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.

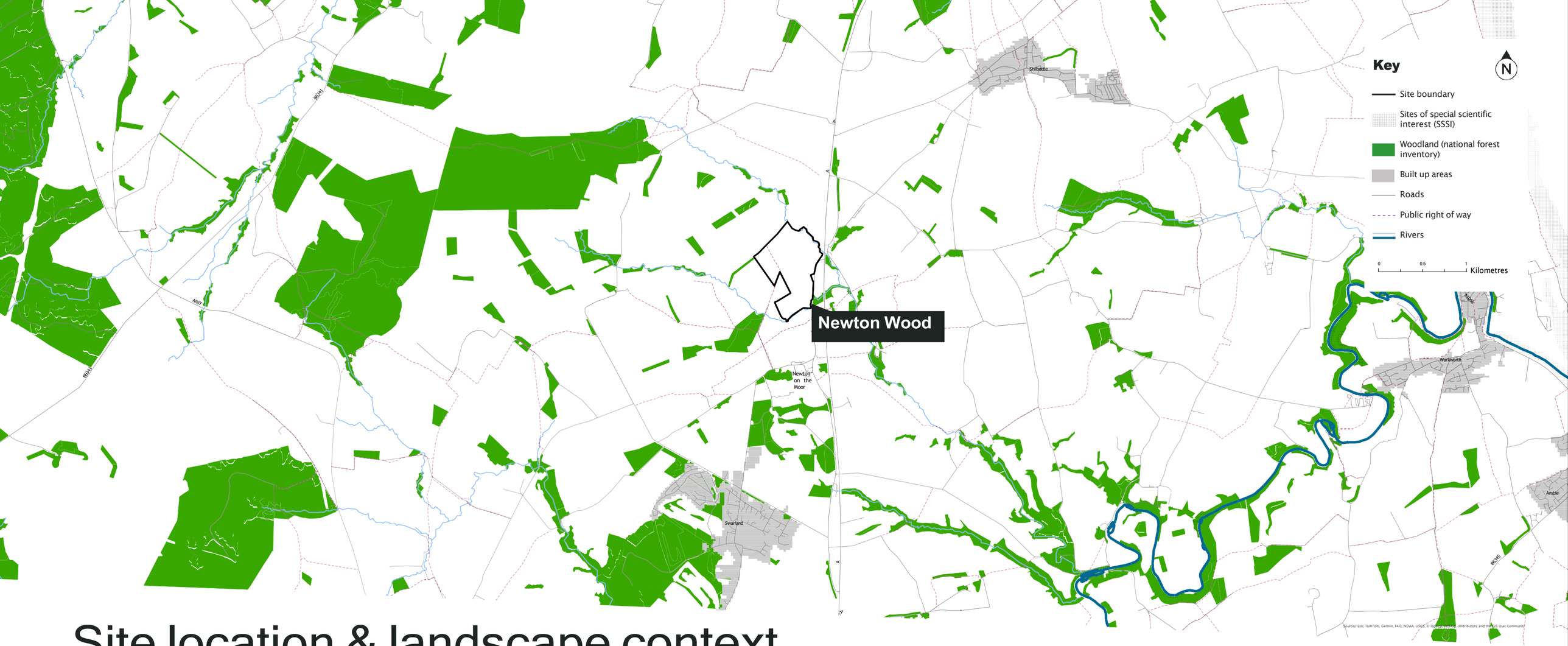
They will be valuable places for wildlife, often linking other woods to provide green corridors for wildlife to move and thrive across the landscape.

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:

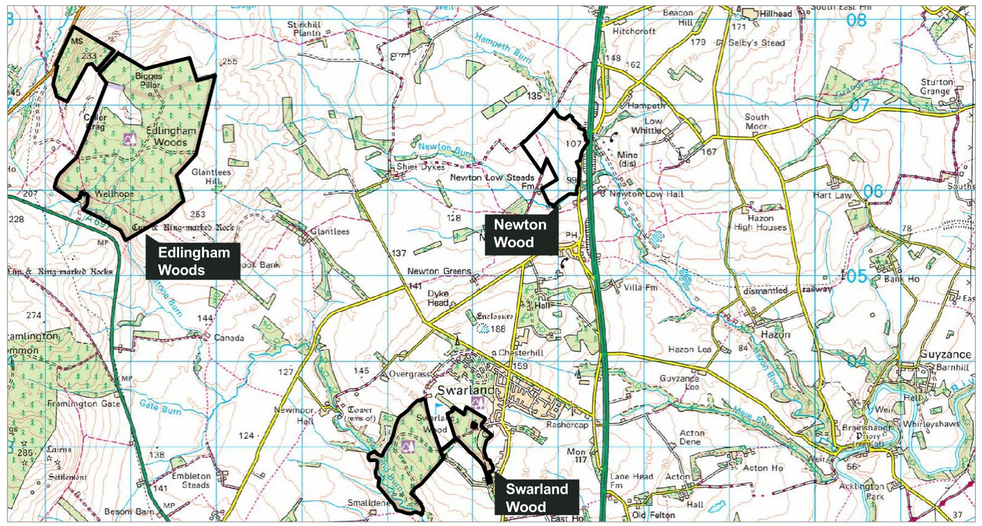
forestryengland.uk



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.



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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 bridleway 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.



