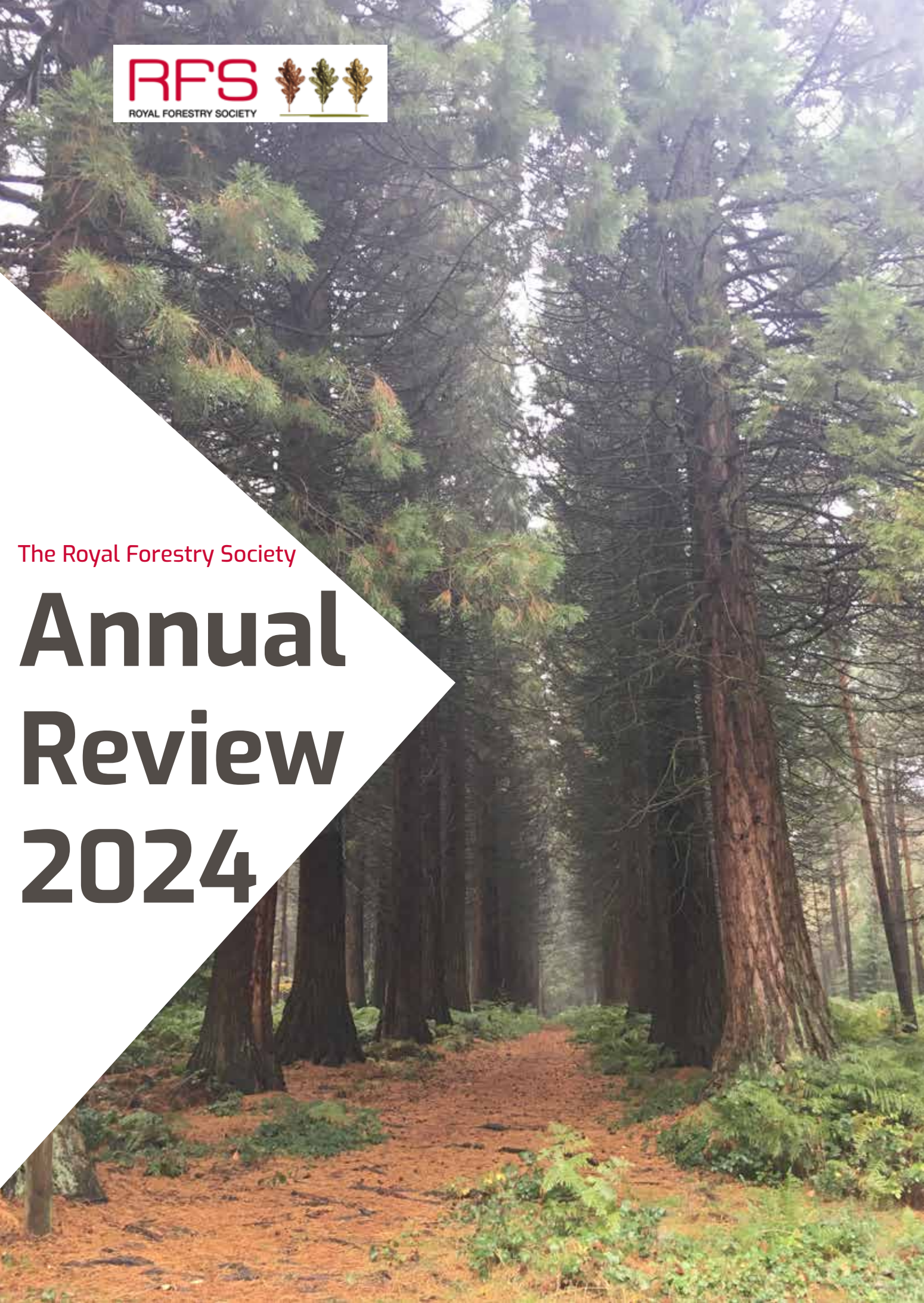




The Royal Forestry Society

# Annual Review 2024





# A Letter from the President

We were honoured that His Majesty, King Charles III, re-confirmed our Royal Patronage in 2024. The King was President of the RFS in its centenary year (1982-1983), and continues his close connection with our Society.

