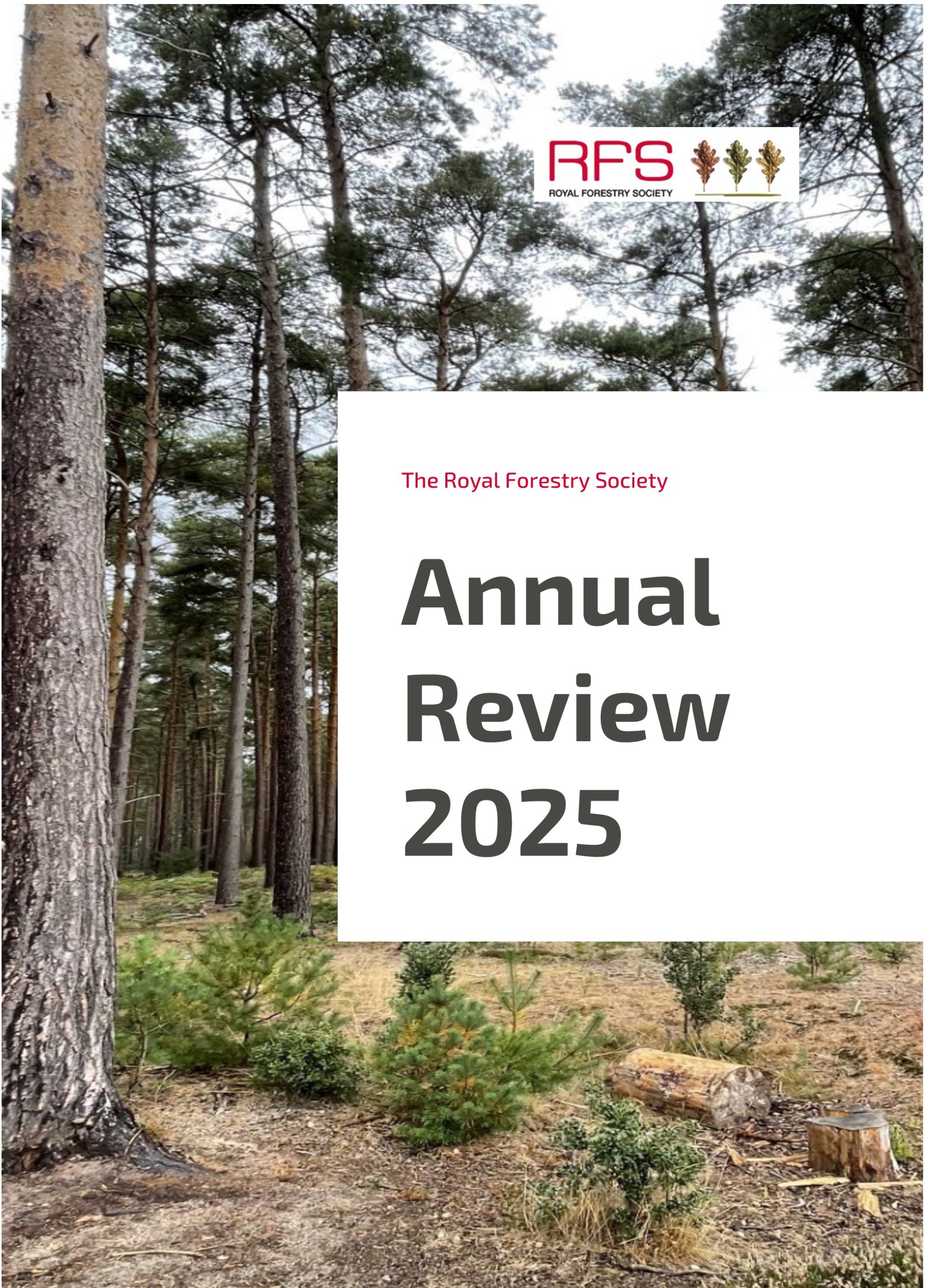




The Royal Forestry Society

Annual Review 2025



A letter from the President

Firstly, I would like to thank all our members for their continued support. It is a pleasure to hear your views on a range of forestry issues at Woodland Meetings and other events.

