Press Release:
NCFed Appoints New Patron

National Coppice Federation
Supporting the Coppice Industry

The National Coppice Federation (NCFed) is delighted to announce that Professor Julian Evans OBE, DSc, FICFor will be its first patron.

Professor Evans is a longstanding advocate for the benefits of coppice management as well as a long-term supporter of NCFed's aims. He attended NCFed's inaugural meeting in London when it was formed in 2013, at which point he served as the President of the Institute of Chartered Foresters.

Professor Evans said: *"Coppicing is amongst the oldest of woodland management practices dating back millennia yet of much relevance today. It is what so many neglected woods need to bring back production, wildlife and work in our countryside. I am honoured to become Patron of the National Coppice Federation which brings together coppice workers and artisans across the nation. Few rural crafts can be as rewarding to practitioner and public alike."*



Professor Julian Evans OBE, DSc, FICFor

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Coppicing is the practice of repeatedly cutting trees back to ground level on a rotation to encourage straight shoots to grow up from the base. Depending on the species, the resulting materials can be used for a wide array of renewable materials used in fencing, thatching, hedgelaying, charcoal, horticulture, and in buildings. The varied age structure created by coppice management fosters vibrant woodland flower displays and provides vital habitat for iconic wildlife such as Nightingale, Turtle Dove and the Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterfly, each of which has declined more than 90% in recent decades. For centuries, coppicing was the most widespread form of woodland management in Britain but dramatically declined in the 20th due to a combination of converging factors.

Formed in 2013 to support the coppice industry, NCFed provides a voice for 21 regional coppice groups across England, Wales and Scotland, promoting coppicing as a form of woodland management that provides economic, ecological and culturally significant benefits. NCFed also convenes an annual weekend gathering in October and publishes a biannual online newsletter (the Cleft Stick) with all the latest news from the coppice sector. More information can be found at the NCFed website https://ncfed.org.uk.

Professor Evans, who is currently a non-executive director of Forest Research and formerly a Forestry Commissioner, joins NCFed at an exciting moment following the completion in 2025 of our three-year More Coppice Into Productive Management mapping project, which identified more than sixteen times the previously known area of coppice woodlands across just three regions of England covered, and more than twice that previously identified for the whole of Great Britain. 80% of recorded coppice was found to be unmanaged and at risk of further decline or disappearance, and most coppice seemed to occur within ancient woodlands.

Through the Project, NCFed helped introduce the coppice-specific FY6 Countryside Stewardship grant, produced support and information resources, and helped influence woodland policy. More information on the Project can be found here: https://ncfed.org.uk/mapping-project/.

Professor Evans joining NCFed at this time therefore represents a great opportunity to extend the support to the coppice industry, and in turn help restore Britain's remarkable coppice woodlands before it's too late.



Hazel coppice woodland under active management in Hampshire, UK

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