

FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL[®] UNITED KINGDOM



ANNUAL REVIEW 2023/2024

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Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) UK is a charity dedicated to promoting responsible forestry in the UK.

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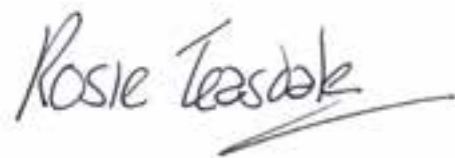
Welcome to our Annual Review for 2023/24

We continue to see growth and development in many sectors and hopefully this is reflected within this report. It is encouraging to see progress not only in traditional wood and paper products, like furniture and packaging, but also in supply chains such as rubber and textiles (see pages 16 and 17). We are also delighted to see continued increases in consumer recognition of FSC and purchase preference (see pages 24 and 25), even if there is work to be done in raising awareness of what products come from forests.

Of course, forests provide more than products and, after several years of promoting the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure, we are so happy to report on news of the first FSC Verified Impacts in the UK (see pages 18 and 19). We have every confidence that many others will follow in the footsteps of Mull & Iona Community Trust, demonstrating the positive impacts of their forest management on specific ecosystem services.

The introduction of the European Union Deforestation Free Regulation (EUDR) is turning the spotlight on deforestation and forest degradation globally, and the implications for the UK forest products supply chain are considerable. Our introductory EUDR webinar, held in early 2024, was well-attended and the recording has been viewed many times since. As FSC seeks to support companies with their compliance, EUDR will be a key area of work for us in the coming year. Rather than negating the need for certification, it seems that such legislation could actually further drive demand. We certainly welcome all efforts to reduce the market for products that are the result of deforestation.

As ever, much of this report is focused on the efforts of our stakeholders and we look forward to continuing to work with you all towards our shared vision of Forests For All Forever.



Rosie Teasdale
Executive Director, FSC UK

MEET THE TEAM

The Staff



Rosie Teasdale
Executive Director



Beth Bennett
Business Development Manager



Tallulah Chapman
Communications Manager



Andrew Sharkey
Forest Standards Manager



Karen Paterson
Forests & Ecosystem
Services Manager



Rachel Hembery
Business Advisor
& Operations Manager



Maggie Cooper
Trademark & Licensing Officer



Georgina Davies
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About FSC

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international, non-governmental organisation dedicated to promoting responsible management of the world's forests. FSC's pioneering certification system enables businesses and consumers to choose wood, paper and other forest products made with materials that support responsible forestry. FSC members have developed the world's most respected forest management standards by consensus. Independent verification of adherence to FSC forest management standards, provides the best possible assurance that forests are being responsibly managed.

Democratic and inclusive

We are governed by more than 1000 members and actively support Indigenous Peoples' rights. Members are drawn from social, environmental and economic interest groups to govern by consensus in a unique process.

Consistent and robust

All FSC-certified forests are managed in line with the same global principles, and our certificate holders and certification bodies are accountable and independently audited.

Credible and trusted

We consult stakeholders on changes to our standards, have a dispute resolution process and enjoy broad NGO support.

Global and recognised

We operate globally, our iconic logo is recognised, and we help governments and organisations to meet agreed sourcing standards.

Innovative and ambitious

We are pioneers of forest certification, using standards developed by our global membership in consensus, and we continue to innovate, whether that means certification in new sectors or using more efficient, digital tools.



MISSION:

FSC will promote environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests.

VISION:

The true value of forests is recognised and fully incorporated into society worldwide. FSC is the leading catalyst and defining force for improved forest management and market transformation, shifting the global forest trend toward sustainable use, conservation, restoration, and respect for all.

FSC IN NUMBERS

UK FSC-certified forests (hectares):
1,629,247

UK FSC Ecosystem Services Claims:
3 (across 1 project)*

UK FSC chain of custody certificates:
2,222

UK FSC chain of custody group scheme members:**
714

UK FSC promotional licences:
126

Worldwide FSC-certified forests (hectares):
159,261,627

Worldwide FSC Ecosystem Services Claims:
178 (across 87 projects)

Worldwide FSC chain of custody certificates:
59,464

Worldwide FSC promotional licences:
1,722

Figures correct as of 1 April 2024

* The maintenance/conservation of areas of importance for recreation and/or tourism, restoration of natural forest cover and conservation of natural forest characteristics have been verified at one FSC-certified forest, demonstrating verified positive impact on recreation and biodiversity services.

** Group chain of custody certification aims to help smaller enterprises achieve FSC certification by reducing the financial and/or administrative burden, via collective certification under one certificate, overseen by a group scheme manager.