In 2025, we launched our 10 year strategy, emphasising the urgency of addressing the climate related threats facing our woods. Our new climate is increasingly challenging for foresters, and 2025 was the UK's warmest year on record. It brought prolonged summer drought, early leaf fall, and several forest fires, while this winter has delivered weeks of persistent rain.

The RFS also took the decision to host Action Oak, connecting our Society more closely with the plant health research community. We have also worked with partners to address proposed changes to Inheritance Tax and have played a key role in strengthening collaboration across forestry interests.

I would particularly like to thank the RFS Divisions for their significant contributions. I have seen exceptional Douglas fir in North Wales and Devon; visited the construction of a major new sawmill in the Northeast; joined debates on the merits of agroforestry in Wiltshire; and admired the next generation of oak being raised to exemplary standards in Norfolk. A visit to Northern Ireland highlighted the challenge of growing trees in areas where storms are a regular occurrence. Wherever I have gone, I always leave inspired by the dedication of our volunteers.

Our Head Office team has worked tirelessly, running our education programmes, organising our prestigious events, training courses, awards and grants and supporting people in their forestry and arboriculture careers. Our charitable work continues to extend its reach, and I am pleased to report that the RFS achieved an annual turnover of over £1 million for the first time in our long history.

I look forward to meeting many more members at our Annual Study Tour, hosted by the Southern Division, and at Woodland Meetings across the country.

Alison B. Field

Alison Field

President of the Royal Forestry Society



Your RFS team



Christopher Williams
Chief Executive



Becky Wilkinson
**Learning & Outreach
Manager**



Dawn Dewhurst
Finance Manager



Jen Turner
Development Manager



Annabel Narayanan
Action Oak Director



Andrea Donnelly
Events Manager



Zoe Knight **Corporate
Partnerships Manager**



Joe Roberts
**Communications &
Advocacy Manager**



Elle McAllister **Digital
Communications Officer**



Amy Aylward
Membership Officer



Alison Dinnie
Forestry Careers Advisor



Pat Sedgley
Office Administrator



Jemma Cuthbert
**School & Community Outreach
Officer**



Melanie Smith
**Action Oak Research
Coordinator**



Elaine Taylor Green
Finance & Facilities Officer



We are the RFS

Our Priorities

In 2025 we published our new 10 Year Strategy. This sets out our four main priorities:

- **Creating new & more resilient & productive woods** to help shape a confident future for forestry.
- **Raising the profile of forestry** by delivering inspirational forest education programmes to new and existing audiences.
- **Developing career pathways** by highlighting routes which match diverse skill sets to the range of disciplines needed for a modern high-performing sector.
- **Sustaining a well-run Society** by ensuring that we have good governance, supporting our staff and volunteers and gaining income from diverse sources.

Extended Support Team

QJF Editorial Board: Prof Julian Evans OBE, Rik Pakenham, Alison Field, Dr Peter Thomas

QJF Co-Editors: Dr Gary Kerr, Dr Freia Bladon

Managing Agent, Hockeridge and Pancake Woods: John Morris

Warden, Charles Ackers Redwood Grove at Leighton: Evelyn Over

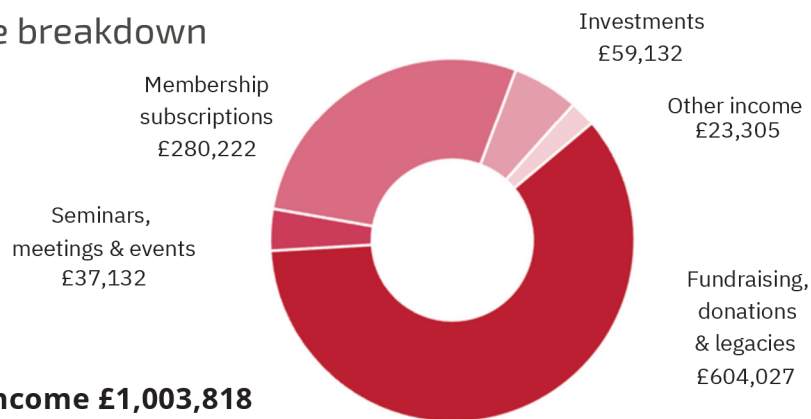
Managing Agents, Battram Wood: Forwoods Forestry and Woodland Consultancy

