



Positive Impact Report

2021/2022

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Forest Holidays



Ardgärtan, Loch Long

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“We understand that delivery of our ambition represents a huge challenge. We are ready and determined to rise to that challenge and play our part in delivering a better future.”

Delamere Forest, Cheshire

A message from our CEO



The connection between our physical and mental wellbeing and that of the planet is I think, beyond any doubt. To build a profitable and yet sustainable future we need to build sustainability and biodiversity net gain into all aspects of business. With our long term commitment to the health of our nation's forests, we have always sought to balance profit with purpose. However, like most businesses we know we can and want to do better.

Earlier this year we submitted our application to become a B Corp certified business and I am delighted to be writing the introduction to our first Impact Report.

The connection between our physical and mental wellbeing and that of the planet is I think, beyond any doubt. To build a profitable and yet sustainable future we need to build sustainability and biodiversity net gain

Our purpose is to help people experience and reconnect with forests, each other and rural communities, because these connections are good for people and good for nature. In doing so, we try to balance health: individual health, the health of our local communities, the health of their economies and the health of one of our most important natural resources.

Despite the many challenges presented by the pandemic, we have continued to grow, producing further employment opportunities in rural communities, creating more locations for our customers to visit, and building on our long term commitments to sustainability. We owe this to all our stakeholders including our most important... the planet on which we *all* live.

Bruce McKendrick
CEO, Forest Holidays



Who we are

Domestic tourism is our thing. But it's about more than just holidays.

Our business model carefully balances purpose and profit. All Forest Holidays' locations are leased from the Forestry Commission for 125 years, there are no boundary fences around the locations, they remain in public ownership and entirely open for local people to enjoy. We invest millions into Britain's forests, increasing recreational use, improving facilities, and creating and maintaining trails, in addition to providing a sustainable income stream which ensures the country's woodlands remain open to the public.

Our unique public private partnership with the Forestry Commission is like no other. Our holidays create a brighter future for Britain's woodlands by supporting local rural communities, people and wildlife.

Our
holidays have
connected over
1 million
customers with
nature

Our business is a force for good.

In 2021/22 we've worked hard to redefine how we positively impact all stakeholders – our people, communities, customers, and our planet. We've submitted our application to become a B Corp certified business and by doing so we've introduced new ways of working and implemented new policies and practices to meet the highest standards of verified performance.

Over the past year, we're proud to have made a positive social and environmental impact and made long term commitments. We focus our efforts in four key areas:

- ◆ People
- ◆ Communities
- ◆ Environment
- ◆ Biodiversity

Welcome to our first impact report



Our 12 incredible forest locations

ENGLAND

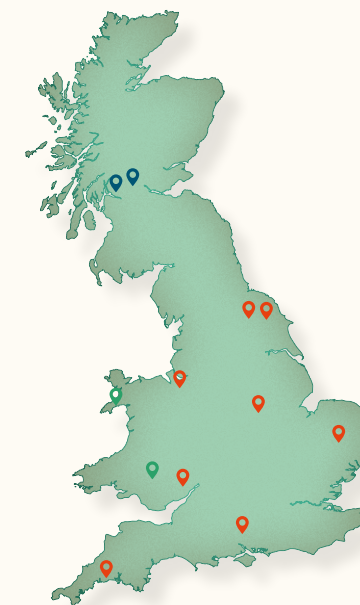
- 📍 Blackwood Forest, Hampshire
- 📍 Cropton, North York Moors
- 📍 Deerpark, Cornwall
- 📍 Delamere Forest, Cheshire
- 📍 Forest of Dean, Wye Valley
- 📍 Keldy, North York Moors
- 📍 Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire
- 📍 Thorpe Forest, Norfolk

SCOTLAND

- 📍 Ardgartan, Loch Long
- 📍 Strathyre, Ben Ledi

WALES

- 📍 Beddgelert, Snowdonia
- 📍 Garwnant, Brecon Beacons





People

OUR TEAM

We employ over 700 people across our locations and at our Support Centre. From Housekeeping teams to IT developers, we work as one team to give our customers that Forest Feeling.