Highlights

June 2023

- Executive Director, Rosie Teasdale, presented in the Bathroom Zone of the Installer Show, encouraging installers to specify FSC-certified products.
- Outreach Manager, Amy Willox, attended the British Ecological Society Trees for Climate Change, Biodiversity and People symposium where she presented a poster on FSC Ecosystem Services verification.

July 2023

- A partnership between Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) and TreeStory achieved the first FSC Ecosystem Services impact verification in the UK for Ardura Forest, on the Isle of Mull (see pages 18-19).

August 2023

- FSC UK appointed Andy Sharkey as Forest Standards Manager.
- Forest Standards Manager, Andy Sharkey, presented to the Highlands and Islands Women in Property group.

September 2023

- FSC Forest Week took place between 23 and 29 September. 168 UK organisations registered for and were sent the Forest Week Toolkit, including 8 promotional licence holders and 4 non-licence holders (non-commercial, educational), the remainder were chain of custody certificate holders.
- The FSC UK Annual Members' Meeting took place in Swinley Forest, near Bracknell. Simon Webb of forest management group scheme, UKFCG, and Maria Wilding of FSC UK Member, Llais y Goedwig, were led in discussion regarding the latest UK developments in Ecosystem Services Verification.

October 2023

- FSC UK appointed Owen Lewis as Trademark Assistant.
- Initial feedback on the pre-approval draft of Version 5 of the United Kingdom Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) was received from the FSC Performance and Standards Unit.

February 2024

- FSC UK hosted a webinar on the EU Deforestation Free Regulation (EUDR) encouraging participation in the associated FSC consultations.

March 2024

- Annual consumer survey conducted (see pages 24 and 25 for results).



Certification

Forest management certification

FSC certification provides credible third-party assurance that the management of woodlands is environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable. Our Principles and Criteria for forest stewardship run the gamut from legal compliance and management planning to community relations and High Conservation Values.

In the UK, FSC forest management certificate holders include the state forest services, charities such as the RSPB, Woodland Trust and National Trust, and private forestry companies. Most privately-owned certified woodlands are part of group schemes, in each of which a group manager takes overall responsibility for ensuring that all members meet certification requirements and members are externally audited on a sample basis.

The certified area in the UK at the end of April 2024 was 1,629,247 ha. This is an annual fall of 26,283 ha or 1.5%. However, some 24,834 ha (95%) of the decrease is accounted for by an FSC area correction within a single major certificate holder who remains certified. Therefore, the true annual decrease in area is just 0.1% and this falls within the normal fluctuations that can occur. There continues to be a steady increase in the number of certified members of group schemes with an increase from 1,110 to 1,123 over the year.

Following feedback from FSC International the members of the UK Woodland Assurance (UKWAS) Working Group worked to achieve consensus on a revised pre-approval draft of UKWAS 5 for re-submission to FSC International.

Interest in FSC Ecosystem Service certification continues to grow. It's easy to measure the economic value of forest products, but the other vital services provided by forests can be harder to quantify. The FSC Ecosystems Services Procedure builds on FSC forest management certification by providing

forest managers and owners with a framework for protecting these benefits and scientifically measuring the impacts of their efforts, allowing them to promote the wider benefits provided by their forests. Impacts can be verified for biodiversity conservation, storing carbon, purifying water, regenerating soil, and providing recreation. In 2023 the first FSC Ecosystem Services impact verification in the UK was certified for Ardura Forest, on the Isle of Mull (see pages 18 and 19).

Chain of custody certification

FSC chain of custody certification ensures that FSC-certified material has been identified and separated from non-certified and uncontrolled material as it makes its way along the supply chain, from the forest to the market. Any company, which takes legal ownership of FSC-certified products and wishes to sell them on with FSC claims, apply the FSC label or transform the products must hold FSC certification.

145 new chain of custody certificates were issued in the UK between April 2023 and March 2024. The retention rate for FSC chain of custody certificates was 92.6%.

Project certification

Individual objects or buildings of any size or scale that are built or renovated can seek FSC project certification. Project certification can also be used for civil engineering projects and events such as exhibitions and festivals. Under this certification standard, several projects can be managed on a rolling-basis or a single project can achieve a one-time certification.

During 2023/24, FSC project certificates were issued to: premium London office development, 21 Moorfields (FSC®P001794); Grade II listed building refurbishment, Camden Town Hall (FSC®P001964); new housing development, Park Central (North) (FSC®P001982), part of the Elephant Park regeneration project in Elephant & Castle.



“FSC certification is an absolute prerequisite for reputable suppliers of artists papers. Today’s consumers, and in particular those involved in the creative arts, are growing ever more conscious of the environmental impact of their choices. For wood derived products understanding how the material has been sourced through ethical channels and companies practicing responsible forestry is one of the key features consumers will have in mind when considering purchases. By seeing the FSC logo they can at a glance feel comfortable that the item has been manufactured sustainably.”

