

## MEET THE EMERGING LEADERS



### Jude Alexander

Scottish Woodlands

Jude Alexander studied BA(Hons) Business Management with Human Resource Management at Edinburgh Napier University, obtaining a 2.1 degree in 2012. Following this, and due to her interest in the environment and climate change, she continued studying at Heriot Watt University obtaining an MSc postgraduate degree in Climate Change: Managing the Marine Environment. Jude's HR career began in 2014 when she joined the Forestry Commission where she became passionate about Forestry and has since progressed her career within the industry further with Scottish Woodlands Ltd. While at Scottish Woodlands, Jude has become a Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD).



### Ben Anderson MICFor

Duchy of Cornwall

Ben is the Deputy Head Forester for The Duchy of Cornwall, based in Herefordshire. He has been in his current role for 18 months. After graduating from Harper Adams in 2001 he worked on mixed Estates for several years before joining the Forestry Commission in 2009 whilst studying Forestry through distance learning. He later joined Abbey Forestry and worked as a Forest Manager. Ben became a Chartered Forester in 2017, and subsequently completed an MSc in Rural Land Management in 2022.



### Kelvin Archer

Woodland Trust

After a number of years as a professional dancer in contemporary ballet, Kelvin returned to his rural roots, joining the Ranger Service in Scotland with a focus on woodland management. Whilst reading a masters in Engineering at the University of Edinburgh, Kelvin continued working as a ranger while also with planting squads and as a chainsaw operator, developing expertise in engineering and practical forestry management. After which Kelvin joined Scottish Woodlands as a Forestry Manager in Perth, before joining the Woodland Trust as Northern England Forestry Manager. In 2023, he was appointed as an associate director for forestry management with Savills covering Northern England.



### Tim Bennett

National Trust

Tim has been working as a woodsman for the National Trust in Mid and SE Wales for the last 15 years. Involved from seed to product on the ground and in improving the condition of the land we look after. Work in a variety of settings from ancient woodland to plantation forestry, from domestic to parkland trees and with new plantings to veterans.



### Clare Bowen

The Tree Council

Clare has been the Director of Programmes & Communications at The Tree Council for just over four years, leading their national volunteer, schools and hedges programmes. Although she studied ecology at university and has worked in nature related roles her whole career, she has loved discovering the complex and fascinating world of trees and hedges. She spent the previous 14 years growing the charity supporting London's beautiful Royal Parks and five years before that at the People's Trust for Endangered Species, helping to manage an ancient woodland teeming with wildlife. She enjoys building teams, delivering creative and impactful programmes and encouraging people to notice and connect with trees and nature.



### Lea Brandes

Forestry England

Lea Brandes is the container-grown Operations Manager at Forestry England's plant nursery in Delamere, managing the production of approximately 3.5 million seedlings per year. Having studied Marine Ecology and Coastal Management for several years, Lea decided to change careers in 2020 and joined as an agency worker in the open nursery and quickly moved into dispatch. After a season in dispatch, she joined the team at the glasshouse facility where key areas of her work include crop production management, resource allocation, and ensuring plant needs are met to produce the quality standards that customers expect from their plants.



### Sam Brown MICFor

Natural Resources Wales

Sam is a Senior Forest Operations Officer for NRW in Mid Wales. His main role is as a silvicultural expert concentrating on planning and delivering harvesting, thinning, restock and establishment across a range of forest blocks and types to NRW and Welsh Government objectives. He started his forestry career at Bangor University studying forestry with a years placement undertaking forest mensuration across the UK for state and private clients. He then honed my forestry skills whilst working for Tihill throughout Wales, working for a range of woodland owners and becoming Area Manager of the North Wales office before joining NRW in 2022.



