



Forestry England

Central England Forest District

Christmas Tree Sales Tender



We are Forestry England

We look after more land and more trees than any other organisation in the country, shaping landscapes for people, wildlife and timber. It's a job that never stops growing.

How we care for forests

We look after over 250,000 hectares of woodland and other natural environments across England - roughly equivalent to the area of London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds combined.

Our professional approach to sustainably managing the land allows us to keep our public forests and landscapes as special places for nature, which people can enjoy and businesses can thrive in.

We manage all of our forests to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard. Together with Scotland and Wales we were the first state-owned forestry organisation to gain Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) accreditation and our timber is certified under Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification™ (PEFC™).

For people

Our forests host over 230 million visits each year, making them the largest area for outdoor recreation in the country, including our beautiful national parks.

We have a long history of welcoming visits from the public, and we continue to make our forests accessible to people on bike, horseback, wheels and on foot.

Providing access for recreational activities also helps us to support businesses and contribute to local economies throughout England.

For nature

The nation's forests host many different habitats for wildlife including ancient woodlands, heathland, bogs, moors and fens.

We carefully manage each of these to provide homes for wildlife and create healthy woodland ecosystems that make sure our forests continue to thrive.

For the economy

Although we receive some money from government, we generate most of our revenue ourselves by sustainably harvesting and selling timber, and by working with commercial partners to offer new ways to experience and enjoy our woodlands and develop business activities. All the income we generate goes back into managing our forests.

Central England Forest District

Central England Forest District manages the English public forest estate in the midlands and North West which covers from Milton Keynes in the south, to Hull in the east and the Mersey Belt in the North West.



Our overriding strategic aim is to maximise the social, environmental and economic benefits to the nation from the national forests in Central England, increasing their natural capital and reducing the net cost to the public.

Our objective is to connect everyone with the nation's forests through: inspiring our people, increasing our commercial value, evolving our offer, and engaging our customers.

We want to leave the forests we care for in a better, more valuable condition for future generations.



Our key Forest Centres

We currently operate Christmas Tree Sales Centres at three of our key Forest Centres within the Central England Forest District.

Sherwood Pines

Sherwood Pines is the largest block of woodland open to the public in the East Midlands and thus an important regional resource for a wide range of visitors and stakeholders. Created in 1993 the Forest Park has developed and evolved from a purely working forest to a regional hub for outdoor recreation.

The Forest habitat is a mosaic of lowland pine forest, heathland and broadleaf belts and its size ensures an inspirational wilderness feel despite it being on the door step of Mansfield. Geographically it sits centrally within the Sherwood Forest area, complementing the multiple surrounding attractions by providing a robust and well zoned environment for a variety of outdoor recreation.

Hosting some of the first purpose built mountain bike trails in the world has ensured that Sherwood Pines has developed as a cycling destination for all levels and has hosted both local and international events.

Concessionary businesses have been at the core of the site with successful café, cycle shop and Adventure forests sites proving to be some of the most popular in the UK. Latterly this has been added to by a large Forest Holidays cabin site on the northern boundary of the forest, and a Camping in the Forest campsite scheduled to open in 2020.

Sherwood Pines is an incredibly popular year round venue with over 500,000 visits per annum.



Delamere Forest

Delamere Forest, at 972 hectares, is the largest wooded area in Cheshire. It sits on the Cheshire Plain, near the town of Frodsham, nestled between the major conurbations of Manchester, Liverpool and Chester. This mixed Conifer and Broadleaf woodland has captured the imagination of many local families who return with all the generations to walk, cycle, play, purchase a Christmas tree or simply to remember those that are no longer with them. Whilst it can be extremely busy at peak times, it is still possible to visit at quieter times and feel like you are the only person in the forest.

The Forest is supported by an extensive and varied transport network. It is intersected North to South by Station Road and East to West by Ashton Road. It is close to the A556 and M56 with easy connections to the M6 and M62 motorways. There is a local bus service and Delamere Railway station provides a stop on the Mid-Cheshire line connecting Manchester and Chester.

Delamere (forest of the lakes) is all that remains of the ancient Norman Hunting forests of Mara and Mondrem. These were established in the 11th Century by the Norman Earls of Chester. In 1812 the ownership of Delamere passed to the Crown. And then in 1924 to the Forestry Commission which has managed it since, with the first visitor centre being opened in 1969.

For a number of years it has been recognised that the facilities and infrastructure needed investment in order to cope with the demands placed upon it by high visitor numbers at peak times. In Autumn 2019 work started on a brand new visitor welcome building, including a new café and improved toilet facilities, a new car park and improvements to the access for everyone. These new facilities will really improve the experience for all visitors to Delamere Forest. The new building and car parking is due to open in Summer 2020.