Daler-Rowney (FSC® C111372)

Packaging makes progress

Five years ago, after the broadcast of Blue Planet II, but before the global Covid pandemic there were just over 200 FSC-certified companies in the UK with packaging within their scope, that figure has increased year on year and in 2024 stands at nearly double that of 2019. Although growth has slowed, the number of certified companies in this sector has continued to increase over the past year.

Established certificate holders, Progress Packaging, are due to renew their FSC certificate in 2024, having held certification for nearly 5 years, whilst Flexi-Hex, who are passionate about sea and surf, became certified in late 2022.

Progress Packaging Ltd (FSC®C149731) work with some of the world's leading designers and luxury brands to produce sustainable packaging with a strong creative vision.

Progress have created a diverse client base consisting of a wide range of customers, from some of the bigger names in motor sport, to independent international fintech banks, start-ups that are well on their way to reaching their business goals, through to start ups that are run out of kitchens/attics/spare rooms or cellars. They produce packaging for some of the educational sector, for British charities, retail, e-commerce and all those in between.



©Progress Packaging

They work with a chain of suppliers, from forests, through to paper mills and finally factories, ensuring their FSC-certified products pass through this process FSC certified every time. Their team of administrators and account handlers take great care in ensuring all the products they sell to their customers end up labelled correctly without any non-conformities along the way.



©Progress Packaging

“Understanding the FSC certification process was very daunting at first for me as the newly appointed Chain of Custody manager. Understanding how we buy the products, how we sell them and label them correctly was a task for both me and our administrative team. But with the help from FSC UK and the utilisation of their free training course for certificate holders, we were able to build an internal training programme of our own, making running FSC projects for clients less admin heavy to run alongside our non FSC projects with ease.”

Lucy Carr,
Chain of Custody Manager,
Progress Packaging

“Being a paper-based product, it is incredibly important that we use as much recycled content as possible and that we are held accountable to produce our products to the highest of standards. That’s why we chose to go through the FSC Certification process.”

Sam Boex,
Co-founder, Flexi-Hex



©Flexi-Hex

Flexi-Hex (FSC®C175222) is a coastal company born out of a love for the sea and a desire to design a packaging solution that doesn't persist in the environment and negatively impact the ocean. Their innovative honeycombed-shaped paper packaging is designed to be strong, flexible, and beautiful.

Will and Sam Boex are the Co-Founders of this sustainable packaging start-up. Passionate surfers, they saw the damage plastic and waste was having on our marine environments and their playground. After receiving a new surfboard wrapped in layers of plastic bubble wrap, Sam felt frustrated not only by the quantity of unsustainable material used but also the

lack of thought around the unpacking experience for the consumer.

Drawing expertise from their backgrounds in design, Will and Sam experimented with a range of materials and designs before they had a lightbulb moment after playing with honeycomb core paper, a commonly manufactured material that the twins approached with fresh eyes.

Today, Flexi-Hex provides sustainable, paper packaging solutions for industries including sports, drinks, cosmetics, electronics, homeware and other commercial uses.

Trademark licensing & enforcement

Enforcement

We take trademark infringement very seriously. The FSC logo, the name Forest Stewardship Council, the abbreviation FSC and the FSC Forests For All Forever brandmarks are all registered trademarks and there are strict controls on their use. Only companies holding an FSC certificate, or a promotional licence, are allowed to promote products commercially as FSC certified. Incorrect use of the FSC trademarks by FSC certificate and licence holders is categorised as misuse, while commercial use of the FSC trademarks by unlicensed organisations is categorised as infringement.

FSC UK resolved 361 cases of unauthorised trademark use between April 2023 and March 2024, 88% of which were infringements. 7% of cases related to the on-product use of the FSC trademarks. Protecting the trademarks from infringement and misuse helps to maintain the integrity of the FSC system and ensure that those who have invested time and resources in responsible forest management and sourcing are properly identified and rewarded.



Licensing

Consumers justifiably have high expectations that the forest-based products they buy are sourced responsibly and do not contribute to deforestation. Promoting FSC-certified products and packaging empowers consumers to make informed choices about the products they purchase. We encourage retailers, brand owners and other eligible organisations to use the power of the FSC brand by creating their own unique and compelling promotional campaigns and materials. Through these tailored campaigns, businesses can communicate their commitment to responsible forest management to their customers, supported by the widely-recognised FSC trademarks.

For organisations that buy FSC-labelled products from FSC-certified suppliers and either use them in their business or sell them on unchanged, a promotional licence may offer an alternative to chain of custody certification. 16 new licence agreements were issued by FSC UK during this period. At the end of March 2024, 126 FSC promotional licences were held in the UK, representing 7.3% of the licences held worldwide.