We believe in making a real difference to our teams' lives. After all, it's our team that are part of every step we take towards sustainable tourism in the UK. Forest Holidays offers a genuine inclusive team culture, individual career paths, a focus on health and wellbeing in the workplace and financial security. It's all this, and much more, that ensures a real love for our company.

94%

of our team members are proud to work for us

89%

feel we're an inclusive place to work

"What I love about Forest Holidays is the people who make it."

Team member,
Support Centre, Moira

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED:

- ✓ We're committed to supporting the workforce of the future, offering apprenticeships across all of our locations to further develop skills within our teams.
- ✓ We've rolled out a bespoke ED&I policy and training programme for everyone including directors.
- ✓ We have trained mental health first aiders at all of our locations.
- ✓ 48% of our leadership team are women and we've made significant progress in reducing our mean gender pay gap from 36.9% in 2017 to 28.4% in 2021.
- ✓ We're committed to creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce and are proud to be part of WiHTL's growing community of businesses and their Global Female Leadership programme. This has led to one of our female leaders being selected for inclusion in the 2021 WiHTL Women to Watch Index.
- ✓ We've introduced a new policy to support women during menopause.

OUR COMMITMENTS:

- Become a Real Living Wage employer from April 2022.
- Record time spent on training and professional development, so we can better understand how we can support our teams career paths.
- Monitor our team policies and training in line with best-in-class standards through the B Corp framework.
- Provide free health checks and a wellbeing calendar of events for all team members.
- Work with our partners to provide teams with more volunteering opportunities.
- Reduce our gender pay gap and champion female leadership through our WiHTL partnership over the long term.

"I quickly fell in love with the unique working environment."

Team member, Forest of Dean



People

OUR CUSTOMERS

Forest Holidays offers a unique and special way to enjoy the forest and help people reconnect with nature. Because these connections are good for people and good for nature.

You don't just visit the forest, you really feel it, and the only place you can really find that Forest Feeling is on a Forest Holiday. We invite all our customers to feedback on their experience, and we continuously monitor and innovate, ensuring we are committed to our customers – and the forest.

“Sometimes you just need a week in the woods with family. Forest Holidays you are beautiful.”

Guest feedback

When people and nature connect, good things happen.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED:

- ✓ 89% of our customers feel a Forest Holidays break had a positive impact on their mental well-being and 89% felt better connected with nature.
- ✓ 85% of our customers tell us they'll stay with us again.
- ✓ We're a Feefo Gold Trusted Award winner with a 4.8 star rating.
- ✓ We're committed to marketing and selling our products responsibly and have introduced a responsible marketing policy.
- ✓ Our guest satisfaction scores are 91% (FY22).

“A beautiful, peaceful place to escape it all. The best part of our trip was spending time with Pauline, the Forest Ranger, and being able to learn from her wisdom and deep knowledge of the surrounding environment.”

Guest feedback

OUR COMMITMENTS:

- Continue our journey to use our business as a force for good and use our marketing channels to educate our audiences.
- Introduce a formal brand innovation programme to utilise guest data and feedback to drive product and service innovation.
- Increase our NPS year on year.





Community

Our customers spend an estimated £22.9 million per year in local rural communities and since 2006, we've invested over £100 million into rural areas across Great Britain.

We have lovingly created a small number of cabin locations in Great Britain. Whilst we occupy just 0.02% of the public forest estate, the benefits each location brings to its local community are considerable. With year-round occupancy, we support rural economies with employment. We like to celebrate all things local and encourage our customers to explore the local area, supporting tourist spend with our local suppliers.

We provide
all year round
trade for local
businesses

82%
of our supply
chain is within
a 50 mile radius
of our
locations

71%
of our spend
is with local
suppliers

Helping to create a sustainable future.

WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED:

- ✓ We support local businesses and tourism campaigns, helping to promote the surrounding area.
- ✓ We've worked collaboratively with our suppliers to introduce new ways of working:
 - ✦ *Supplier code of conduct setting out the social and environmental standards we'd like our suppliers to comply with.*
 - ✦ *A supplier questionnaire to understand the broader impact we have.*
 - ✦ *New supplier screening process to ensure new partners share our commitment to the environment, to local communities, to safe and fair working conditions and to equality, diversity and inclusion.*
- ✓ All full-time team members are encouraged to take one paid volunteering day every year.
- ✓ Our preloved sofas, mattresses and dining chairs have raised over £32,000 for the British Heart Foundation.
- ✓ We've introduced the role of Strategic Partnerships Manager to look after our partners and ensure we work closer with them to achieve our goals.
- ✓ We've recruited 135 people into local jobs in rural areas in the last year.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS:

- ✓ Forest Holidays and The Prince's Countryside Fund are proud to help new rural businesses through the Rural Start-Up Fund. In 2022, three rural start-ups have secured funding and mentoring support.
- ✓ We work closely with National Parks to encourage young people to connect with the outdoor world, improving their well-being through time spent in nature.
- ✓ In partnership with the Family Holiday Charity, we provide back-to-nature breaks each year for families coping with severe challenges such as bereavement, disability and domestic violence.
- ✓ We support a diverse range of local initiatives, including forest schools, town and village projects, wildlife trusts and other local charities.





Forest of Dean, Wye Valley

We commit
to connecting
20,000
young people with
nature over the
next five years

OUR COMMITMENTS:

- 100% of new suppliers to be accountable to our code of conduct.
- Maintain an 80%+ local supply chain.
- Support at least one rural business start-up every year.
- Empower our Forest Rangers to deliver local Forest School sessions.
- Support every local Wildlife Trust close to our locations.
- Give the equivalent of a break every month to a family in need.
- Work with our partners to create more volunteering opportunities for our teams.
- Monitor team volunteering hours to enable us to set future targets.
- Support a minimum of 12 local community projects.

National Parks Partnership



Heavenly Cakes and Desserts
at Delamere Forest





Environment

Thanks to our forest-centred approach to business, we commit to ecologically sensitive decisions that protect and enhance the forest for all. It’s not just a holiday in a forest, but a holiday that’s good for you and the planet too.

We believe it’s our responsibility to care for Britain’s forests, provide favourable conditions for wildlife to thrive and enhance the environment around us. This means designing our locations to be in harmony with the forest, managing them in an environmentally friendly way, taking active steps to protect and enhance the forest and our planet, and educating our teams, customers and visitors so that they can play their part too.

Our amazing experiences and connections are the starting point for inspiring and educating people about the importance of caring for our natural world.

OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT:

tCO2e	FY22
Scope 1	1,509
Scope 2	2,347
Limited scope 3	732
Total	4,588



OUR COMMITMENTS:

- Net Zero emissions across all our operations and locations by 2030 (Scope 1 & 2) against a FY22 baseline.
- In 2022 we will undertake detailed Scope 3 assessment to help us understand and set Net Zero targets for our value chain by 2023.
- Reduce our total water operational consumption by 5% based on a FY22 baseline.
- Become zero waste to landfill by 2028.
- All of our new locations will be built to BREEAM standards.
- Develop educational campaigns for our customers and teams.



Deerpark, Cornwall

Our cabins in the forest

Our cabins gently blend into the forest thanks to a forest-centred approach to development, design and integration which uses extremely low impact and ecologically sensitive methods and techniques. This helps to retain and enhance the woodland, its wildlife and their habitats.

We're committed to building sustainable locations that protect and promote the UK's forests and wildlife.

We believe in sustainability by design and follow guidance set out by BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method). We build in a unique way with a pioneering design which fits around the forest, using a technique which allows cabins to be carefully assembled between the trees and raised on steel piles. This process protects the forest floor, ensures that nearby trees are unaffected, soil movement is minimised, and rainwater drains into the forest floor naturally.

We've further revolutionised the way we create the foundations for our cabins by using new piling technology. A lightweight micro pile system, which mimics a tree root system, is installed with simple portable tools, making it extremely low impact and ecologically sensitive.





Forest of Dean, Wye Valley



Biodiversity

Over 80% of the land Forest Holidays occupies is managed for conservation.

Protecting the environment is about understanding how our actions today will impact on the future. That's why careful planning and a long-term biodiversity enhancement strategy are so important.

What would a Forest Holiday be without butterflies, bumblebees and birdsong? The work our teams, incredible Forest Rangers and partnerships do to protect wildlife is core to our holiday experience and fundamental to our long-term partnership with the Forestry Commission. We look after 179 hectares of land through our land management plans and record the wildlife at our locations – 280 species and counting!