Teaching Trees Team: Alice Parker, Barbara Brannigan, Jemma Cuthbert, Jessica Lloyd, Jodi Winter, Nicki Jempson and Tim Kaye

Librarian: Leonie Woods

Design and Print Volunteer: Shona McAllister

Income breakdown





Our Directors

President: Alison Field

Vice President: James Hamilton Stubber

Immediate Past President: Ben Herbert

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Ian Tubby

Hon. Treasurer: Rodney Morgan-Giles

Company Secretary: Christopher Williams

Cheryl Lundberg

Harriet Schiavone

Felix Gregory

Caroline Harrison

Greg Vickers

Special thanks

Special thanks to all our divisional committee members and volunteers (in particular, those who have contributed to our many in-person and online events and training courses).

The RFS at a glance

In 2025...



RFS members got grants to plant **84,864** trees through our Grants for Resilience scheme



We became hosts of the **Action Oak** partnership



10 young people completed their Forestry Roots traineeships with RFS employers



We published our new **10 Year Strategy**



588 people enrolled on our training courses and events



We achieved an annual turnover of over **£1 million**



11,304 children took part in Teaching Trees or Junior Forester Award activities

We responded to government consultations on the issues that matter to you in **England, Wales & Northern Ireland**

Our Finances

Summarised Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 December 2025

	Income	Expenditure	Revenue Surplus/(Deficit)	Revaluation Gain/(Loss)	Transfers/ Refunds	Inc. /Dec. in funds
Unrestricted funds						
Head Office	364,501	(399,484)	(34,983)	267,597	-	232,614
<i>Designated funds</i>						
Divisions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Education	168,487	(233,523)	(65,036)	-	-	(65,036)
Hay Barns	-	-	(6,033)	-	-	-
Batram Wood	93	(6,033)	(19,	-	-	(6,033)
Hockeridge Woods	3,110	(19,530)	437) 92	-	-	(19,437)
Leighton Pollock		(3,018)		20,069	-	20,161
Total	536,191	(661,588)	(125,397)	287,666	-	162,269
Restricted funds						
Duke of Cornwall	12,253	(9,890)	2,363	13,379	-	15,742
Leslie Astle	645	(727)	(82)	3,345	-	3,263
NDG James	1,201	(3,288)	(2,087)	6,690	-	4,603
Spencer Bursary	-	(1,022)	(1,022)	-	-	(1,022)
Teaching Trees	53,485	(41,696)	11,789	-	-	11,789
Randle Travel	1,355	(1,248)	107	10,035	-	10,142
Viking	2,081	(2,117)	(36)	13,380	-	13,344
Future Foresters	330,375	(198,619)	131,756	-	-	131,756
Wise About Woods	27,208	(18,519)	8,689	-	-	8,689
Action Oak	39,024	(28,042)	10,982	-	-	10,982
Total	467,627	(305,168)	162,459	46,829	-	209,288
Total - all funds	1,003,818	(966,756)	37,062	334,495	-	371,557
<i>Year ended</i> <i>31st Dec 2024</i>	917,444	(967,164)	(49,720)	52,315	-	2,595
Summary Balance Sheet						
Property, woodland and fixed assets				Dec 2025		Dec 2024
Investments				306,628		306,421
				1,801,594		1,718,836
Stocks				3,656		4,261
Debtors				57,703		45,801
Cash, current and deposit accounts				562,717		252,696
Creditors				(50,740)		(28,349)
Subscriptions received in advance				(61,049)		(50,714)
				2,620,509		2,248,952
Funds brought forward	Unrestricted 1,534,346	Restricted 714,606		2,248,952		2,246,357
Result for the year	162,269	209,288		371,557		2,595
Funds carried forward	1,696,615	923,894		2,620,509		2,248,952

