

Our Timber; Our Roads; Our Communities

A Community Guide to Transporting Timber

Forestry and timber play an important role in our lives by providing many of the products we use every day. This summary gives an overview of how and why timber is moved on our roads, the effects it can have on local communities, and the steps the timber industry is taking to reduce disruption. Our goal is to keep you informed and build understanding about timber transport and its local impacts.

Timber on the move

Every year, the UK forestry and timber industry produces around 10 million tonnes¹ of timber, much of it from forests in rural areas.

This timber goes into things we use every day – like paper, pallets, buildings and energy.

Why we see timber lorries on rural roads

As many forests are only accessible via minor rural roads and mills are closer to urban centres, most timber has to be transported by lorry.

These roads weren't designed for the modern vehicles used today, and we understand this can cause concerns for people living in or visiting these areas.

What the industry is doing

The timber sector reduces its impact by:

- Using **modern vehicles** that are kinder to road surfaces and the environment;
- Limiting haulage to **specific times and routes**, where appropriate;
- **Managing** the number of trips where possible;
- Working with local authorities to develop and apply **good practice**.

Working with communities

Timber companies and local councils are members of **Regional Timber Transport Groups**², which support dialogue and practical problem-solving around timber transport.

Communities can play a part in sharing local knowledge. Information or observations that may be relevant to those planning haulage can be raised with the community/parish council and passed to the appropriate organisation. Community/parish councils can also circulate information provided by the industry about how timber haulage is being managed to local residents.

You can also find the contact details of forest managers on site signs if you need information about a specific operation or would like to get in touch.

Timber haulage is a routine part of managing forests, but local information can help flag specific issues and avoid misunderstandings.

This **short video**³ has been produced to show how the industry is working to protect roads and respect local communities.

We're all road users

Timber is essential to the UK economy and rural jobs.

When transporting it, the industry is committed to using roads responsibly and sharing them respectfully with everyone.

¹ 2024 – 2: UK-Grown Timber – Forest Research

² Regional Groups - The Timber Transport Forum

³ The Timber Transport Forum Homepage - The Timber Transport Forum