We believe in the principle of 'biodiversity net gain' which means that our presence in the forest should go further than simply ensuring that biodiversity is unaffected. We're on a mission to not just talk about it but reduce our carbon footprint, and look at new ways to conserve and protect land and wildlife for future generations.

We embrace our responsibility for the environment.

OUR COMMITMENTS:

- 15% biodiversity net gain for all new locations.
- Delivery of land and woodland management plans.
- Programme of ecology monitoring and surveys.
- Engagement activities for our customers and teams.
- Dedicated Conservation Fund to support projects with Forestry England and other organisations.



“Working with Forest Holidays compliments what we are trying to achieve in our forests. We’re able to do so much more with both the additional revenue stream and shared vision of our partners. We’re able to do things in the forests that create interesting and more diverse habitats for some of our most sensitive and rare species, such as planting of new species of trees and opening up grass ride networks.

Our partnership with Forest Holidays benefits people who come to visit, the woodlands themselves and the wildlife that lives in the forests too.”

Forestry England





Delamere Forest, Cheshire

Supporting conservation projects

Our Conservation Fund was created to support nature conservation projects across the UK. We've supported 10 projects over the last five years, from a butterfly enhancement project to the reintroduction of beavers, surveying long-eared owls and protecting veteran oak trees.

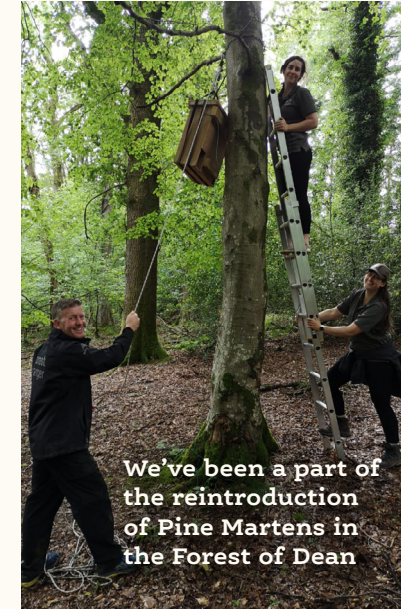
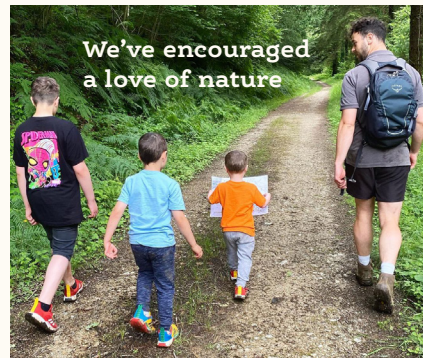
Most recently, we've partnered with Forestry England and Cheshire Wildlife Trust to support nationally important habitats within the Delamere Forest meres and mosses basin. Delamere's meres and mosses are nationally important for the species they support and the ecosystem services they provide and particularly, for the survival of the reintroduced population of white-faced darter dragonfly. The once extinct white-faced darter is rare in England and therefore work around this species is of national importance and interest. This project covers tree and scrub control; eradication and control of invasive species; heathland management to maintain open habitats and corridors; and maintenance of dams, bunds and pipes to ensure correct water levels within the mosses.

We're committed to improving the biodiversity of Britain's forests.



*We're more than
just a holiday*

Here are some of our
highlights this year...





Cropton, North York Moors

We're privileged to be able to look after our spots in the forest as special places for nature, for people to enjoy and communities to thrive.

Our plans for the future excite us. We're committed to making a positive impact on the environment and world around us, playing our part in a global movement of organisations who are using business as a force for good and doing what we can to tread lightly on our planet.

We know there's lots more to do but we're proud of the journey we've been on and the steps we've put in place to make our holidays even better.

Follow our progress

forestholidays.co.uk/about

**“Breathing in the fresh scent, experiencing the peace
and feeling the presence of the trees.**

**Knowing there is an underground network of life
sustaining everything we are privileged to see above
- it’s truly magical.”**

Forest Ranger, Strathyre