Cannock Chase Forest

Cannock Chase Forest is the biggest outdoor pursuits tourist attraction within Staffordshire and surrounding area. The Forest Centre is locally unique as an adventure destination, as an off-road cycling mecca with renowned Follow the Dog and Monkey Trails, and with GoApes tree top ropes course and Segway experience, and as the local leaders in children's play, fairytale sculptures and themed trails.

Cannock Chase Forest is located in the heart of the Midlands within the area of Cannock Chase in the county of Staffordshire located between the towns of Lichfield, Rugeley, Cannock and Stafford, bordering the counties of the West Midlands, Shropshire and Derbyshire. Within an hour's drive of Cannock Chase Forest there are thriving, multicultural and vibrant cities including Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Stoke on Trent, Derby, and Telford.

Cannock Chase was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) on 16 September 1958 and is the smallest area so designated in mainland Britain covering 26 square miles. Much of the area is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The area has excellent commuter links with superb, rail and road network providing easy access to the key towns, although access to Cannock Chase is not served directly by public transport. The A5 and A34 trunk roads, M6 and M6 Toll provide east-west and north-south routes and being close to the M54, provide rapid access to Telford and beyond.



Our current Christmas offer

We currently operate Christmas Tree sales at three of our key Forest Centres within the Central England Forest District. Across the three sites we have sold on average over 10,700 trees per year over the last three years (although 1 sites have been operating for much longer). Although tree varieties, pricing and branding is consistent across the three sites, there are distinct differences between the sites.



The Forestry England Christmas brand

Pick your perfect Christmas tree in our beautiful forests. Enjoy this authentic experience with friends and family. Savour the atmosphere... hot chocolate, mulled wine, toasted marshmallows, delicious food from pop-ups, fire bowls. The twinkle of Christmas lighting. A tradition to remember. Festoons, fairy lights, tasteful décor: a classy experience. Pick your ideal tree with our experts to help make your perfect Christmas at home this year. A beautiful place to visit. An authentic and different experience if you're new to this. A classic Christmas tradition for many local families... for generations. Surround yourself with the sights, sounds and smells of the forest at Christmas season. Rejuvenate your senses with a forest visit at this beautiful time of the year.



We demonstrate this through:

- **Quality product, customer service**

Great trees, sold by experts, friendly, helpful, long serving team, there to help you, smiling, safe, great parking, carry tree to car. Our tree experts are here to support you, with years of experience. We've selected great quality trees and the experience couldn't be easier.



- **Family time**

Bring your kids, easy parking, food and drink, spend quality time, wholesome activity, building tradition, wellbeing, marshmallows and hot chocolate. Open after school - why not collect the kids and come out to the forest? Just 20 minutes from town, with free, easy parking, toilets and simple hot food and drink for you and the little ones. Back to basics: take a little time in our stunning forest locations.

- **Tradition**

Making a tradition/ continuing a tradition, Christmas trees for generations, 100 years of Christmas trees, with your family for generations, Real trees... for generations. The same great experience you've always known. Join us in the forests to celebrate



- **Simple, good value,**

Free, simple parking beside our magical sales sites... no-hassle, avoid the town, grab some food while choosing your tree, affordable, high quality. Help choosing, guidance. Easy parking, hot food, real Christmas: a serene break from Christmas chaos.

Sherwood Pines

- This is the smallest Christmas tree sales operation within our district
- Tree sales (Spruce, Fir and Pine) cut trees from 4ft to 8ft and pot grown trees
- Additional sales of wreaths, mistletoe and tree stands
- Additional customer engagement activities that we currently operate to help enhance the tree buying experience - free craft activity, selfie scene, Christmas themed trail which allows us to achieve our communications/learning objectives
- Operating on site at Christmas as standard - Café, Bike Hire, Go Ape high ropes course, segways and Nets course, Forest Holidays cabins. Due for opening in 2020 Camping in the Forest campsite
- Christmas is also a popular time for School Visits
- Open 7 days a week, 10am - 4pm



Delamere Forest

- Tree sales (Spruce, Fir and Pine) cut trees from 4ft to 10ft and pot grown trees
- Additional sales of wreaths, mistletoe and tree stands
- On site catering - various locally sourced hot and cold food and drinks (previously housed in a teepee that offered pop up restaurant nights)
- Santa's Grotto - open to the public on weekends (and late nights)
- Further customer engagement experiences - selfie scenes
- Open 7 days a week, 10am - 5pm plus limited late night opening on key dates
- Please note, up to and including 2019 Christmas Tree Sales has been operated from our Whitefield site (a 2 minute drive from the main Delamere Forest site, due to access and capacity issues at the main site. From Christmas 2020 it is anticipated that the Christmas Tree sales operation will run from the new Visitor Centre at the main site.
- Christmas tree sales has operated in isolation at the Whitefield site, but at the main site operating as normal is the café, Go Ape high wires course, bike hire, Forest Explorers educational partner and Delamere Outdoor Fitness.



