to have a broad range of skills including a background in timber recycling and



power generation. Prior to joining Confor I was a surveyor with John Clegg Forestry Agents.

### What are you most looking forward to in this role?

Getting to know the members in Wales and hoping to build on the amazing achievements of Martin.

### What are you most likely to be found doing at the weekend?

Either out on my mountain bike amongst the trees or in my workshop persuading some antiquated piece of machinery back into life.

Anthony starts on 26 November. His contact details will be on our website and in the December issue of *Forestry and Timber News*.

## Brexit and our Land

Confor submitted evidence to the important Welsh Government consultation *Brexit and Our Land*, which will provide the policy and funding framework for farming and forestry after Brexit.



Welsh Government held workshops around the country which a number of Confor members attended. We are very grateful to all our members who responded to the consultation to help provide a strong voice for forestry.

The key points in Confor's response include:

- The Welsh Woodland Creation strategy requires urgency and ambition across Welsh Government.
- Planting must favour forests producing high-value timber under the UK Forestry

Standard, which deliver the greatest range of benefits.

- We warmly welcome the hints about a step-change in funding for forestry as early as next year.
  - Some funding should be announced now, recognising the time involved in preparing forestry plans.
  - The 'windows' system should be replaced with a first-come-first-served system of applications.
- NRW must be provided with sufficient staff resources to handle increased applications. This should include:
  - a dedicated unit to handle large woodland creation applications;
  - a lead individual tasked with improving the woodland creation process.
- We would welcome a carbon funding scheme under the public goods package. Funding to bring unmanaged woodland into management is also important.
- Capital grants should also be available for planting timber crops under the economic resilience package.
- A target of at least 4000 hectares/year, as per the Committee on Climate Change recommendations, must be maintained and ideally restored to the 2010 target of 5000ha. The estimated area of conifer woodland in Wales has decreased by 18,000ha since 2001.1 At least 60,000ha new planting is required merely to sustain wood supply at current levels and prevent job-losses in the processing sector; an additional 11,000ha would be required to supply a Welsh CLT plant exclusive of any future growth in the use of Welsh timber in existing sectors, such as timber frame housing, fencing, pallets, packaging, paper, biomass, or exports to England;
- We welcome the proposal for a scheme of outcome-based payments for public goods in which 'there is no reason why a farmer or forester cannot produce public goods and food and timber.'
- We welcome the proposal for multi-year agreements to deliver meaningful public goods over years or decades.
- The scheme should commit to a principle of a level playing field for different land uses in eligibility for all relevant funding.
- We would welcome the opportunity as a sector to take part in public goods scheme trials.

For the full response, visit

[www.confor.org.uk/resources/consultations/](http://www.confor.org.uk/resources/consultations/)

What next? Welsh Government have received several thousand responses to the consultation. Having read these, they will publish a White Paper with proposals, which will be an opportunity for further comment.

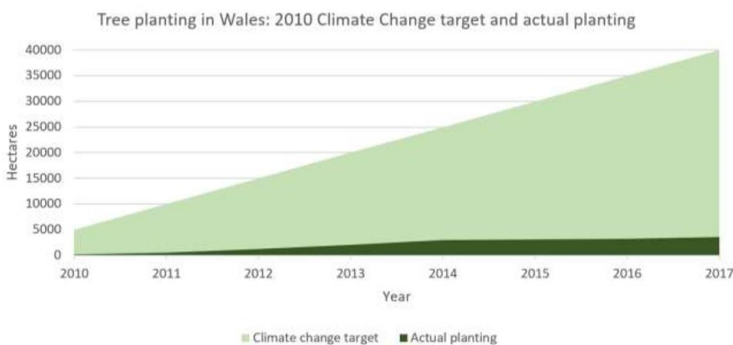


## A low carbon pathway for Wales

Wales is required by law to reduce its carbon emissions by at least 80% by 2050. Confor submitted evidence on proposals for reduction by at least 45% between now and 2030.

Key points in Confor's response included:

- A need for urgency and ambition in tree planting given the ongoing failure to meet targets (below)



- Favour forests that produce high-value timber
- Capital grants for planting to encourage farmers to diversify into forestry
- A high-level individual tasked with improving the approvals process
- Test other land-use support for carbon costs caused by creating a competitive disadvantage for forestry
- Collaborate with private-sector investors to achieve cost-effective planting
- Ensure architects do not over-specify, excluding Welsh timber from use in construction
- Improve forecasts of Welsh timber availability so that the timber resource can be used to maximise carbon benefit
- Develop a smart wood-fuel incentive to decarbonise rural heating and bring woodland into management without skewing the softwood market

For the full response, visit [www.confor.org.uk/resources/consultations/](http://www.confor.org.uk/resources/consultations/)

What next? The consultation responses will help to develop Wales' first Low Carbon Delivery Plan, due in March 2019.