“Customers can rest assured that by purchasing our FSC-certified litter they are supporting responsible management of the world’s forests.”

Rachel Andre, Founder, Tippaws
(FSC®N004258)



Cosy (FSC®N004464) promote a natural, engaged, and active childhood by supplying sustainable Nursery and Educational Equipment worldwide. Built with the aim of incorporating more nature into increasingly indoor childhoods, they have sought to move away from the high carbon, single-use plastics that dominate the industry, and instead focus on products that re-engage today’s children with nature.



Underwear that supports sustainable forestry

As shoppers become increasingly concerned with how their choices impact our planet, Step One (FSC®C183245) is taking incredible strides towards a sustainable future for all with its FSC-certified underwear range.

Transitioning to responsibly sourced, forest-based materials is key to enabling the fashion industry to meet its sustainability goals. Renewable tree fibres like viscose, lyocell and modal, also known as man-made cellulosic fibres (MMCFs), can be an eco-friendly alternative to synthetic materials in fashion, but only

when they come from sustainably managed forests. According to a 2020 report by Textile Exchange, more than 50 per cent of MMCFs are sourced from uncertified forests that are vulnerable to deforestation and illegal logging.

Crafted with care for the planet and your privates, Step One underwear is made from viscose derived from FSC-certified, sustainably grown and managed bamboo plantations. This provides Step One's shoppers with an assurance that their underwear contributes to the health and resilience of forests



©Step One

worldwide. The organisation joined the FSC forest family in October 2022, achieving Chain of Custody certification. This milestone achievement enables Step One to verify that the FSC-certified forest-based materials in their underwear have been credibly tracked along their product's path from the forest to finished goods.

Founder and CEO of Step One, Greg Taylor says, "At Step One, we believe that sustainability is not just a responsibility, but an opportunity. It's something we can do to make the world a better place, and that's why we're so proud to have earned our FSC certification. It's an important measure of our commitment to sustainability and also an indication of the quality of our products. We're always looking to do our bit for the environment, and this certification is a way to show that we care about the future of our planet."

"We're so proud to have earned our FSC certification."

Greg Taylor
Founder and CEO
of Step One



©Step One

Scottish island community celebrates UK forest-first

A partnership between Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT) and TreeStory (FSC®N004333) has been successful in achieving the first FSC Ecosystem Services (ES) impact verification in the UK for Ardura Forest, on the Isle of Mull.

It may be easy to measure the economic value of forest products, but the other vital services provided by forests can be harder to quantify. FSC Ecosystem Services impact verification builds on FSC Forest Management Certification by providing forest managers and owners with a framework for protecting these benefits and scientifically measuring the impacts of their efforts. It enables impacts to be verified for biodiversity conservation, carbon storage, water purification, soil regeneration and recreation provision.

This trailblazing partnership between the Mull and Iona Community Trust (MICT), who bought and began managing Ardura forest in 2019, and TreeStory, an ecologically-focused forestry and green investment consultancy, has verified impacts both for biodiversity and recreation services.

“We are delighted to have worked with MICT and the UK Forest Certification Group to validate the first UK woodland under the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure,” says Claire Wightman, Forestry Consultant at TreeStory. “It is a joy to work with innovative landowners like MICT who are willing to lead the way in developing new techniques to measure the benefits of woodland for nature and communities. The success of this project was very much a team effort, not only within TreeStory, but also with our certification partners and FSC UK. We believe that FSC ES impact verification will become an important mechanism for assessing, quantifying and auditing non-timber benefits of woodland at a time when these benefits are more critically needed than ever.”

Ardura Community Forest consists of some relatively small areas of intact ancient semi-natural native woodland, areas of plantation forestry and a range of

open habitats including grassland, heathland and mire (swamp/bog). There are also numerous veteran trees, particularly oaks and hollies, still present across much of the footprint of the ancient woodland, although many are now surrounded and threatened by non-native Sitka spruce. Community volunteers undertake activities to protect these isolated veteran trees and restore native Atlantic woodland habitats and associated lichen communities.

Through their management, MICT has demonstrated restoration of natural forest cover and conservation of natural forest characteristics. MICT has also undertaken activities to support nature-based recreation in the Ardura area through the construction of paths and facilities as well as hosting forest school sessions.

One of MICT’s objectives for pursuing FSC ES impact verification is to facilitate access to public and private finance to enable restoration practices at Ardura, and to generate an alternative revenue stream from the forest to fund wider community benefits on the Isle of Mull.

The forest became FSC certified in 2020, as part of the UK Forest Certification (UKFCG) group scheme (FSC®C112410), confirming that its management meets FSC’s globally recognised Principles and Criteria for responsible forest management.