These financial statements are only a summary of information derived from the charitable company's annual accounts and may not contain certain information for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. A copy of the full accounts can be obtained from www.rfs.org.uk

Hosting Action Oak

2025 saw the RFS become the new home of Action Oak. Since Action Oak was launched in 2018, it has been hosted by Woodland Heritage. The RFS took on this hosting role in August 2025 and now employs two members of staff to help run this important initiative.

Action Oak is a public-private initiative dedicated to protecting our native oaks, sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) & English oak (*Quercus robur*). These oak trees are a cornerstone of our landscape, heritage and biodiversity, but they face growing threats from pests, diseases, human activity and climate change.

Where it all began

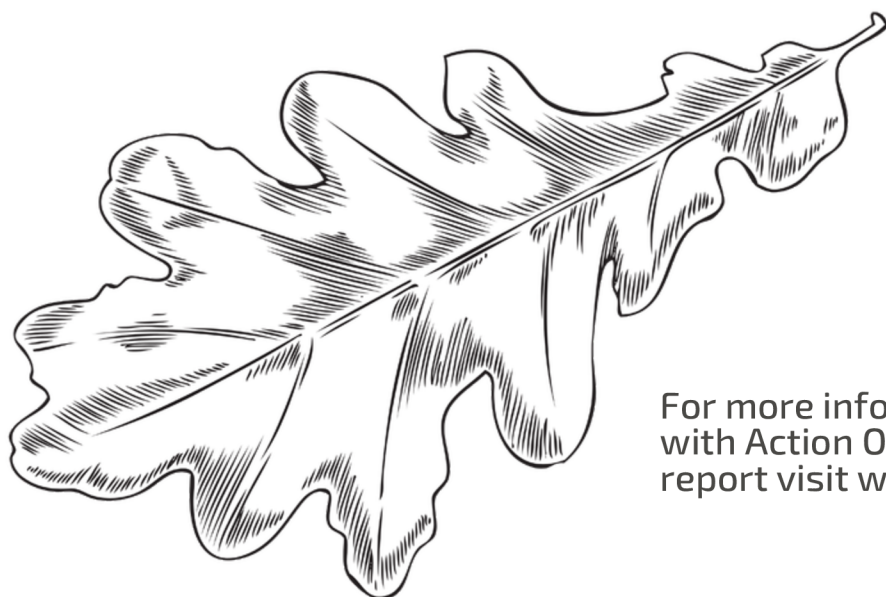
Action Oak's roots stem from a plant health and biosecurity meeting hosted at Highgrove in 2016, where representatives from charities, landowners and government identified a need to act to protect oak trees from both current and impending threats to their health and survival. Action Oak launched in May 2018 at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, with our initiative and coordinated plan to identify and tackle the issues facing our native oak trees.

Saving oak trees together

As a national partnership of charities, governments, private landowners and research institutions, Action Oak works tirelessly to safeguard these vital trees for future generations. Through leading-edge research and continuous monitoring, we seek to understand the challenges our oaks face and develop innovative solutions to ensure their survival.

Taking action

Action Oak is taking action through research and monitoring, publishing advice and guidance and by raising awareness. Action Oak encourages people to manage woods and trees for climate resilience, increase biosecurity and get involved with research. Action Oak has recently published *The State of the UK's Oaks*. This new report outlines the pressures currently affecting the UK's native oak trees, and the emerging risks to the long term future of these iconic and ecologically important tree species.



For more information on our work with Action Oak or to read the new report visit www.actionoak.org

Thank you

Our warmest thanks go to all our members, volunteers
and the many donors and benefactors who have supported our work in 2025.

We couldn't do any of the work we do without our supporters.

Contact us

If you would like to make a donation to one of our programmes,
or if you would like to find out more about the work of the RFS
please contact us.

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