



IFG 2015 - Field Trip Guide

Thursday 18th June – Cannock Chase forest

The purpose of this trip is to find out how the public forest estate is managed in England. It is an opportunity for you to explore some of the themes that have come up in the classroom in a real-life forest governance situation.

We are visiting Cannock Chase forest which is a public (government) forest managed by the Forestry Commission (FC). We will meet the local staff and find out how key long term decisions are taken and implemented, in particular we will hear about forest management planning. Cannock Chase is a multiple use forest – we will learn about both timber production and use of the forest by local people for recreation.

Please read this guide before the field trip so that you know what the focus of the trip is, what the schedule is and what to bring. The staff at Cannock Chase are very helpful and open and will be expecting lots of questions!

What to bring

Please ensure that you are prepared for a day outside in the forest in all types of weather. Please bring sturdy footwear, warm clothes and waterproofs.

Schedule:

8:30	Depart CIDT
10:00	Welcome and introductions
10:30	TOUR: Forest recreation and management of a multi-purpose forest visitors centre
11:30	Tea break
12:00	TALK: 'Introduction to Cannock Chase and forest management planning' by the FC's planning forester, Alastair Semple . Followed by questions and discussions
13:00	Lunch with the Forestry Commission
14:00	TOUR: Visit to timber harvesting site and talk by Roger Wilson , FC Forester
16:00	De-brief with IFG tutors
17:00	Depart

Key Themes

- **Public forests in England** – how are they governed? What are the key elements of forest policy?
- **Forest management planning** – how much consultation takes place?
- **Certification of timber** – how does the FC certify its timber products?
- **Recreation & the social role of public forests** – what does the FC do to encourage local use?
- **Being RESPONSIVE**- how does the FC respond to a changing world eg climate change?

About Cannock Chase forest

Cannock Chase is located 22 miles east of the University of Wolverhampton Telford Campus. The forest is located in an area of high population and covers 68 km² (6,700ha). The forest is managed by the Forestry Commission's agency (Forest Enterprise England) for multiple uses (economic, social, nature). It is made up of coniferous plantations, natural broadleaf forest and heathland.

You will see timber harvesting in the forest, but the forest managers also have to be **responsive** to the needs of local people living near this public forest who want to go to the forest to walk, to have cycle rides and even adventures. At the forest you will see a visitor centre, cycling and walking trails and an adventure ropeway. The site is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and this designation has to be taken into account when decisions are being taken.

Cannock Chase is managed by the local Commission staff, in accordance with an agreed Cannock Chase **Forest Plan (FP)**. The Cannock Chase Forest Plan was approved in January 2015 and sets out the Forestry Commission's management proposals for the next fifty years and approval for all harvesting and restock operations over the next ten years.

The main objectives of the FP are:

- the continued production of commercial conifers and broadleaves;
- facilitate the 2.3 million visitors to whole of the AONB and 350,000 visitors to the Birches Valley each year through the provision of recreation facilities and services;
- manage the forest for the conservation of the wide range of species which are found there;
- conservation and enhancement of surviving elements of the historic environment within the forest landscape,
- the restoration of ancient woodland sites and to make the economic potential of the forest more resilient in the face of a changing climate.

The current threat to the primary conifer species in Cannock Forest from pests and diseases will lead to a diversification in species currently grown. To achieve this some of the stands of trees will be removed early before they reach the end of their rotation to reduce the threat and diversify the current stands that are dominated by Corsican pine. A combination of continuous cover management systems will be used to provide the best conditions to establish future stands. Management will have to become more reactive to change to ensure it can grow the economic, social and environmental value of the forest into the future.

This link gives you full access to all the information and maps in the FP:

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/bee9-9ushgc>



About Forestry Commission (FC) England

Established in 1919, the FC was originally a single body covering the whole of the UK. It was responsible for the management and commercial operation of publicly owned forests, and for regulation of the sector.

Following devolution, separate Forestry Commissions for England, Scotland and Wales were established in 2003. Forestry Commission England reports to a Minister of State in the Westminster (UK) Parliament) and Forestry Commission Scotland is funded by and reports to the Scottish Government. In 2013, Forestry Commission Wales merged with other agencies to form Natural Resources Wales.

Forestry Commission England is overseen by a Board of Commissioners, an Executive Board and a Director. Its mission is to protect and expand forests and woodlands to increase their value to society and the environment. The Forestry Commission in England is split into two arms: Forest Services and Forest Enterprise.

Forest Services is the authority with responsibility for putting in place the conditions that enable landowners, managers, businesses and civil society and local communities to protect, improve and expand ALL England's woodland resources. In 2010 the UK Government planned to sell the public forest estate in England, there was a great deal of opposition and the plan was dropped. This led however to a lot of consultations and a Government Review of Forestry Functions. As a result, the Forestry Commission is gradually re-shaping both Forestry Services and Forest Enterprise.

Follow the link below for the latest FC Corporate Plan 2014-15.

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCECorporatePlan2014WEB.pdf/\\$FILE/FCECorporatePlan2014WEB.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCECorporatePlan2014WEB.pdf/$FILE/FCECorporatePlan2014WEB.pdf)

Forest Enterprise is the agency responsible for managing the public forest estate. Forest Enterprise England prepares a Strategic Plan for the management of the English Public Forest Estate –the current plan runs to 2020. The overall goal is to secure and grow the economic, social and natural capital value of the public forest estate for the people of England (ie economy, nature and people). Follow these links to the Forest Enterprise England Strategic Plan (2013-2020) for the public forest estate and the current Corporate Plan (2014-15). See below for a link to the current strategic plan.

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC20STRATEGY20PLAN_V7.pdf/\\$FILE/FC20STRATEGY20PLAN_V7.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FC20STRATEGY20PLAN_V7.pdf/$FILE/FC20STRATEGY20PLAN_V7.pdf)



The Forestry Commission has a FANTASTIC website with loads of information on forestry in the UK for the general public and for foresters - please check it out - www.forestry.gov.uk/England

Appendix 1 – Field Trip Location

Please note in addition to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty there are also National Parks and many other forests not shown on this map]