“The audit process was relatively straightforward owing to the wealth of documentation and preparatory work completed by the TreeStory team”, explains Simon Webb, UKFCG Lead Auditor. “We are thrilled to have assisted TreeStory and MICT in their groundbreaking achievement with FSC ES impact verification and hope other forest managers will be interested in this new development”.

In early 2024 FSC UK released a short film about the project, which is available via the FSC UK YouTube channel.

“We’re over the moon to achieve this verification and are so pleased that we chose TreeStory as our project partner, as they share our concern for the environment. We hope the impact verification will convince potential partners that our project is founded on sound principles for restoring biodiversity and providing recreational access to nature”.

Moray Finch, MICT General Manager

Plastic-free poppies

The Royal British Legion and Peace Pledge Union have been working with FSC certificate holders James Cropper and Calverts respectively to give the red and white remembrance poppies an eco-friendly makeover.

The new red poppy, which has been revamped for the first time in 28 years, will be made completely from paper, will no longer have a single-use plastic stem or centre, and can be recycled through ordinary household recycling collections. The Royal British Legion has been developing the plastic-free poppy for the last three years, in collaboration with expert partners, in efforts to reduce its use of single-use plastic and be less impactful to the environment.

The new design still features the traditional poppy shape and was created in collaboration with FSC-certified paper and packaging manufacturer, James Cropper (FSC®C009165). The bespoke paper is produced from a blend of renewable fibres. Upcycled fibre from paper coffee cup production, sourced via James Cropper's CupCycling™ facility in Cumbria, make up half of the fibre in the product. The rest is sourced from responsibly managed, FSC-certified forests.

“Although we have worked with the Royal British Legion in the creation of poppies for remembrance for over 40 years, we never take for granted what this symbol means to so many families and the country as a whole.” Steve Adams, Chief Executive Officer at James Cropper

The Royal British Legion has worked with scientists at University College London to assess the environmental impact of the new poppy and the findings revealed that the new poppy's carbon footprint is 40% lower than the previous design. The Royal British Legion, which supports tens of thousands of armed forces personnel, veterans, and their families every year, hopes it will encourage more people than ever to support the Poppy Appeal, held in October and November each year, during the period of Remembrance.

White “peace” poppies, which are worn in the run-up to Remembrance Day as a symbol of remembrance and peace, went through their plastic-free redesign in 2022. The poppies were first produced in the aftermath



©Peace Pledge Union

of the First World War, to hold on to the key message of remembrance, ‘never again’. They are now distributed by the Peace Pledge Union, a pacifist campaigning organisation, promoting peaceful and non-violent solutions to conflict.

As the white poppy campaign has grown over time, the Peace Pledge Union became increasingly aware of the need to minimise their impact on the environment and ensure the poppies are ethically produced. Before the redesign, the white poppies were made from fabric with a wire stem and were not suitable for household recycling.

The new white poppy paper design was created by FSC-certified print and design co-operative Calverts (FSC®C007915). They were chosen because they specialise in design that is socially and environmentally responsible and frequently work with NGOs, charities, and campaigning groups.

“Co-operatives and the Peace movement have a long history of working together. This was a fantastic opportunity for our co-operative to work collaboratively with the Peace Pledge Union to transform this iconic emblem and make it more sustainable in the process.” Arthur Stitt, Project Director, Calverts.

The new poppy maintains the look of the previous white poppy, with two layers of white petals and a circular green centre featuring the word ‘Peace’ but has been redesigned to be made from a single piece of FSC-certified paper. By using uncoated paper, printed with plant-based inks, the poppy is now entirely plastic-free, biodegradable and can easily be recycled in ordinary household recycling collections.



Everyone at James Cropper is very proud of our long-standing involvement in the production of the paper poppy, worn the world over as a mark of respect and remembrance.”

Steve Adams, Chief Executive Officer at James Cropper

Chatsworth foresters far from stumped

The name Chatsworth may for many conjure up visions of stately homes, the landscaping of Capability Brown and a bygone era of grandeur. But as FSC UK Outreach Manager, Amy Willox learned when she took a look behind the scenes back in July 2023, the Chatsworth Estate of today must earn its keep, not least when it comes to the more than 1,600 hectares of woodland under its management.

Forestry Manager, John Everitt, leads a diverse team of 15, which has rapidly expanded since the Covid pandemic and associated restrictions catalysed a shift from using contractors to building up the in-house team. John is joined by colleague, Jemima Letts, who first started at Chatsworth on placement post-university before becoming a permanent member of the team. In addition to their obvious passion for all things forestry, John and Jemima share a love of cricket, and so, as Amy begins her introduction to the Estate, in the newly renovated estate office, it's clear that regular updates on the Ashes cricket will also be an essential component of the day.