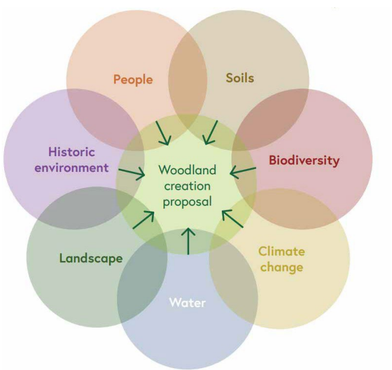


1: View southwards, towards recent tree planting and Newton-on-the-Moor. 2: View southwards, with topography falling towards Newton Burn. 3: View south over the watercourse leading to Newton Burn. 4: View eastwards from the bridleway. 5: View east over Hampeth Burn and towards the A1.



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



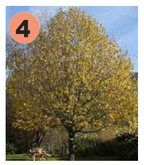
Douglas fir with sitka spruce and aspen



Norway spruce with western red cedar and downy birch



Macedonian pine with small leaved lime and alder



Small leaved lime with field maple and hornbeam



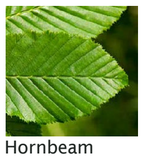
Field maple



Downy birch



Sitka spruce



Hornbeam



Western red cedar



Grey alder



Common alder



Aspen

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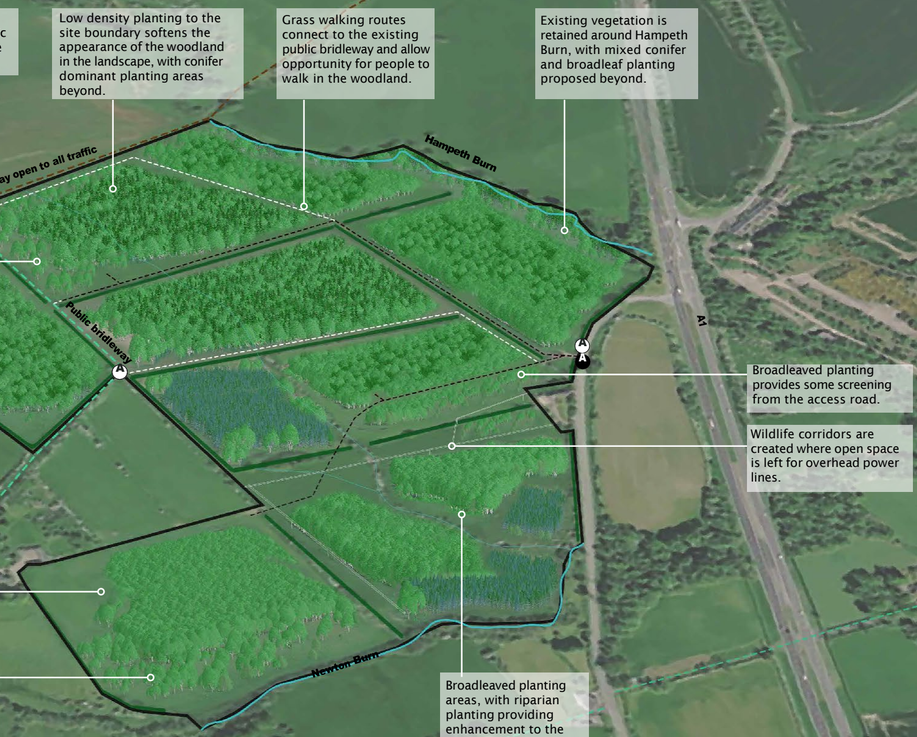

How the new woodland could look

Our initial designs include proposals to:

- Plant coniferous and broadleaved trees together, with shrub species along some edges. This will add variety, colour and texture in the landscape.
- Create grass routes for woodland management and for public access, which will connect to the existing public bridleway, leading to the wider landscape.
- Create wildlife corridors by leaving open space next to hedgerows and power lines, and adding some shrub planting at the edges of woodland for wildlife to thrive.
- Include a mix of open space, native shrubs and trees at low density to keep some open views from nearby properties. This will also make the area look interesting throughout the year.

Artist's impressions:



View from the bridleway how it looks now



View from the main access road how it looks now



How it could look 5 years after planting



How it could look 5 years after planting



How it could look in 25 years



How it could look in 25 years

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The historic field boundary has been recreated to reference past field boundary patterns.

Low density planting to the open site boundary creates a soft, graded woodland edge, with a natural transition between new planting and the surrounding farmland.

Open space and low density planting adjacent to the bridleway creates an irregular woodland edge, retains some openness and allows a gradual transition to the woodland.

Conifer dominant planting is located at the centre of the site, with conifer dominant planting areas to the edges partially screened by broadleaved planting to the site boundary.

Low density planting is positioned to the western boundary due to views from Newton-on-the-Moor and surrounding public rights of way.

Grass walking routes through the site link to the existing bridleway.

Access point for public use, as well as operational access for future forestry management.

Areas of recently planted broadleaved and coniferous trees are retained throughout the site.

Low density broadleaved planting near properties with views into the site.

Riparian broadleaved planting provides enhancement to the watercourse.

Hampeth Burn

Public bridleway

Newton Burn

Key:

- Site boundary
- Existing vegetation
- Existing hedgerow
- Existing vegetation to be removed
- Proposed grass rides/ walking routes
- Watercourses
- Planned road upgrades
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Overhead powerlines
- EA Flood Zone 3
- EA Flood Zone 2

Proposed woodland

- Broadleaf planting
- Mixed conifer and broadleaf planting
- Low density broadleaf
- Riparian broadleaf planting
- Shrubs and small broadleaved trees planted at low density
- Conifer dominant planting
- Pedestrian access
- Operational access

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 km

Your views are important to us, let us know what you think about proposals for Newton Wood

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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 Code[1].

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 Initiative[2], 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 website[3].

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

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