

Grow trees for timber as well as for the environment

The U.K. has a good climate and soils for growing timber. Despite this we end up importing many of our needs from northern softwood growing states where it takes longer for them to grow and adds cost and carbon generation to transport the wood to the U.K. We even import the wood to burn in the large Drax power station.

The state has made some attempts through the Forestry Commission to boost timber sales from domestic woods, but on a small scale. There have been some tax advantages given to woodland but not enough to generate large forestry businesses here.

Given government enthusiasm for more woods it would be a good idea to review the package of licences, tax breaks and help available. The U.K. needs more than lots of extra trees. It needs bigger scale forestry to back house building, furniture and other wood using industries and to power the Drax fires.