### Jemima Cooper

Institute of Chartered Foresters

Jemima is Head of Policy & Partnerships at the Institute of Chartered Foresters. She looks after the Institute's central policy function, oversees their education and outreach work and manages their events and CPD programme. She started at the Institute in late 2019 with very little knowledge of forestry, and has thoroughly enjoyed learning from colleagues and partners throughout the sector in various policy and research roles. Previous roles includes policy and research at the Office for Students and the Institute of Psychiatry in London. She studied a BA in Classics, MA in Criminology, and courses in counselling and counselling skills.



### Patrick Cowdy

Welsh Government

Pat Cowdy is a senior policy adviser for forestry and farming working in the Welsh Government. Originally from the West Country, he has worked in Wales for more than 20 years on a wide range of projects including on-farm woodland creation, forestry research, and woodland management. Pat has an honours degree in Agriculture from Bangor University and an Open University MBA. He started his career working as an ADAS farm business consultant, and has also worked with agri-environmental schemes, climate change, and marine planning. In his spare time he is a keen Welsh learner and is passionate about music and sport.



### Mike Cresswell MICFor

Natural Resources Wales

Starting his journey in the sector, Michael studied Forestry at Bangor University, which culminated in a Master's degree. Following a year in the Highlands and Islands with Scottish Forestry, he returned to Wales and initially worked in land management for Natural Resources Wales and more recently in forest operations. This is where he leads a team undertaking planning, harvesting and establishment on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate in Mid Wales. Mike is an Institute Council member and has been a Professional member since 2017. He is also on the inaugural Executive Board for the Global Network for Forestry Young Professionals.



### Elaine Dick MICFor

Forest Research

Elaine is the Knowledge Transfer and Exchange Advisor for Forest Research, working within the Chief Scientist's Office at Northern Research Station. Prior to this new role she headed up the Forestry Commission's technical publishing programme, based at the then FC Cross-border services in Silvan House in Edinburgh. Elaine has gained a very broad knowledge of applied forest science and forestry practice through many years of work publishing commissioned research, coordinating and developing guidance on sustainable forest management, and co-writing the 3rd and 4th editions of the UK Forestry Standard, among other communication and engagement activities. Elaine has been a Professional Member of the ICF since 2015 and is one of three representatives of the Institute on the UKWAS Steering Group. She is also a Director of the UKWAS Board in her own right.



### Miles Drury MICFor

Forestry Commission

Since graduating in 2014 from the University of Cumbria (Newton Rigg), Miles spent two years in forestry consultancy for Lockhart Garratt. He then took the opportunity to study an Erasmus MSc organised by six universities across Europe, spending most time in Finland and the Netherlands, and undertaking research on the behavioural economics of woodland creation. He has worked for Forest Services since 2017, spending four years as a Woodland Officer in Yorkshire, and two years advising Defra on grant development. For the last year, he has also worked part-time for the National Trust, helping develop their ambitious woodland creation plans.



### Antonia Dunwoody

Forestry and Land Scotland

Antonia began her career in forestry more than 30 years ago, starting out as a forest worker. Now an operations manager for Forestry and Land Scotland, she has worked for more than 17 years in various forestry related roles for the public sector in Northern Ireland and Scotland, three years in the International NGO sector in Southern Africa, six years in the private and academic sectors in Austria. She attained a BSc (Hons) degree in Forest Management at the University of Aberdeen and a MSc in Mountain Forestry from the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, (BOKU), Vienna, Austria.



### Anthony Geddes MICFor

Confor

As a seed to sawmill organisation, Confor is very much involved in the present and future of the forestry sector. As the National Manager for Wales, Anthony represents the forestry sector to make sure it's engaged with its opportunities and threats, and to support it in looking forward and adapting to those situations. His aim is for forestry, timber and fibre to become a familiar part of our everyday lives, and for the value and importance of their role in society to be recognizable, taking responsibility to build links with farmers, school leavers, politicians, and encourage them to engage and understand how forestry can support them and their goals. He is looking to defuse the weaponisation of land use change and rebuild our cultural, societal and commercial links with the trees in our landscape.