This has been a positive year for the RFS. Membership has grown, Divisional meetings report strong attendance, with well organised visits generating memorable days out. The Quarterly Journal of Forestry continued to publish highly-acclaimed articles contributing to learning and debate for which our Society is renowned.

The RFS Overseas Study Tour visited Slovenia where we were enlightened by the country's extensive wildlife-rich forests and its long-term commitment to continuous cover. In the UK, members enjoyed an Annual Study Tour hosted by the Notts and Lincs Division which included diverse and inspirational visits to estates, community woodlands, historic parkland, and amenity woods.

Our commitment to inform and inspire the next generation has continued through new initiatives and flagship programmes. The year has seen the launch of a new Forestry and Arboriculture Careers Advice Service, providing support to young people interested in pursuing opportunities in our sector. We were delighted with the continuing success of our Forestry Roots programme for 18 – 30 year olds. We have also strengthened our RFS Certification Scheme that recognises the knowledge and practical skills of professional foresters and arborists and are proud to share that the RFS Junior Forester Awards has reached over 100,000 children.

In 2025, building on the success of the past year, the RFS will launch its new Strategy. In this we share our vision for

creating more resilient and productive woods, raising the profile of forestry with politicians, other land-users and the wider public and to further develop career pathways.

Our many achievements depend on a strong and dedicated core staff team, on the loyalty and commitment of so many volunteers in the Divisions and on the constancy and support of our membership.



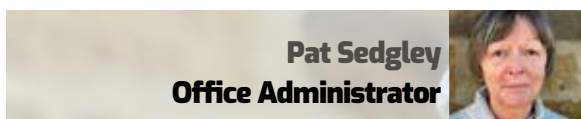
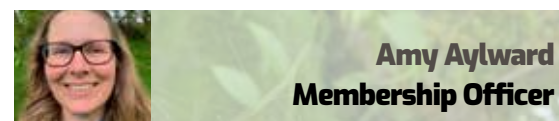
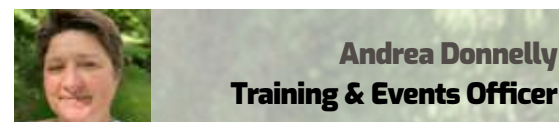
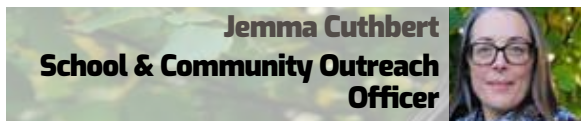
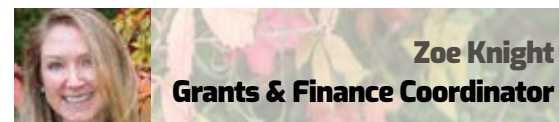
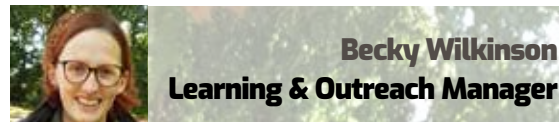
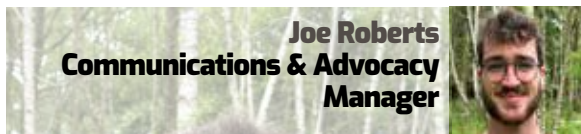
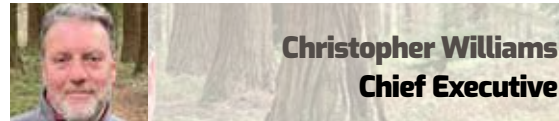
Together your many contributions ensure that we remain the membership organisation for forestry in England, leading Wales and Northern Ireland. Thank you for all that you do to make this possible.

