



Forestry England

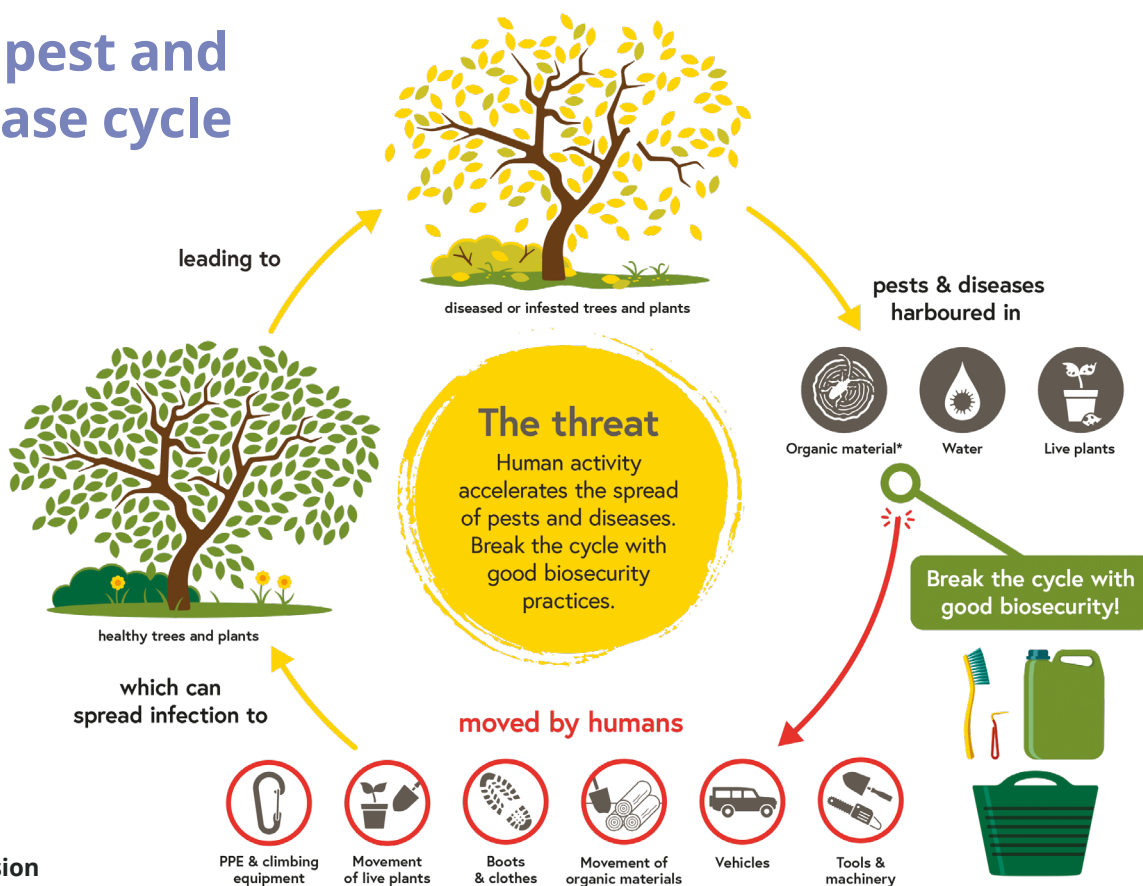


Case study

Raising awareness

Just a few simple steps can really make a difference to prevent the spread of pests and diseases, but many people do not know how or understand why.

The pest and disease cycle



*Organic materials include plant material, timber, woodchip and firewood.

Freddy, Becki and Robert are biosecurity officers within the Forestry Commission Plant Health Team. Their role is to spread the word about the importance of biosecurity, offering advice and training so people know what action they can take to reduce the movement of tree pests and diseases and how to report anything of concern.



Biosecurity refers to a set of measures or precautions designed to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful pests, pathogens or invasive species.

Contaminated material can be anything such as water, soil or leaf litter that has some sort of pest or disease living within it.

Spreading the word, not pests and diseases

To help spread the word and encourage positive biosecurity practises the Plant Health team use a variety of methods.



Engaging with members of the public

They attend roadshows, events and lead guided walks and talks.

- Demonstrations show forest visitors how to stop accidentally moving contaminated material, such as water, soil and leaf litter that may be on their shoes, bike tyres or buggy wheels



Supporting landowners

The team help inform landowners and managers so they can be aware of the pests and diseases that could be affecting their trees.

- By offering support and guidance so they can identify their tree species and know which pests and diseases pose the biggest risk, and what to look out for.
- By generating confidence to report their findings through Tree Alert.

Working with the forest industry

They work with tree related industries, such as foresters and tree surgeons, to make them aware of the different measures that they can adopt:

- **'Think kit'** – adopting routine cleaning of tools, equipment, boots and clothing.
- **'Think transport'** – removing soil and organic material from vehicles, ensuring the wash site is biosecure and doesn't spread contaminated material off the site and into the wider environment.
- **'Think trees, plants and materials'** – buying plants from pest and disease-free areas, with plant passports and certification.



Keeping our forests healthy

The result of all this hard work means that the forest industry and members of the public become more aware and adopt good biosecurity measures and help to keep our trees, woods and forests healthy.

The role of the plant health team is vital especially as our climate changes and new pests and diseases are likely to keep appearing.