## Confor writing prize

There is still just time to enter Confor's new writing competition.

Industry professionals and students (aged 30 and under) have been invited to write a short essay about their vision of the future, with cash prizes of £500, £250 and £100 on offer for the three best entries.

The winners will be presented with their prizes at a reception hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Forestry at Westminster on the evening of 20th November. The competition is sponsored by Confor member Tilhill Forestry.



Entries of 500-1000 words should be sent to Eleanor Harris, [eleanor@confor.org.uk](mailto:eleanor@confor.org.uk), by **13 November**, on this topic:

"How can forestry and wood processing help deliver a Green Brexit and a more sustainable society in the UK?"

Illustrations, infographics and other visual tools can be used.

## Confor Marches field day

The practicalities of the management of European Protected Species in a woodland situation

29 November at Cleobury Mortimer Woodland, Shropshire.

Woodland owners and managers are mostly aware of the guidelines and various regulations that surround European Protected Species however there are still questions that need to be addressed:

- How will an incident of accidental disturbance be policed?
- How can we communicate the message that judicious forest management provides greater benefit than harm?
- How best can we mitigate the responsibilities being thrust upon us?

A programme will be sent out to all those who register to attend.

Book your place at: <http://bit.ly/2qITrv6>



Speckled wood, Wapley Hill Wood. EMH 2018

## Confor Woodland Show 2019

Exhibitor bookings are now open for the 2019 Confor Woodland Show. Contact Chloe Francis, 01502 725 844 or [chloe.francis@micropress.co.uk](mailto:chloe.francis@micropress.co.uk).

Stands will be offered to 2017 exhibitors and Confor Members as a priority. If you have not been involved with the Confor Woodland Show before, please get in touch and we will discuss your requirements.

For more information on the show visit [www.confor.org.uk/resources/events/confor-woodland-show-2019/](http://www.confor.org.uk/resources/events/confor-woodland-show-2019/)

## The best time to plant a tree

Confor's latest article in the *Western Mail*, by Eleanor Harris, is about what it will take to achieve the Welsh Government's woodland creation target of 2000 hectares. It is available on the Confor website at: [www.confor.org.uk/news/latest-news/](http://www.confor.org.uk/news/latest-news/)

## ICF Wales Annual Conference

*Land Use in Wales – where are we going?*

The Institute of Chartered Foresters will meet on 15 November in Cardiff University for a lively programme of talks and discussion on the future of forestry in Wales. Non-members are also welcome. For more details, visit: [www.charteredforesters.org/event/icf-wales-annual-conference-agm/](http://www.charteredforesters.org/event/icf-wales-annual-conference-agm/)

## Enabling Natural Resources and Well-Being in Wales 2019-2023: Call for Grant Proposals

The Welsh Government is setting in place revised grant arrangements to support implementation of the Natural Resources Policy, making clearer links between Wales' natural resources and well-being.

The scheme has 3 themes of action under which grant applications can be made:

- Developing, regenerating and broadening access to sustainable green infrastructure
- Improving the quality of the urban and rural built environment
- Developing resilient ecological networks and nature-based solutions

The grant is open to a wide range of organisations working in a collaborative way to deliver activity and will provide both revenue and capital funding.

Further information about the scheme can be obtained from [gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/environment-grants/enabling-natural-resources-and-well-being-in-wales-2019-2023-call-for-grant-proposals/?lang=en](http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/environment-grants/enabling-natural-resources-and-well-being-in-wales-2019-2023-call-for-grant-proposals/?lang=en)

The deadline for applications is 3 December with view to grant funding commencing early in the 2019-20 financial year.

## Stay in touch!

If you are on facebook or twitter please follow Confor for the latest news and updates.

If you have articles or news for our magazine *Forestry and Timber News*, or If you have a contribution for the Forestry in Pictures feature, please contact our Communications Manager Stefanie Kaiser, 0131 240 1420 or [stefanie.kaiser@confor.org.uk](mailto:stefanie.kaiser@confor.org.uk).



The seed orchard, Maelor nurseries. EMH 2018