*Alison B. Field*

Alison Field -

President of the Royal Forestry Society

# Your RFS Team



# We are the RFS

## Our Priorities

We are an educational charity inspiring passion and excellence in woodland management.

We work with others to:

- **Share learning and best practice** through publications, woodland meetings, training, lectures and online resources for our members.
- Deliver forestry **education for children and young people**.
- **Inform and inspire** more people to pursue careers in forestry (and its allied sectors).
- **Raise awareness** of issues affecting woodlands to the government and media.
- **Demonstrate responsible ownership** through management of our RFS woodlands.

## Our Directors

**President:** Alison Field

Cheryl Lundberg

**Vice President:** James Hamilton Stubber

Harriet Schiavone

**Immediate Past President:** Ben Herbert

Felix Gregory

**Chair of the Board of Trustees:** Ian Tubby

Caroline Harrison

**Hon. Treasurer:** Rodney Morgan-Giles

Greg Vickers

**Company Secretary:** Christopher Williams

## 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, Batram 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

## 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 2024...

Our education officers planted **724** trees with children in schools.



We finished the year with **4,063** members.



We approved the planting of **107,635** trees through our grant scheme for resilient woodlands.



We trained **157** people through our training courses, improving skills and knowledge within the sector.



We funded **11** early career professionals through our bursaries to advance their knowledge through attending events, study and research.



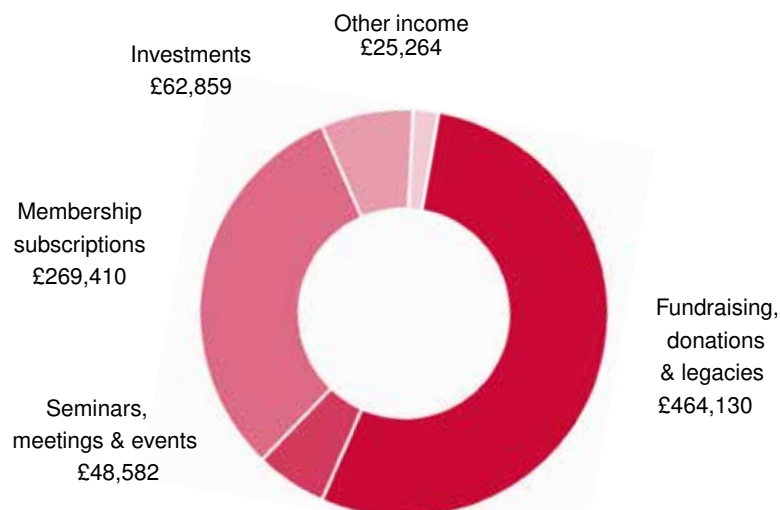
We advertised **88** forestry positions on our jobs board on the website, promoting a diverse range of forestry careers.



We received **55** enquiries through our new careers advice service, supporting people to choose the right path for them.



Over **100,000** children have signed up for the Junior Forester Award, learning how to care for the trees in their schools and communities.



## Income breakdown

54% of our income is derived from generous donations and legacies.

