

Independent Panel on Forestry – Call for Views

The Independent Panel on Forestry would like to hear your views on forests and woods in England, and what this part of our landscape can and should provide, now and in the future. This call for views is the start of an ongoing dialogue with everyone who is interested in forests and woods.

The Panel has been set up to advise Government on the future of England's forests and woods by April 2012. Our terms of reference, which you can see in full on the webpages, state that we should advise "on the future direction of forestry and woodland policy in England".

This includes, but is not limited to, the work of the Forestry Commission, forests and woods in public, private and charitable ownership, the economics of forestry, public benefits such as well being, access for leisure pursuits and the role of forests and woods, and related open habitat, in the wider natural environment.

This ongoing dialogue will work in a number of ways, including site visits and web activity. We will develop the best way to engage people through the Panel's work over the coming year. The Panel will draw on existing information and previous Government consultations but will not be limited to the questions and issues asked before.

We want your help with understanding:

- what forests and woods deliver for people, communities, nature and the economy;
- what it is about forests and woods that people value so much and why; and
- what works in the practice and can be repeated in other locations.

We would welcome your views and ideas on any aspect of forests and woods. The following list of questions may help frame your response. It would be helpful for us if you could respond under these broad questions.

Question 1 – What do forests and woods mean to you?

Question 2 – What is your vision for the future of England's forests and woods?

Question 3 – What do you feel to be the benefits of forests and woods to:

- a) you personally;
- b) society as a whole;

c) the natural environment; and

d) the economy?

Question 4 – We would like to hear about your suggestions of practical solutions and good practice which can be replicated more widely.

Question 5 – What do you see as the priorities and challenges for policy about England's forests and woods?

Please capture your ideas in a maximum of four pages, to reach us by 31 July 2011.

Practicalities

Please send your response to:

E-mail: forestrypanel@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Secretariat to the Independent Panel on Forestry
Defra
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

Do you want to be kept in touch with the work of the Panel?

If you would like to be added to our mailing list and keep in touch with the work of the Panel, please reply with the details listed below:

Name:

E-mail address:

Organisation (if applicable):

Location (if applicable):

Whether you are interested in the whole subject or specific issues (please list):

We will keep these details on a database to enable us to contact individuals and organisations with news on the work of the Panel, to invite views and to send invitations to events. We may share this information with Defra and the Forestry Commission for the purpose of contacting people with news, opportunities to comment and invitations to events relating to forestry and woodlands.

What will happen to the views you send us?

We will use the responses throughout the work of the Panel and will give an overview of what you have said in our progress report in the autumn. Regular updates and information on the Panel's work will be available on the Panel's website.

When this call for views is completed we intend to put a copy of all the responses in the Defra Information Resource Centre at Ergon House, London. Also, members of the public may ask for a copy of responses under freedom of information legislation.

We would encourage people to share their views widely and engage others in discussion. If, however, there are particular reasons you do not want your views - including your name, contact details and any other personal information - to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send in your views. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. Please note that if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not count as a confidentiality request. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under freedom of information legislation. But, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

Thank you so much for your contribution.

You can find out more about the Panel's work at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/forestry/panel/>