

# Forestry

## What is Forestry?

Forestry is the science and practice of planting, managing, and caring for forests for commercial lumber.

## What kind of jobs are available?

- Forest Worker
- Planting Contractor
- Fencing Contractor
- Technical Development Officer
- Landscape Architect

## What can I expect from a job in Forestry?

Jobs can range from controlling large machines to strip and cut down trees, to conducting research from a comfortable chair in an office.

## Tell me more

- Introduction
- Is Forestry right for me?
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## Introduction

As of January 2016, woodland covers roughly 13% (3.16 million hectares) of the United Kingdom, 43% (1.35 million hectares) of which are independently certified as sustainably managed, and the amount of land dedicated to woodland has been on a steady rise since 1919 (up from just under 5% of land coverage). However the woodland recovery is far from over, and remains an ongoing priority for the [Forestry Commission](#), ensuring hiring in the industry continues.

Forestry is an interdisciplinary field in which social, economic and environmental factors are merged. Forestry professionals are required to develop a keen understanding of these factors to ensure that their actions both promote economic activity, and provide a sustainable and healthy ecosystem for future recreation, wildlife and resources.

From chainsaw operators, to tree planters, to heavy vehicle drivers, the Forestry industry is hiring in both the public and private sector. If you're looking for a career where you get to work outdoors, learn new skills, keep physically active, and help promote economic and environmental growth for generations, then perhaps Forestry is right for you.

Read on the find out more...



## Is Forestry right for me?

Do you match the description below? If so, you might find a career in Forestry to be extremely rewarding:

- Physically fit
- Good time management and practical skills
- An eye for safety
- Able to work well in a team, but equally capable of working on your own
- Safe driver (experience with off-road or large vehicles is beneficial)
- Enjoy spending time outdoors
- Desire to promote woodland and wildlife across the UK

## Some facts about Forestry

- In 2016, woodland area covered 3.16 million hectares of the United Kingdom 1.35 million (43%) of which are certified as sustainably managed.
- 6,000 hectares of new woodland was established across the UK between 2015 and 2016.
- Last year, 10.8 million tonnes of softwood, and 0.5 million tonnes of hardwood were harvested across the UK.
- Currently in the UK, there are 16,000 people employed in forestry, and 27,000 employed in primary wood processing.
- The total value of wood product exports in 2015 was £1.6 billion.
- In 2015-2016, it is estimated that there were roughly 447 million visitors to woodland in England. The most commonly reported activity? Dog walking.
- At 13% land coverage, the UK is one of the least densely forested countries in Europe. However, this is on the rise, and will continue to grow alongside increasing public pressure for a more environmentally friendly UK.
- In terms of net imports (imports less exports) of forest products in 2014, the UK was third behind China and Japan.

## Career Options

Careers in Forestry can range from driving logging machines through the mud to working in a laboratory analysing plant samples to identify diseases. Below you will find a few examples of key roles in the forestry industry that you may find appeals to you.

### • Forest Worker

- Forest workers spend most of their time conducting day to day practical management on the woodland; Planting trees, pest control, habitat creation and tree felling. Basic knowledge of forestry is advisable.
- Expected: £12,000-17,000 per annum

### • Forestry Equipment Operator

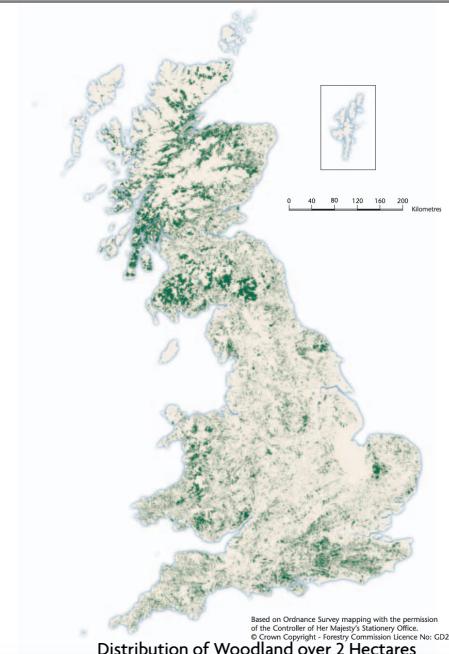
- Forestry Equipment Operators are required to operate all manner of heavy machinery, such as skidders and harvesters. Experience operating large vehicles/machines will often be required.
- Expected: £20,000-30,000 per annum