# Our Finances

## Summarised Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Income	Expenditure	Revenue Surplus/(Deficit)	Revaluation Gain/(Loss)	Inc./Dec. in funds
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
Head Office	419,230	(460,412)	(41,182)	35,411	(5,771)
<i>Designated funds</i>					
Divisions	-	-	-	-	-
Education	84,352	(151,736)	(67,384)	-	(67,384)
Hay Barns	-	-	-	-	-
Battram Wood	-	(9,175)	(9,175)	-	(9,175)
Hockeridge Woods	110	(5,540)	(5,430)	-	(5,430)
Leighton Pollock	3,585	(3,276)	309	-	309
<b>Total</b>	<b>507,277</b>	<b>(630,139)</b>	<b>(122,862)</b>	<b>35,411</b>	<b>(87,451)</b>
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Duke of Cornwall	11,833	(9,513)	2,320	4,498	6,818
Leslie Astle	713	(690)	23	1,529	1,552
NDG James	1,278	(131)	1,147	2,742	3,889
Spencer Bursary	-	(331)	(331)	-	(331)
Teaching Trees	56,792	(71,233)	(14,441)	-	(14,441)
Randle Travel	1,497	(1,454)	43	3,209	3,252
Viking	2,298	(2,834)	(536)	4,926	4,390
Future Foresters	305,878	(229,844)	76,034	-	76,034
Wise About Woods	29,878	(20,995)	8,883	-	8,883
<b>Total</b>	<b>410,167</b>	<b>(337,025)</b>	<b>73,142</b>	<b>16,904</b>	<b>90,046</b>
<b>Total - all funds</b>	<b>917,444</b>	<b>(967,164)</b>	<b>(49,720)</b>	<b>52,315</b>	<b>2,595</b>
<i>Year ended</i>					
<i>31st Dec 2023</i>	<i>904,524</i>	<i>(840,720)</i>	<i>63,804</i>	<i>71,990</i>	<i>135,794</i>

### Summary Balance Sheet

			Dec 2024	Dec 2023
Property, woodland and fixed assets			306,421	308,628
Investments			1,718,836	1,632,477
Stocks			4,261	4,261
Debtors			45,801	73,885
Cash, current and deposit accounts			252,696	291,032
Creditors			(28,349)	(22,641)
Subscriptions received in advance			(50,714)	(41,285)
			<b>2,248,952</b>	<b>2,246,357</b>
	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted</b>		
Funds brought forward	1,621,797	624,560	<b>2,246,357</b>	<b>2,110,563</b>
Result for the year	(87,451)	90,046	2,595	135,794
Funds carried forward	1,534,346	714,606	<b>2,248,952</b>	<b>2,246,357</b>

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](http://www.rfs.org.uk)

# Growing a Resilient Sector

2024 saw the RFS continue to expand its work in enabling new entrants, career changers and young professionals to all make the most out of the opportunities available to them and grow a lasting career in this sector.

It is well known that we have a skills shortage in the forestry sector. We need more skilled practitioners to create new woodlands, as well as to bring currently unmanaged woodlands into management. What is less well known is that there are hundreds of people wanting to join our sector, but we need to find more pathways in for them. We also need to support them in getting established once they are in the early stages of their career.

## Better visibility

In our busiest year yet on the RFS jobs board, we advertised 88 jobs from across the sector. This gave greater visibility to opportunities that might have otherwise gone unnoticed in other spaces.

## Better information

In early 2024 we launched the Forestry and Arboriculture Careers Advice Service and recruited a Forestry Careers Advisor. This has created a space for people new to the sector to reach out for advice on courses, training and funding. It has also created an opportunity for career coaching for those ready to take the next step.

