



## Sustainable forestry management

**New governmental regulations dictate that all central government departments and their contractors can only source timber and timber related products from the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). This new regulation forces many businesses into either paying a local premium or facing increased transport costs.**

By reviewing the potential of the woodlands on the land we manage, we were able to enact a plan for the sustainable production of FSC certified timber on the Otterburn Defence training estate. This new self-sufficient approach has created huge environmental and cost saving benefits, whilst simultaneously providing a new useable training space for the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

### The challenge

In order to make use of the timber on the Otterburn site we had to go through the process of gaining an FSC certification, which means following certain methods of foresting and processing the trees. Additionally, for this to become a worthwhile sustainable project, we would need to produce enough timber to furnish the training estate's 30,000 metres of fencing.

Any lumber that isn't turned into the necessary 10,000 stakes, 600 straining posts and 250 fencing rails is chipped and used to fill shell holes in the training areas.

### The solution

Our rural estate team in Otterburn developed a new woodland management scheme, which would enable them to produce the timber products in a highly sustainable manner.

### The benefits

In becoming self-sufficient in timber production we have experienced huge cost savings, reduced imports, improved forestry management and enhanced military training facilities. It has also helped us to combat the inadvertent procurement of illegally sourced or unsustainable timber thus providing us with a truly ethical of product.

The conservation and environmental impact of this project has exceeded even our expectations. The thinning of the trees has not only turned what was an impenetrable unusable space into a valuable training site, it has also created an ideal habitat for biodiversity.