

A year of roots and reach

In our first full year, Western Forest partners planted woodland, brought communities closer to nature, and laid the foundations for a national forest that will transform the West of England

OUR VISION

Transformed woodlands, farms and communities connected by trees

OUR MISSION

To create a new national forest by leading action for trees and woodlands

BY 2050

20 million trees planted, creating a national forest that connects our cities, countryside and towns

Our three pillars

FOREST CREATION

242ha planted

WF partners met 96.8% of the combined year 1 creation target of 250ha, connecting woodland and nature recovery with agroforestry to support rural livelihoods.

FOREST ACTION

3.49M reached

Inspiring transformation and hope for people and nature.

FUTURE FOREST

Team built

A sustainable partner operating model to deliver 20 million trees by 2050.

Key achievements in 25/26

242 hectares

created against a combined year 1 target of 250ha (WF + Community Forests)

1,551 people

attended events
Where Western Forest spoke or hosted

3.49m

web, digital, media + press reach in 25/26

★ FLAGSHIP SITE

Lower Chew Valley - 123ha of new forest

Both Community Forests delivered nearly double their individual 100ha targets.

Delivery led by Avon Needs Trees and Forest of Avon Trust, Lower Chew Valley alone accounts for more than half the WF Priority Area target - a landmark moment in the forest's first year of delivery. 88% of Priority Area planting was woodland, with 12% agroforestry and Trees Outside Woodland, signalling a strong start toward the 2030 farms goal.

Impact across the pillars

210ha

Accessible woodland created

Forest created by partners on land with a public right of way or permissive access - ensuring

124ha

Woodland management pipeline for 26/27

25/26 work focussed on developing the WF woodland management methodology and pipeline, leading to a strong

woodland benefits reach communities directly across the priority area.

committed pipeline for 26/27 in partnership with Sylva Foundation and Forest Canopy Foundation.

468

Learners at WF-hosted events

15× the 30-person target - including 437 at National Careers Week and 31 at the Festival of Tomorrow. Education is a core route to long-term forest action.

264

Landowners engaged

Across eight partner-hosted events covering beavers, agroforestry, orchards and riparian planting - plus 35 direct enquiries through the new WF website.

Progress toward our 2030 Big Goals

Year 1 of 5. Targets span Gloucestershire, West of England and Wiltshire.

New trees & woodland 242ha delivered – collective target: 3,500ha by 2030



Trees for farms (agroforestry) 28ha delivered - target: 1,000ha by 2030



People taking action 269 directly engaged - target: 10,000 by 2030



Building the partnership

Woodland Creation Partnership - launched 2025/26

The Western Forest Woodland Creation Partnership (WCP) was established to supercharge collective delivery. This brings together Community Forests, Forestry Commission and delivery partners with four Farm and Tree Advisors now embedded in Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Wildlife Trusts and FWAG Southwest. National Trust, Woodland Trust, Bristol Avon Rivers Trust and The Duchy are sharing farmer leads. A committed 26/27 Community Forest pipeline is already in place.

A National Lottery Heritage Fund bid of £240,000 has been submitted for woodland management in 26/27 and 27/28, against a pledged WF contribution of £30,000 - with a new Head of Development starting Q1 26/27 to lead fundraising strategy.

Match funding: context and outlook

£8,225

secured in 25/26

The £8,225 from West of England Combined Authority funded three roundtable workshops at the Festival of Nature. Additionally, Forest of Avon Trust provided £12,000 in match funding (half the Agroforestry Lead salary for H2 25/26) plus a full year of free office accommodation for the core team.

What comes next

More woodland

Our Woodland Creation Partnership - with four new Farm and Tree Advisors embedded across the Wildlife Trusts and FWAG - is now active and building the pipeline for 26/27 and beyond.

Woodland in care

124 hectares of woodland management committed for 26/27 - restoring the ancient and neglected woodlands of the region to health and productivity.

People taking action

New Forest Action corridors launching across the region in 26/27, with opportunities to volunteer, get involved in citizen science and join the movement to build this forest together.