John, a fifth-generation forester, who joined the team in 2016, was brought in to commercialise the woods of the Estate in a sensitive and sustainable manner. Sensitivity is key, not just to maintaining the landscape

value and wooded skyline surrounding Chatsworth House itself, but also to conserving biodiversity, with the Estate comprising 650 hectares of ancient woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites and a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest. To both these ends, 71% of the Estate's woodlands are managed through low impact silvicultural systems with continuous cover forestry and areas of minimal intervention.

The FSC forest management standard, against which the Estate is certified, requires managers to use practices in the care and maintenance of their woodlands that are ecologically appropriate for the range of woodland types and the species they contain, as such the site management objectives include the adoption of lower impact management systems. The custodians of Chatsworth Estate have set 10 goals for the next 10 years, to help ensure Chatsworth benefits as many people as possible. FSC certification, says John, aligns with these goals, which include a multitude of environmental and social aspirations.

But while Chatsworth may not look like a traditional commercial forestry estate, it's no small player when it comes to timber, felling up to 8,000 tonnes each year,



©Chatsworth Estate

Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF)
Continuous Cover Forestry is an approach to forest management which aims to develop structurally, visually and biologically diverse forests, in which sustainable production of quality timber is achieved along with the provision of a wide range of ecosystem services.
(Source: CCFG)

Lower Impact Silvicultural System (LISS)
Silvicultural systems including group selection, shelterwood or under-planting, small coupe felling, coppice or coppice with standards, minimum intervention and single tree selection systems which are suitable for windfirm conifer woodlands and most broadleaved woodlands.
(Source: UKWAS)

much of which it delivers to local sawmills. For sales, FSC certification opens markets and can add a small premium. Homegrown woodchip is also used to power the Estate's biomass boiler, its FSC certification making it easier to receive payments under the Renewable Heat Incentive government scheme.

As is typical with the best-laid of plans, however, all has not gone exactly as hoped. As in many forests, larch and sweet chestnut infected with *Phytophthora ramorum* (a fungal-like organism that causes the death of a wide range of trees and shrubs) have had to be felled in Stand Wood, behind Chatsworth House. This, together with other pre-emptive protective fellings and harvesting to restructure the forest, has sometimes raised a few public eyebrows.

To help visitors to better understand this work, QR codes are now used on operational sites, linking to story maps about what work is being done and why, or

to details of sawmills where wood from the Estate can be purchased.

While this digital initiative has enhanced communications with the public, the Team also employ effective technology in their day-to-day work, using the Arc GIS Field Maps app to log monitoring data in the field, making reporting for audits and monitoring conformance with certification requirements far easier.

John and Jemima, teammates not just as Estate employees but also as members of the Chatsworth cricket team, want to change the idea of what is considered productive forestry and the perception of a clear divide between commercial and conservation management. With both youth and experience (collaboratively) on their side, they and the team are demonstrating that responsibly managed forests and landscapes can offer returns far beyond (but also including!) the purely financial.

Awareness and recognition

Could a lack of materials knowledge be undermining consumers' desire to shop sustainably?

When shopping for products made from wood or paper, more people recall the FSC label than any other certification label¹. And, amongst UK consumers, 79% say they recognise the FSC logo. However, some are confused about which materials come from trees, with twice as many selecting cotton (which doesn't) as viscose (which does). And although younger generations tend to lead the way in terms of sustainability awareness and action, they trail behind their more senior counterparts when it comes to identifying that cork and natural rubber come from trees.

Once it is explained that a material, such as viscose, is sourced from trees, 73% of UK consumers agree it is important that they are sourced sustainably, with at least two thirds of those in each age group in agreement. When asked about forest products in general, 68% would like reassurance that what they buy is sourced responsibly.

Shopping responsibly

More than half of those surveyed look for certification labels when shopping for forest-based products, and 90% of those recognise the FSC logo. Younger people are most likely to recognise and understand the FSC logo; 88% of Gen Z recognise the logo and 66% are confident that they understand at least roughly what it means. Across the generations, 79% would give preference to FSC-certified products, with 60% prepared to pay more for them. 49% always or usually give preference to FSC-certified products.

Brand reputation

67% of UK consumers would have a more positive opinion of a brand or retailer if they saw the FSC label on their products. Generationally, this figure is highest amongst 25-34 years olds, with 80% positively influenced by the availability of FSC-certified products. With FSC chain of custody certificate and FSC promotional licence holders, citing improved brand image as one of, if not the, top benefit of their

FSC association², brands and retailers seeking this and other benefits may consider not only introducing FSC certification in their procurement policies and requesting that their suppliers apply the FSC label to applicable products and packaging, but also considering FSC chain of custody or a promotional licence, as appropriate to the scope of their business.



©FSC / Valeria Rivera

79% of people in the UK recognise the FSC logo

67% of UK consumers would have a more positive opinion of a brand or retailer if they saw the FSC label on their products.