Cannock Chase Forest

- This is the largest Christmas tree sales operation within our district
- Tree sales (Spruce, Fir and Pine) cut trees from 4ft to 14ft and pot grown trees.
- Additional sales of wreaths, mistletoe and tree stands
- On site catering - multiple log cabins selling various hot and cold festive food and drinks
- Santa's Grotto - open to the public on weekends (and late nights) and used for school visits during the week. Christmas is a popular time for School Visits.
- Further customer engagement experiences - fully dressed sales centre, multiple selfie scenes, Christmas themed trail which allows us to achieve our communications/learning objectives
- Operating on site at Christmas as standard - Café, Bike Hire, Go Ape high ropes course and segways
- Open 7 days a week, 10am - 5pm plus limited late night opening on key dates



The opportunity

Forestry England has a future opportunity for the delivery of Christmas tree sales and potential supporting activities and partnerships at our sites: Cannock Chase Forest, Delamere Forest and Sherwood Pines.

Forestry England would like to invite potential partners to visit our Christmas tree sales sites throughout our sales period which is 28th November until 15th December. The purpose of the visits is for potential bidders to see our sites and current offer and for to “pitch” business ideas that would suit Forestry England’s requirements. All business ideas must be received by email to procurement.england@forestryengland.uk no later than 31st December 2019.

This notice is intended to notify the market of Forestry England’s intention to tender an opportunity. It is anticipated that the tender exercise for this opportunity will be published in February/March 2020.

Forestry England operates on the basis of openness, fairness and transparency, and attendance to the advertised market engagement event shall not inhibit any ability to subsequently tender for this opportunity nor provide any advantage.



Our quality and experience expectations

Many of our Christmas Tree customers are incredibly loyal and have been coming to buy their Christmas Trees from our forests for many years (and in some cases for generations). This level of emotional attachment to our locations and products is something we would be keen to continue through quality of products and experience.

Health and Safety, for our staff, visitors and contractors, is our highest priority. There are a number of Health and Safety requirements that will be mandatory, including but not limited to:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998
- Supply of Machinery Regulations 2008

The sales site will be subject to Forestry England branding. Any further signs or notices may be used in agreement with Forestry England. The Forestry England branding will sit alongside the successful bidder's branding with wording to the effect of 'in partnership with'. Promotion of the successful bidder will be supported by Forestry England via our website and social media channels.

The Forestry England reputation must be protected at all times. We will provide training to the successful bidder on who we are and what we do, and we expect all members of their team to gain an understanding of this so that they might answer questions from customers in an appropriate way. This also extends to customer service - we expect the highest levels of customer service so that all visitors have the best possible experience when coming to a Forestry England site.

Forestry England may choose to run marketing campaigns around Christmas Trees. Previously this has included giving away a sapling tree to grow on at home with every sold Christmas tree. Whilst all materials are provided by Forestry England, participation from the successful bidder will be expected. Further information can be found in the example Management Regulations and Key Performance Indicators.

There will be a period of time given before the sales season starts to allow time for set up and stock delivery. This will be agreed at the pre-commencement meeting. This will allow for a certain amount of stock piling within the sales area but bidders must be aware that space will be granted to a given area and there is no additional storage available.

During periods of Severe Weather (e.g. high winds or heavy snow) the sales site may need to be closed. Whilst we endeavour to re-open as soon as is safe to do so, during this time the Christmas Tree Sales Centre will be unable to trade. Copies of the site's Severe Weather Policy will be issued to the successful bidder.

All trees sold must be sourced from members of the British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA), we would expect all trees to be grown according to the BCTGA code of Practice.

Any wood based products including items such as Christmas tree decorations should be FSC and/or PEFC certified.

Proof of origin and certification for trees and related products must be supplied at the pre-commencement meeting and may be requested at any time throughout the contract period.

To protect the Nation's forests and to minimise the risk of introducing or spreading harmful pests and diseases, biosecurity measures appropriate to the level of risk at the location of work, are expected to be undertaken. For more information and guidance, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-introduction-and-spread-of-tree-pests-and-diseases>

Your expectations from us

As part of the business pitch expression of interest process we would also be interested to hear your expectations from us. For example:

- Is there anything in our quality and experience expectations that concerns you or you think could be problematic?
- What supporting activities would you potentially like us to provide, or is this something you would want to provide yourselves?
- What infrastructure requirements would you have?

