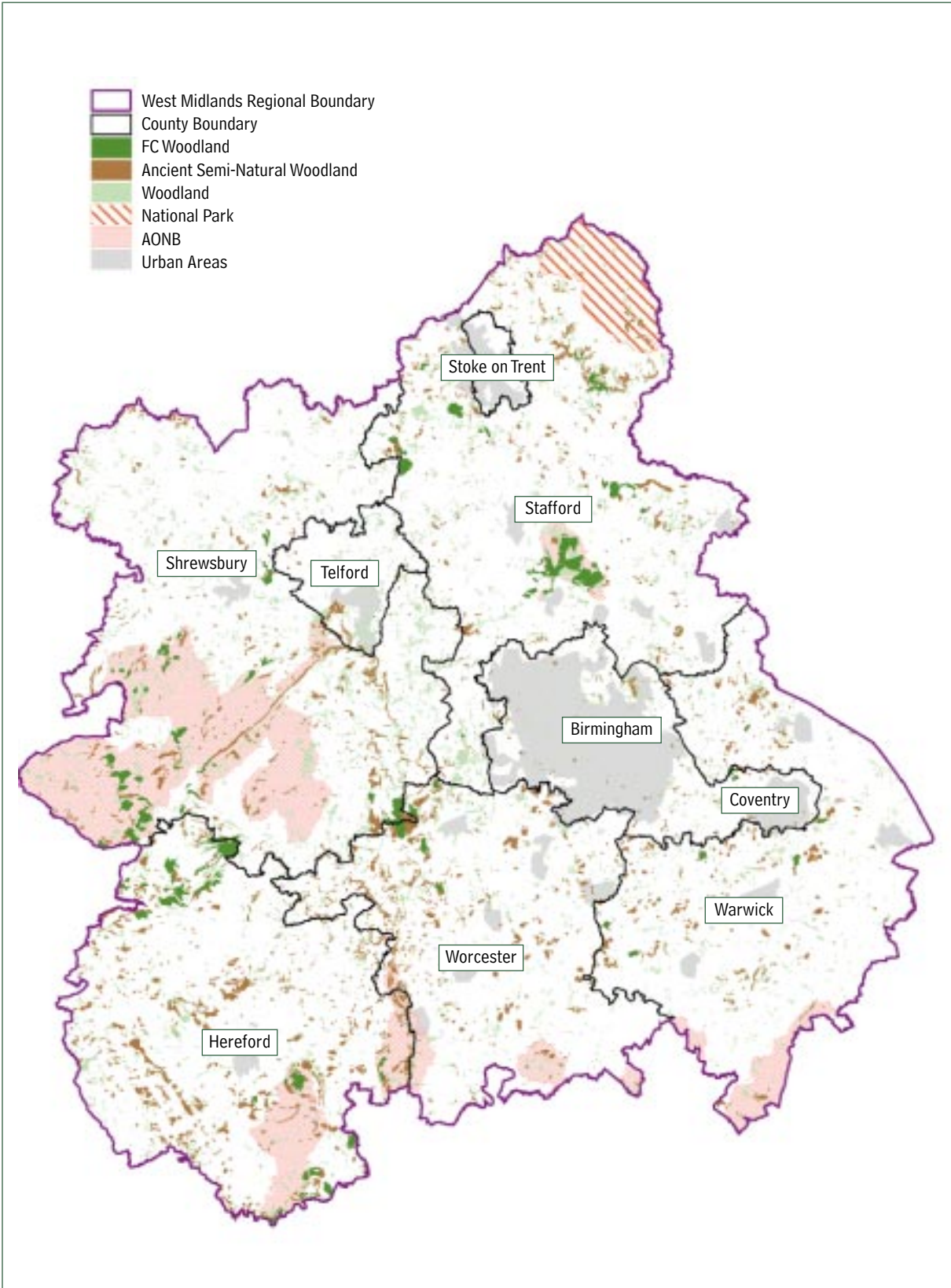


Regional woodland assets maps

Woodland Cover



Regional woodland and forestry baseline information

In 2003, regional partners commissioned the baseline study *A Growing Resource* into the benefits of woodland and forestry to the quality of life in the West Midlands. The region is known for various special features, including its timber-framed buildings, network of small woods, and apple and pear orchards. It also has an enviable record for urban woodland and forestry, protecting street trees, managing open spaces and creating new urban-fringe woodlands.

The region's total area of woodland and forestry (of 0.1 hectares or more) is 98,474 hectares. This represents 7.6% of the land area (compared with 8.4% for England as whole). There has been an increase of 1.5% in woodland and forestry cover in the region in the past 20 years, a result of significant new planting of broadleaves through various grant schemes. Though the majority of new planting has occurred in the more rural shire counties, more recently there has been shift to planting in the urban and urban fringe areas.