More than half of those surveyed look for certification labels when shopping for forest-based products, and **90%** of those recognise the FSC logo.

¹FSC UK Consumer Survey 2024 conducted (21/03/2024 – 25/03/2024) in United Kingdom by Kantar via OnLineBus, a sample of 1,279 UK adults aged 16+ were interviewed.
²FSC Global Client Survey 2022.

New research to monitor forestry impacts on water



©Woodland Trust

FSC Certificate Holder, and global hygiene and health company, Essity (FSC®C003255), are donating £75,000 to the Woodland Trust to assist in carrying out research that will help measure, verify and deepen our understanding of the impacts of nature-based solutions on water quality and flood management.

Snaizeholme, where the research will take place, is a unique and complex habitat restoration and nature recovery project 20 miles north of Settle, close to the iconic Ribbleshead Viaduct in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The Woodland Trust holds FSC forest management certification (FSC®C009406), ensuring their forests are managed in accordance with FSC's Principles and Criteria for Responsible Forest Management. With plans to include the Snaizeholme site under this certificate in future, it will additionally be audited against FSC's Ecosystem Services Procedure. The Procedure provides forest managers and owners with a framework for protecting and measuring the vital, natural services provided by forests. Verified ecosystem services impacts from FSC also facilitate organisations, such as Essity, to finance responsible forestry projects, that make a real difference in the fight against climate change, biodiversity loss, and other global challenges. At Snaizeholme, Essity's donation will help to fund verification and research costs, as well as some of the planned activities on the site.

The Snaizeholme site is a flagship woodland creation project for the White Rose Forest, the Community

Forest for North and West Yorkshire and the Northern Forest. Through investment, research and verification, it is hoped that the positive impacts of activities including woodland creation and peatland restoration, will help to evidence and secure trees and woods at the heart of nature recovery initiatives.

"Essity are pleased to be able to collaborate with the Woodland Trust and FSC UK on this important initiative. Improving and protecting our wider ecosystems is critical and the ability to quantify the ecosystem impacts of investments will only increase the understanding of how this can best be achieved. The wider learnings will be invaluable in how we, and others, can act together with impact now and in the future." Jo Pybus, Sustainability Reporting Manager for Essity UK

"We are delighted to be working with Essity on this exciting project. It is only due to the direct support from Essity that we can explore the new opportunities that the FSC's Ecosystem Services Procedure offer. We will be on a steep learning curve but are firmly committed to the process and this collaboration with Essity and FSC UK represents the first project of its kind for the Woodland Trust. We're hoping it will be the first of many similar projects across the UK where we'd like to engage with FSC's impact verification in parallel with our long-established FSC forest management certification." Gordon Pfetscher, Head of Estate at the Woodland Trust



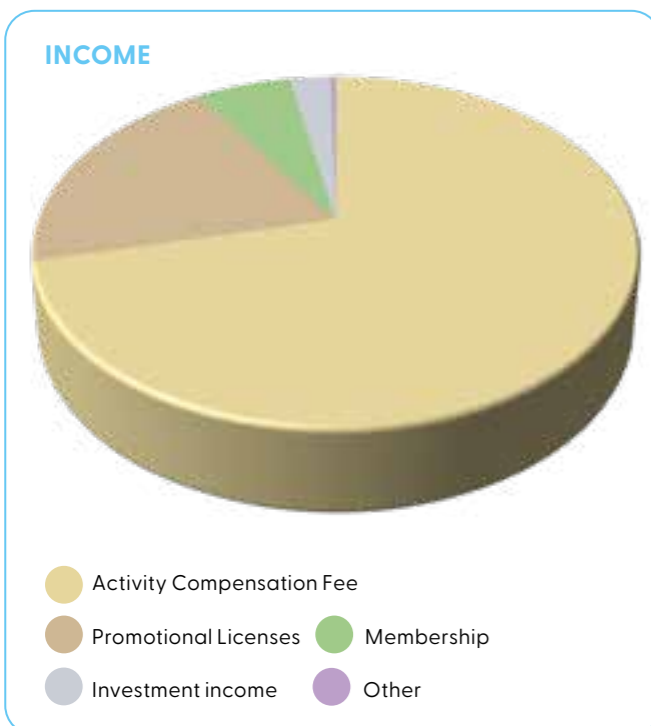
"We are delighted to be working with Essity on this exciting project. It is only due to the direct support from Essity that we can explore the new opportunities that the FSC's Ecosystem Services Procedure offer."