### • Forest and Woodland Manager

- A managerial role for those who have gained years of experience and knowledge in the industry, Forest Managers typically spend their time mapping, accounting, planning and negotiating contracts, often based at a computer. Many Managers are self-employed and work on contracts for private clients.
- Expected: £25,000-40,000 per annum

### • Horse Logger

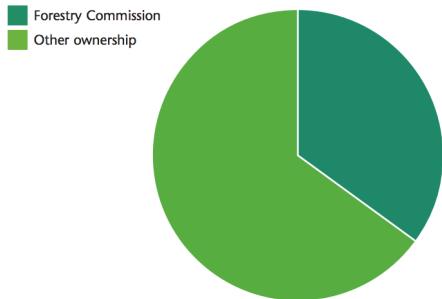
- A more unique opportunity for those who have a particular fondness for horses; Horse loggers are part of a small, niche market that help to remove trees from locations that are inaccessible to regular machines, or where the soil/environment may be too sensitive. You'll need to complete an apprenticeship or some other form of training, but it is common to become self employed later on. (Note: you do not have to own your own horse)



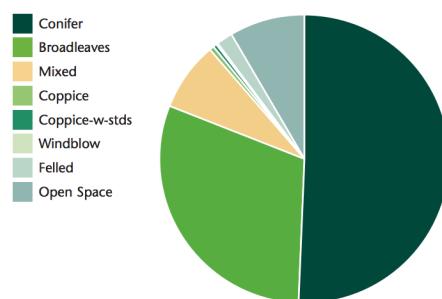
# Forestry National Bodies

If you are interested in finding out more about the forestry industry, we strongly advise you consider attending one of our Rural Weeks. In the mean time, you may find it helpful to have a deeper look into the forestry industry and some of the available pathways and options by looking at the websites of some of the following National Bodies.

- The UK Forestry Commission
- The Institute of Chartered Foresters
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
- UK National Parks
- The Woodland Trust



Area of woodland by forest type



## Career Pathways and Education

There are many different routes you can explore in the forestry industry, and whilst this page is intended to give you a brief introduction to some of the different routes you can take, we strongly advise you consider attending one of our Rural Weeks to find out more.

Depending on the type of role you're thinking about applying for, the type of experience and qualification you need will vary greatly. An entry-level Forester jobs will often require a GCSE level of education, experience with working in the outdoors, and a drive to do well. Other more technical roles, such as a Forest Officer or Arborist, will require NVQ qualifications at a 2nd or 3rd level. (please see table below)

	GCSE	6th Form	NVQ Level 2/3
<b>Forest Worker</b>	✓	✓	
<b>Forest Manager</b>			✓
<b>Forest Officer</b>			✓
<b>Forest Equipment Operator</b>		✓	✓
<b>Forest Ranger</b>			✓
<b>Community Forester</b>	✓	✓	
<b>Urban Forester</b>			✓
<b>Arborist</b>		✓	✓
<b>Forestry Agents</b>		✓	✓
<b>Horse Logger</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Log Buyer</b>		✓	✓
<b>Sawmill Manager</b>			✓

If you're interested in learning more about the ways into the forestry industry, we suggest you attend one of our Rural Weeks. There you will be able to visit the site of one of the top Colleges for land-based careers, Bicton College. You will also be able to speak with the experienced members of the industry to discuss career desires, course choice and next-step options, to see if it could be the right place for you. To find out more, [click here](#).