### Elaine Harrison MICFor

Natural Resources Wales

Elaine started with a conservation placement in Australia planting trees, seed collection and scrub management, subsequently studying Countryside Management at Aberystwyth University, with an industrial year on Flat Holm Island Nature Reserve. After a stint in the commercial horticultural industry, she used her contract management and arboricultural knowledge to join Natural Resources Wales in 2018 as Harvesting Contracts Manager. She completed a part time MSc in Forestry with Bangor University whilst gaining further experience of managing complex contracts, programme planning, restocking and establishment. She is now a Team Leader in Forest Operations and manages a team of eight foresters.



### Kate Hawley MICFor

Forestry Commission

Kate was picked from a field of 1,500 candidates to be accepted onto the Forestry Commission's highly competitive graduate leadership programme, spending several years working in operational forestry across England, Scotland and Wales under the guidance and mentorship of Jean Lindsay FCIPD, then Head of Central Services for the Forestry Commission. Kate has now been with the FC for 12 years and has spent time in forestry research, forestry policy, partnerships working, project management and a challenging time as Head of Incentives for Forest Services, designing and implementing the woodland elements of Countryside Stewardship, and leading on the operational transition from the English Woodland Grant Scheme. She is currently the Operations Manager for Forest Services in Yorkshire and the North East, leading a team of foresters on the delivery of grants and regulations across the area.



### Miriam Jones-Walters MICFor

Natural Resources Wales

Miriam's forestry career began in 2015 when she was lucky enough to get a place on Forestry England's graduate programme. After a range of different roles, from forestry in the New Forest to policy advice, she joined NRW in 2020 to lead on Woodland Creation on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate. This is the programme through which NRW acquires land to create new public woodlands, to ensure that we maintain the woodland area and productive potential of the estate, and to tackle the nature and climate emergency. She also likes to run or cycle long distances, preferably in the mountains.



### Jemima Letts MICFor

Chatsworth Estate

Jemima is the Assistant Forester for the Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire responsible for the management and stewardship of around 4,000 acres of woodlands. She graduated from Bangor in 2019 with a forestry degree. During her studies, she founded Tree Sparks, a social enterprise which aimed to increase awareness of forestry careers to young people and school leavers. Jemima is now also a Trustee of Woodland Heritage and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts.



### Iwan Lloyd-Williams MICFor

DSHWood UK Ltd

Bred and trained in Wales, Iwan lives with his family in Llandrillo in North Wales. He has been involved in forestry for more than 20 years, having worked for Tihill for 15 years, followed by a short appointment as Head of Purchasing at Clifford Jones Timber. He is a well-known figure in the Welsh forestry sector and holds the role of Vice Chairman of Confor Wales. He is also the Assistant Honorary Director of the forestry section at the Royal Welsh Show.



### Kevin Martin

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Kevin is the Head of Tree Collections at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, having joined in 2012. He is charged with the curation and management of Kew's historic collection of trees from around the globe for the purpose of scientific research and conservation within a UNESCO World Heritage Site landscape. Kevin has a foundation degree in arboriculture and is a TRAQ certified tree inspector. He also sits on several boards including the Arboreta Advisory Committee for Westonbirt and Bedgebury. Kevin is also the vice chair of the arboriculture subgroup for the apprenticeship trailblazer. He is currently studying a MRes using climate models to assist with tree species selection.



### Iain Moss

Woodland Trust

Iain is a regional manager for Woodland Trust Scotland, covering South and East Scotland. His department is 3rd party landowner engagement, advising on woodland creation schemes of all sizes. He has been in the sector and the job now for more than 11 years and has significant experience of all types of tree planting schemes in all sorts of conditions with all sorts of landowners. He likes to think of himself as a balanced land management advisor, seeing all perspectives of the divide. His goal is to eventually inspire and lead others into achieving a better natural landscape.



