



Forestry England

# Central England Forest District

Christmas Tree Sales Tender



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# 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.



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## 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.



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## 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.



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## 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.



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## The opportunity

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

Forestry England will be holding market engagement events to invite potential partners to hear more about this opportunity and to find out more about the requirement. The purpose of the event is to inform potential partners of our intended requirement and invite potential bidders to “pitch” business ideas that would suit Forestry England’s requirements.

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.



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## Our current offer

### Sherwood Pines

- Tree sales (Spruce, Fir and Pine)
- Additional sales of wreaths, mistletoe and tree stands
- Customer engagement experiences - free craft activity, selfie scene, Christmas themed trail which allows us to achieve our communications/learning objectives
- Open 7 days a week, 10am - 4pm



### Cannock Chase Forest

- Tree sales (Spruce, Fir and Pine)
- Additional sales of wreaths, mistletoe and tree stands
- On site catering - multiple log cabins selling various hot and cold food and drinks
- Santa's Grotto - open to the public on weekends (and late nights) and used for school visits during the week
- Further customer engagement experiences - multiple selfie scenes, Christmas themed trail which allows us to achieve our communications/learning objectives
- Open 7 days a week, 10am - 5pm plus limited late night opening on key dates



### Delamere Forest

- Tree sales (Spruce, Fir and Pine)
- 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 scene
- 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 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.