If you are interested in a role that requires further education, tuition for these courses will vary depending on what subject you choose, what time length and what degree. The costs to do a course can be anything from £1,000 to £9,000, however there are ex-military financial option to help. If you require, or would like to discuss, assistance with financing options, please get in contact through our website.

## Apprenticeships

Depending on the jobs your interested in, another option is to undertake an apprenticeship. This will allow you to both gain the experience necessary, and to make a salary at the same time (and one that is considerably higher than the minimum wage on other government initiatives!). Apprenticeships are ideal for those who learn best by doing, and are looking for a more personal educational experience.

Apprenticeships can either be applied to through colleges such as Bicton College, or by applying directly to companies that are hiring apprentices.

If you are interested in undertaking an apprenticeship over a traditional classroom education and need some advice or help, please feel free to contact us.

## Major National Employers

Some of the major employers both nationally and internationally in the forestry industry are:

- [The Forestry Commission](#)
- [Tilhil](#)
- [Eurofest](#)
- [Gristwood & Toms](#)
- [Treecare](#) (London Specialist)
- [BSW](#)
- [Crown Timber](#)

## Self-Employed Work

Self employment is a common practice in the forestry industry, but normally only after a few years of experience have been gained beforehand.

Depending on the nature of the work, it can often be advisable to get a few years working with an established organisation to ensure that you're given serious on the job training, especially if you're going to be working with chainsaws and other heavy machinery.

Once the relevant experience has been acquired, many people go on to become contractors or freelancers, allowing them to set their own schedules and fees. Jobs roles such as Tree Surgery and Fencing are especially well suited to the freelancer role.

If you are interested in finding out more about Self-employment, please contact us.

### Finding Work

Once you've decided the direction you want to go, and have completed your certifications or apprenticeship, you might find yourself at a loss at how to secure a new job. Rest assured, we at Highground will be able to provide you with advice and even help connect you directly to employers that suit your needs. Below you will find some advice to help increase your chances of finding and securing the best jobs you can.

#### Volunteer

Unless you've taken an apprenticeship, you may find that some companies want to see some first hand experience working in the forest. Many Tree and Timber organisations have opportunities available, which can be applied to directly, through a Local Authority or the Forestry Commission. We at Highground can also help you find volunteer opportunities, please contact us to find out more about what Volunteer positions we have available at the moment.

#### An extra Certificate

Depending on the amount of education or training you've had, you may or may not have acquired some extra certifications in things such as handling machinery or pesticides. If you have completed anything additional, make sure to bring attention to it as it will lift you above the competition. These courses are often short and relatively inexpensive, but can give you a distinct advantage in securing a job, so if you have not completed any certifications, you may consider looking below at what's in demand.

- Chainsaw Certificate (various levels)
- Pesticides and Pest Control
- Certificate in Competence in Brushcutting Operations
- Certificate in Competence in Brushwood Chipper operations

#### Contact Highground

We at Highground have an extensive list of partners and associates who we will gladly open to you. Whether you're interested helping to manage an extensive plot for a multinational corporation, or simply hauling logs through the Scottish Highlands, our private and public sector contacts are regularly looking for new employees. If you would like to know more about any of the above, please contact us.

## Overseas Opportunities

If you're interested in working in Forestry, but are either finding it difficult to find the right job for you in the UK, or are simply looking for a change of scenery, you may find a fantastic opportunity overseas. Below are just some of the countries with massive employment opportunities.

#### • Canada

- With so much land, Canada's forests provide a vital resource to both its environment and economy. The forest sector employs roughly 930,000 workers (1 out of 17 of the population), and is the largest exporter of wood in the world. However, only 28% of the forest is managed for timber production, the rest is protected under federal law making it the world leader in sustainable forest management, so employment opportunities exist for both timber production and natural protection.
- Canada is rated as one of the best countries to live in, with Vancouver and Toronto often being in top 10 lists of cities in the world.