### Catherine Nuttgens

Woodland Trust

Catherine Nuttgens is the Urban Programme Lead for the Woodland Trust. She worked as a tree officer for Sheffield City Council for a number of years, and also as Community Forestry Manager where she led the community tree planting team. She has a project management background connecting people to nature and landscape; as well as working in arboriculture in the urban environment. Her projects have included themes such as landscape heritage, ancient woodland, art and crafts, outdoor play and forest schools.



### Josh Roberts MICFor

Forestry and Land Scotland

Josh has been the Innovation Manager for FLS for the last three years. His job is to work with operational teams to identify requirements for change from the full range of FLS' core land management activity, then set up projects to test and develop solutions. Prior to that he was a policy advisor to the Scottish Government advising on the forest industry as a driver of inclusive economic growth. Prior to that he provided support to the Forestry Commission Director England, especially to parliament. He is a Chartered Forester and has an MSc in Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Management.



### Michelle Ryan MICFor

Arboricultural Association

Michelle Ryan is the Senior Engineering Leader for Arboriculture & Landscape at Arboricultural Association. Her professional career started 10 years ago following the completion of the BSc (Hons) in Arboriculture at Myerscough College. Since then, she has worked in private consultancy before moving into the public sector in 2019. She now leads the Green Infrastructure Team at Transport for London and is a professional member of both the Institute of Chartered Foresters and The Arboricultural Association. She is passionate about championing the profession of Arboriculture and promoting the industry as a fulfilling career for everyone.



### Ben Searle MICFor

DAERA

Ben has worked continuously in forestry since graduating from Bangor University with a BSc (Hons) Forestry & Forest Products in 2001. He worked in Scotland for a large national forest management company after qualification. In 2004 he moved to Northern Ireland where he has developed a career through a variety of roles within Forest Service. Ben is a Chartered Forester, ICF Northern Ireland regional secretary and has been a Professional Membership assessor since 2019. Ben's day job includes leading a team responsible for development and operation of forestry grant schemes, felling licences, environmental impact assessments and providing health and safety policy advice for Forest Service. Since 2020 Ben has been particularly active promoting afforestation with landowners and managers including the development of new grant schemes in support of Northern Ireland's Forests for Our Future Programme.



### Andy Sloss

Forestry and Land Scotland

Andy is a Health & Safety Advisor for Forestry and Land Scotland, covering East Region from Elgin to Kinross. He's worked in forestry for 13 years, starting as a Modern Apprentice in Aberfoyle in 2009, going on to become a Forest Craftsman, then a Technical Trainer/Assessor with Learning & Development. He became a Health & Safety Advisor in 2016 with a focus on human factors, ergonomics, and chainsaw operational safety. He also sits on IOSH's Rural Industries Group, co-ordinating H&S advice and guidance across industries.



### Shona Smyth MICFor

Institute of Chartered Foresters

Shona joined the ICF team in October 2022 as Senior Technical Officer, following nearly 10 years in the commercial forestry sector. She has a range of experience in harvesting and forest management and is responsible for providing technical support to the Institute and its members, through policy, partnerships and CPD events. Shona is a Chartered Forester and has an undergraduate degree in Countryside and Environmental Management and an MSc in Forestry Management from Harper Adams University.



### Keira Tedd

Pryor & Rickett Silviculture

Keira is a Forest Manager for Pryor and Rickett Silviculture in south-west Scotland. She has worked with the company since graduating from the National School of Forestry in 2015 with a BSc (Hons.) in Forest and Woodland Management. She currently manages a varied portfolio of woodlands, ranging from diverse mixed estates to larger scale commercial properties.



### Dr Eleanor Tew MICFor

Forestry England

Eleanor is the Natural Capital and Resilience Programme Manager for Forestry England. She has a research background, with a PhD from the University of Cambridge exploring natural capital optimisation in UK forestry. Upon moving to Forestry England, she initially developed and managed the Thetford Forest Resilience Programme, and now leads nationally on Forestry England's operational approaches to forest resilience and natural capital. This involves providing thought leadership and strategic direction, alongside practical support and advice to operational teams. She particularly enjoys working with colleagues to deliver ambitious change, helping our forests and woodlands to fully realise their potential.