Gordon Pfetscher, Head of Estate at the Woodland Trust

Finance

Income

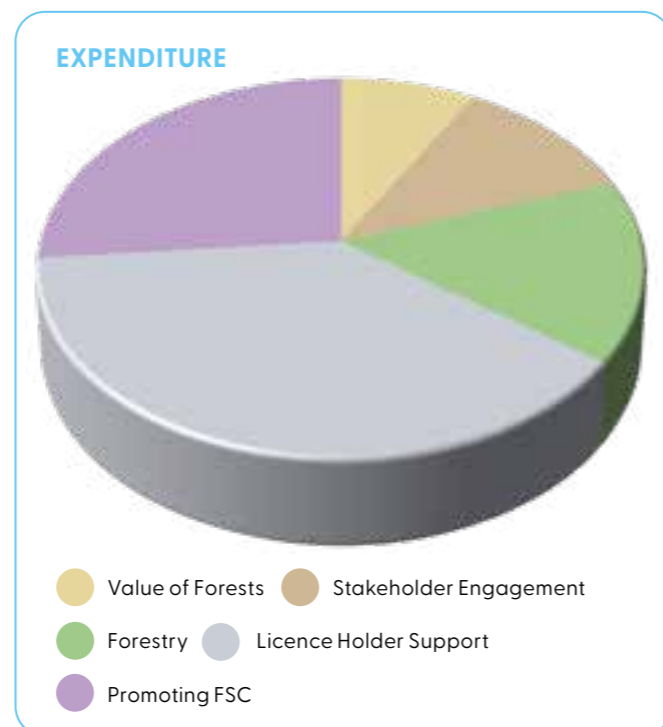
Over the 2023-24 financial year, income exceeded expenditure by £65,961, with a further £20,185 net gain on investments. We started the year with an opening balance from the previous period of £1,019,480 and ended with a carry-forward of £1,105,626. Trademark licensing revenue continued to increase, providing £121,764 of income during the reporting period. Membership income accounted for a further £37,614, a slight decrease from the previous year.



Most of the income is received under the Principal Cooperation, Service and Licence Agreement - the Activity Compensation Fee (ACF) - with FSC Global Development. The ACF income has, to date, been based primarily on a formula linked to the Annual Administration Fee charged to certified companies in the UK. Strategic funding is also allocated for specific projects. Some of these projects are managed by other FSC National Offices and the funding is received and administered by them. The income received indirectly from FSC Global Development through this strategic funding is included within the total ACF figure. The ACF model will be changing in 2025, and this is likely to result in a reduced allocation for FSC UK.

Expenditure

Expenditure was higher this year compared with last year (£551,666 compared with £480,907) primarily due to the increased size of the staff team as we seek to meet the growing demands on the organisation.



The Board of Trustees recognises that it should be investing the resources of the charity to meet the charitable objectives. An Impact Investment Fund will be launched in 2024 to support projects that help deliver FSC's mission, and this is expected to lead to increased expenditure in the coming years.

Reserves Policy

The Board of Trustees considers the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. A policy has been established whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be equivalent to 6 months' of expenditure.

The reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and, in the worse-case scenario, to cover the cost of closing the charity. The Trustees are confident that the charity would be able to continue at worthwhile activity levels in the event of a temporary significant drop in funding and that the estimated cost of closing the charity does not exceed 50% of the reserves.

UK Members

FSC pioneered a multi-stakeholder governance approach for forest certification almost 30 years ago. The FSC global membership network of 1,174 individuals and organisations across 90 countries represents environmental, social, and economic perspectives equally. A democratic and participative voting system brings diverse perspectives together to find balanced solutions. In the UK, 20 organisations and 15 individuals are international members of FSC:

Environmental Chamber

- Born Free Foundation
- Dr Owen Davies (individual)
- Fauna and Flora International
- Dr Florin Ioras (individual)
- Dr Steve Jennings (individual)
- Dr Jon Kirkpatrick (individual)
- Soil Association
- Matthew Wenban-Smith (individual)
- Woodland Trust
- WWF UK
- Zoological Society of London

Social Chamber

- Dr Marcus Colchester (individual)
- Llais y Goedwig
- Andrew Heald (individual)
- Hubert Kwisthout (individual)
- Dr Constance Lynn McDermott (individual)
- National Trust
- Ben Vickers (individual)

Economic Chamber

- Mike Bekin (individual)
- Stephanie Bishop (individual)
- Blueline Office Furniture
- BM TRADA
- Bound Oak Ltd
- Confederation of Forest Industries (CONFOR)
- Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI)
- Dr Hubertus van Hensbergen (individual)
- HSBC Holdings plc
- Kevin Jones (individual)
- Kingfisher plc
- Kronospan Ltd
- Lend Lease Europe
- Harry Mills (individual)
- Mondi plc
- Soil Association Certification Ltd
- Timber Development UK Ltd

Correct as of 31 March 2024

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<https://uk.fsc.org>