

## Forestry Commission News release

**Festive events for all the family in magical woodland surroundings****A round-up of Christmas events in forests across England**

Escape the shops, wrap up warm, enjoy the Christmassy scent of pine trees, and get into the festive spirit this year in the nation's forests.

With magical illuminated trails, stargazing opportunities and the chance to buy your Santa certified Christmas tree from the heart of the forest, Forestry Commission England sites offer the perfect location for a family Christmas day out.

Here is a range of events and activities running across the country for families to enjoy:

**South East England**

This year, for the very first time, families can experience Bedgebury National Pinetum in a whole new light. Wander beneath the unique canopies drenched in seasonal colour on a magical, after-dark illuminated trail. Inspired by the landscape itself it is a festive adventure in a world of trees.

**Central England**

Join experienced astronomer Richard Darn at either Cannock Chase Forest or Sherwood Pines and go in search of distant galaxies and sparkling star clusters with a winter star party that's perfect for novices. This is one of the best times of year to observe heavenly objects and a real favorite of stargazers.

If you're a dog lover, you can take your best friend on an after-dark walk at both Salcey Forest and Sherwood Forest to raise money to care for homeless pets. Setting off at sunset, you'll follow a 5km, glow in the dark trail. Light the way with a head torch, grab a night collar for your dog and see the forest like never before!

**South West England**

For a magical experience, visit the Enchanted Christmas event at Westonbirt, The National Arboretum in Gloucestershire. As night falls there will be a sprinkling of magic over the arboretum, transforming it into an enchanted Christmas wonderland! Take to the woodland trail and see stunning spectacles, fun interactive displays, and breath-taking illuminations.

**North and North East England**

For the adventurous, get active in the festive Petzl Night Runner at Grizedale Forest, Cumbria. A fun, 10km night trail run with fancy dress actively encouraged. There's a free 1km kids' race with medals for everyone, there'll be Christmas carols and Santa might even make an appearance!

Over in the North East, enjoy exploring the night sky at Dalby Forest in the immersive star dome. Journey to the planets of our Solar System and see them up close, visit our Moon and major satellites of the planets and see some of the spacecraft used to explore these

Across England, the Forestry Commission will also open Christmas tree sales centres offering a variety of trees that are grown in the UK in a sustainable way, with all trees being Grown in Britain-certified.

Every tree bought will come with a free baby sapling, allowing you to plant and grow your own real Christmas tree for the future.

It will also come with a certificate of authenticity to guarantee the trees quality, which will be signed by Santa himself.

To find a full list of sales centres in England and their opening times and check out top tree tips on keeping your tree fresh and healthy over the festive holidays visit [www.forestryengland.uk/christmas](http://www.forestryengland.uk/christmas) This page also has details of the many Christmas activities and events that are taking place in forests across England

## Ends

## Notes to Editor

1. The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible in England for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woods and forests and increasing their value to society and the environment. Further information can be found at [www.forestry.gov.uk/england](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/england)

England's Woods and Forests are cared for by Forest Enterprise England, an agency of the Forestry Commission [www.forestryengland.uk](http://www.forestryengland.uk)

2. Forestry Commission England sells around 35,000 Christmas trees each year from 19 Christmas tree sales centres:

### Christmas tree sale centres:

1. Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire
2. Rothbury Forest
3. Hamsterley Forest, Durham
4. Whinlatter Forest, Cumbria
5. Grizedale Forest, Cumbria
6. Delamere Forest, Cheshire
7. Guisborough Forest, North Yorkshire
8. Dalby Forest, North Yorkshire
9. Queen Elizabeth Country Park, Hampshire
10. Moors Valley Country Park, Dorset
11. New Park

12. Cannock Chase, Staffordshire
13. Bedgebury Pinetum, Kent
14. Wyre Forest, Shropshire
15. Westonbirt Arboretum, Gloucestershire
16. Haldon Forest, Devon
17. Cardinham Woods, Cornwall
18. Wendover Woods, Buckinghamshire
19. Alice Holt, Surrey

### **What are the advantages of real over fake Christmas trees?**

- Our real trees are a renewable resource – another tree is planted for every one harvested
- It has been estimated that real trees used 10-times less basic materials and 5-times less energy than artificial trees
- Real trees are totally biodegradable and can be recycled and made into compost
- Real trees are the traditional option and also provide a Christmassy scent
- Growing real Christmas trees helps sustain the UK rural economy and provides jobs

### **Why you should you buy a real Christmas tree from the Forestry Commission?**

Buy your real Christmas tree from the experts this year. We provide high quality, sustainably-grown British Christmas trees for the perfect Christmas.

- **Quality:** Our high-quality trees are Grown in Britain certified - be proud of your superior quality tree
- **Experience:** Choose your tree from a beautiful forest to kick off your Christmas celebrations - look out for special events
- **Expertise:** With 100 years of forestry experience, our experts can help you choose the right tree for your home
- **Altruism:** The money raised from your Christmas tree helps us maintain the forests for wildlife, for you, and for future generations

That's why Santa has given our trees his stamp of approval!

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