### Mark Townsend MICFor

Savills

Mark has worked in the forestry and arboriculture industry for more than 20 years and heads up a team of 30, covering all areas of the sector from woodland management to planting and tree risk management plans to condition surveys. He is passionate about engaging those outside the industry as well as supporting junior colleagues to grow and develop their own interests. He feels lucky to have a job he really enjoys which allows him to work with brilliant people in amazing locations, all while looking after trees.



### Dr Luke Tyler

Llyn Parc Mawr

Luke has had a lifelong fascination with forests and the processes which shape them, with a particular interest in forest health. He is currently working at Natural Resources Wales as a Short Specialist Advisor, presently serving as Chairman of Llyn Parc Mawr, a non-profit community woodland organisation based on Anglesey. His past career involved working as project manager for an agri-tech portfolio at Menter Mon. His academic background includes a BSc in Forestry from Bangor University, followed by a PhD in Soil Science, also from Bangor University, where he explored the relationship between soil fungi and phosphorus cycling.



### Ros Wardman MICFor

Scottish Forestry

Ros started her working career as a freelance stage manager in theatre and opera. In 2005 she swapped the wooden boards of the stage for the real thing and studied forestry at Newton Rigg. Since then Ros has been working across south and central Scotland in a variety of roles with Forestry and Land Scotland and Scottish Forestry. Her current role is Forest Industries Advisor with Scottish Forestry focussing on the support and development of small businesses in any activity linked to forestry or the woodland setting, and on the promotion of forestry as a career.



### Ross Watson

Woodland Trust Scotland

Ross Watson is a Site Manager for Woodland Trust Scotland covering sites across the Highlands, Aberdeenshire, and North Argyll and has been in post since 2016. His broader remit within the organisation includes advising on deer and fire management using experience from previous roles. His background also includes voluntary roles around youth and community development and seeks to bring these into his professional role to increase public engagement with the woods he manages.



### Michelle Whalley-Palmer

The Mersey Forest

Michelle is an experienced project development professional with specialties in biodiversity, project management and marketing. Michelle has successfully developed, funded, managed and delivered projects in public and third sector roles under a range of funding streams, including H2020, NERC and ERASMUS. Many of these projects have involved the development and coordination of large multilateral partnerships. Having worked for Community Forest Trust since 2014, with a specific focus on the Mersey Forest, Michelle works in collaboration with a wide range of partners to deliver the 'More from Trees' strategic vision. This brings together environmental, health, education, economic development and many other sectors to ensure that Community Forestry in its broadest sense, is at the heart of all of the programmes developed and delivered by the Mersey Forest team.



### Claire Wightman MICFor

TreeStory

Claire is a project manager and resource manager for TreeStory, an independent forestry consultancy. She works in the north of Scotland, from Dunkeld to Sutherland and all points east and west, covering all aspects of forest management – continuous cover forestry is her passion. After a recent promotion, she is also responsible for mentoring all TreeStory's young foresters and building their suite of internal systems and guides. She also leads on research and development projects for the company and is currently looking at natural capital and remote sensing.



### Pherenice Worsley-Buck MICFor

Forestry Commission

Pherenice Worsley-Buck is a Chartered Forester, bringing as a Woodland Officer for the Forestry Commission. She is motivated by the principle of 'being the change you wish to see', which has driven a 20-year career in urban and community forestry to protect and expand woodlands, restore landscapes, plant trees, and to empower communities. Her London-based forestry work has won awards for engaging communities and schools in community woodland projects. In her free time she leads volunteer events at her local community woodland, is a Green Flag Park Judge, an ICF assessor and an enthusiastic parkrunner.