

## **AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO ENGAGE FARM WOODLAND OWNERS IN THE WOOD-CHAIN**

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More than half of England's woodlands (627,000 ha) are a mystery. We know little about their ownership, location, or their condition, and nothing about their contents. If we are to build a sustainable forest industry, including woodfuel, and to bring more woodlands into management for biodiversity benefit, this information is essential.

The Sylva Foundation is seeking to address these issues through the development of a new project: <http://www.myForest.org.uk>. *myForest* provides free web-based software supporting the development of forest plans and a basic woodland inventory for woodland owners or their agents. If owners choose to do so, they can make essential information available on an online map-based directory for others to see, while anonymity is maintained. Wood businesses are able to search for species or product by postcode, thereby supporting local wood procurement. Early results of the pilot phase of the project, based loosely around Oxfordshire, indicate significant benefits from this approach. Several ongoing case studies provide practical examples.