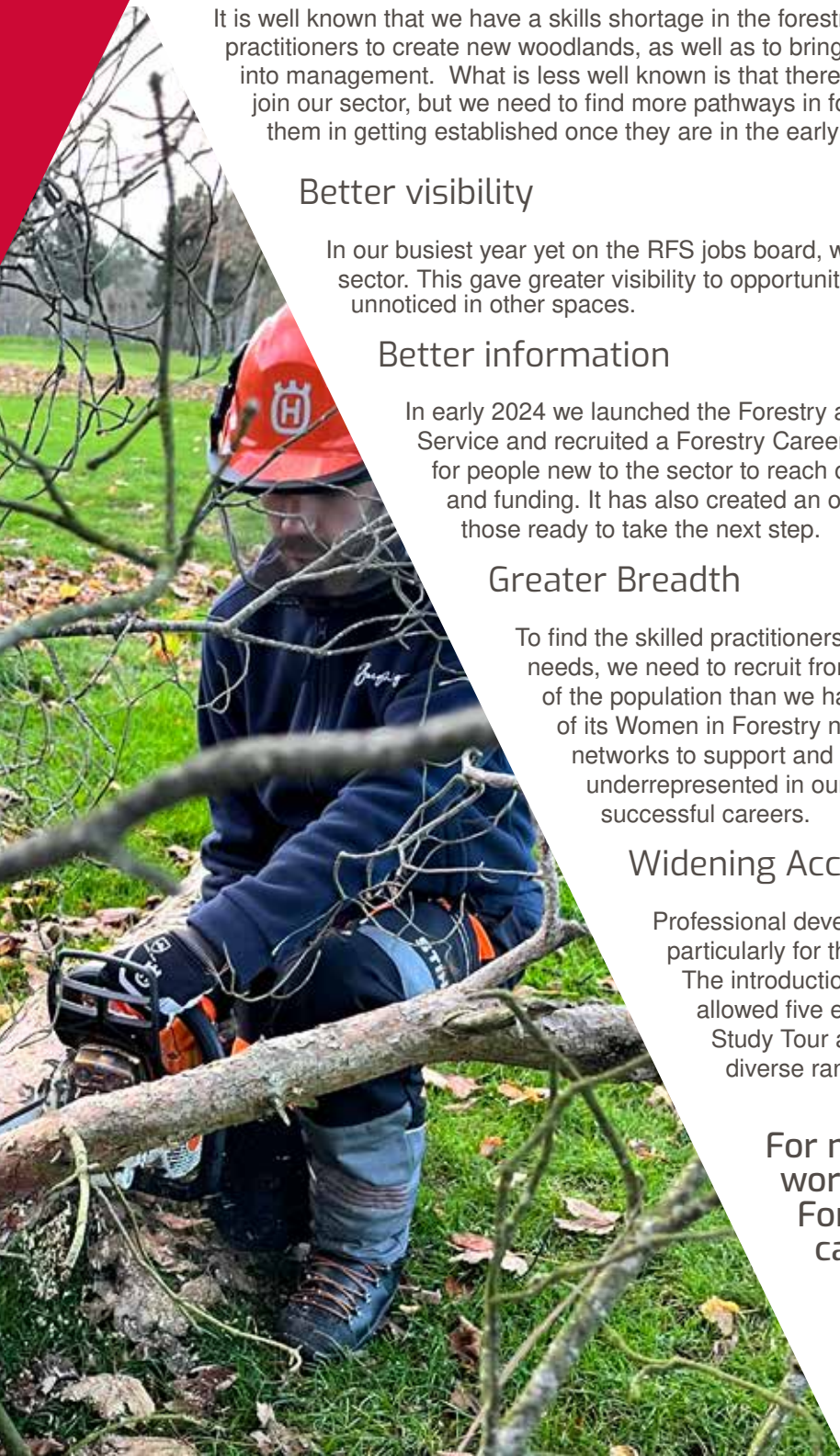
## Greater Breadth

To find the skilled practitioners and professionals that our sector needs, we need to recruit from a wider and more inclusive pool of the population than we have before. Through the launch of its Women in Forestry network, the RFS aims to create networks to support and encourage a group that are still underrepresented in our sector and enable them to grow successful careers.

## Widening Access

Professional development is crucial for all but particularly for those just starting out in the sector. The introduction of the Goodhart Bursary in 2024 allowed five early career foresters to attend our Study Tour and gain first hand experience at a diverse range of woodland sites.

For more information on our work to support Early Career Foresters, please email [careers@rfs.org.uk](mailto:careers@rfs.org.uk)





# Thank you

Our warmest thanks go to all our members, volunteers  
and the many donors and benefactors who have supported our work in 2024.

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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Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX15 6HU

Tel: 01295 678588

Email: [rfshq@rfs.org.uk](mailto:rfshq@rfs.org.uk)

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