Regional woodland distribution by county

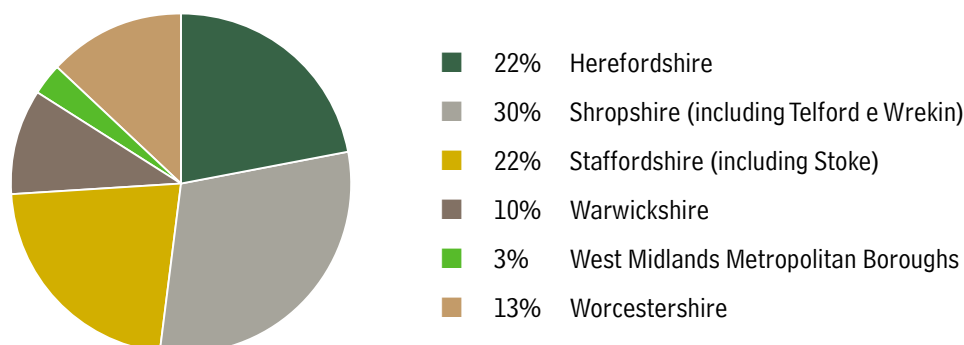


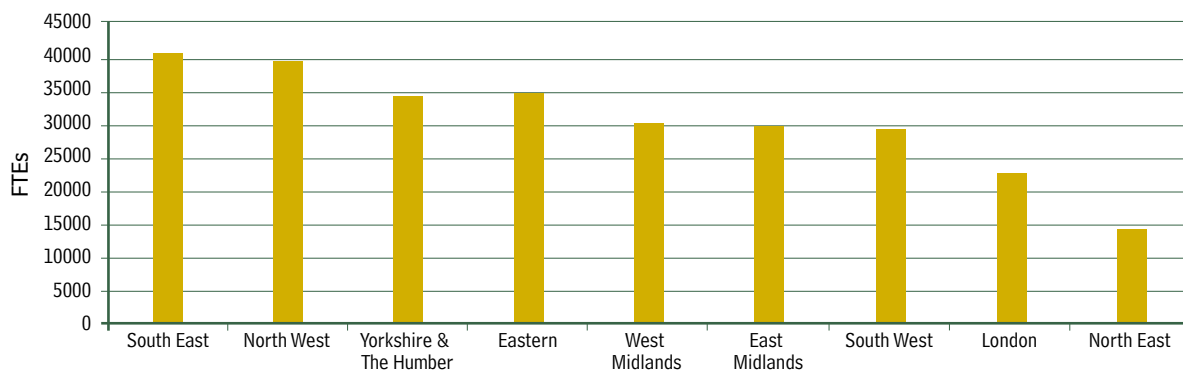
Table 3.1 Area (hectares) of new planting under the Woodland Grant Scheme planted/claimed 1994/5–2004/5 [July]

	Herefordshire	Worcestershire	Staffordshire incl. Stoke	Shropshire incl. Telford e Wrekin	Warwickshire	WM Met. Boros	Total
1994/5-7/8	519	384	309	564	463	133	2372
1998/9	48	102	63	134	78	49	474
1999/2000	103	71	63	101	80	46	464
2000/1	63	103	89	79	42	93	469
2001/2	28	79	61	30	37	16	251
2002/3	45	96	92	115	145	17	510
2003/4	52	126	113	53	125	11	480
2004/5	20	86	225	106	103	8	548
Total	878	1047	1015	1182	1073	373	5568

Woodland and forestry employment can be significant in rural areas, particularly as woodlands can create or help safeguard jobs in association with other land uses. Compared with the region as a whole, a relatively large number of people in the rural areas of the West Midlands are employed in the woodland and forestry industry, through planting and woodland management and related timber production and services.

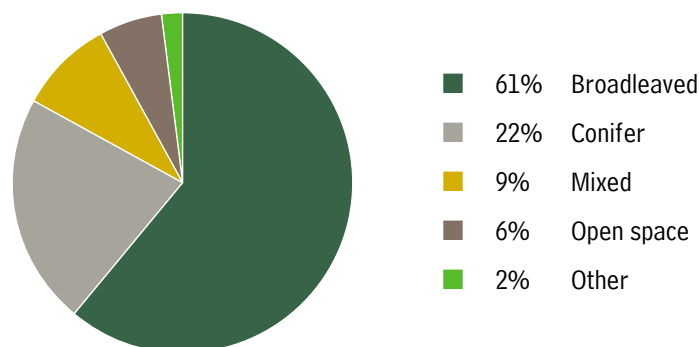
Woodlands and forests also provide tourism, recreational and educational opportunities and associated employment throughout the region, either as attractions or as part of the general landscape. In urban areas, woodlands play an important role in regeneration and landscape improvement, making these areas more attractive and helping to improve the image of the region. This induces inward investment at the same time as improving the quality of life for local people.

Figure 3.2 Total employment in woodland related industries, 2001



Note: Figures are based on the Standard Industrial Classification codes used in the Embedding Industries report plus employment relating to "manufacture of machinery for paper etc" (SIC 2955) and "agents: sale of timber/building material" (SIC 5113)

Woodland type



There is significant variation in the nature and extent of woodland-related activities across the region. In Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, for example, woodlands have traditionally formed part of the local economy (through the local timber industry and sporting use) and of lifestyles (for example, through wood-burning for heat). In urban areas, woodlands tend to be associated more with regeneration and initiatives to encourage community participation and social inclusion (for example the Forest of Mercia community forest). Woodland and forestry are estimated to contribute about £700 million per annum to the economy of the region.



Birmingham school children.

Image: The National Forest, Photographer – Martyn Pitt

Table 3.3 The value of woodland and forestry in the West Midlands

Nature of benefit	Estimated annual value (£ million)
Forestry gross output (including indirect and induced effects)	90.8
Timber processing gross output (including indirect and induced effects)	229.6
Total timber benefits	320.4
Landscape	41.8
Built development	20.7
Recreation and tourism related expenditure	144–195.4
Non-market benefits of recreation and tourism	57.0
Education	2.0
Biodiversity	65.7
Carbon sequestration	9.9
Flood control	0.5
Health	4.5
Total non-timber benefits	346.1–397.5
Total timber and non-timber benefits	666.5–717.9

Figures are sourced from the regional forestry baseline study *A Growing Resource 2003*