

SECURE FORESTS®

IMPACT



REPORT

FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Il never thought that I could have utilised the skills and knowledge that I had learned in my 30 years in the Royal Air Force Regiment . I am thankful that others have believed in me and have supported me in this journey, and my greatest pleasure is to support others in their journeys to finding their own passion and sense of purpose in nature!

My advice is to follow your heart and your passions, be kind and compassionate and be a good listener and learn from others. Be confident that you can make a difference. This is the essence of my life which is Secure Forests!

R. Pyshorn

Richard Pyshorn, FRGS
Founder & Director



Photo: Jarrad Hulm
Richard at Cornish Stone Hedging, Week 7 LMWCC

THE TEAM



RICHARD PYSHORN
DIRECTOR & FOUNDER



TONY MADDOX
VICE CHAIR OF BOARD



LIZ WAUGH
CHAIR OF BOARD



BEV ROBERTS
SECURE FORESTS INT.



JIM ROWE
BOARD MEMBER



JULES FOUTAINE
OPERATIONS
MANAGER



JIM SHATTOCK
VOLUNTEER TECHNOLOGY
ADVISER



IAN BERRY
LAND & WILDLIFE
MANAGER



KOMAL KUMARI
PHD STUDENT &
SCIENTIFIC ADVISER



JANINE WHITLEY
VOLUNTEER
GOVERNANCE ADVISER



DAVID MCLEAN
STRATEGY &
PLANNING

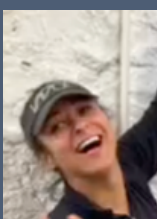
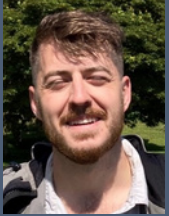
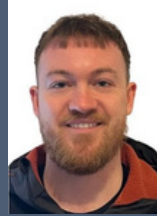
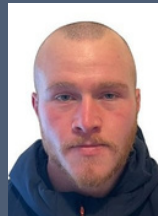
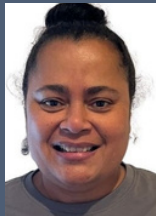
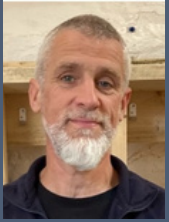
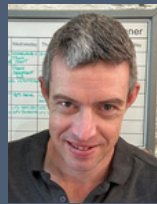
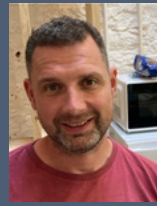


ANDREW
TRAINING &
OPERATIONS

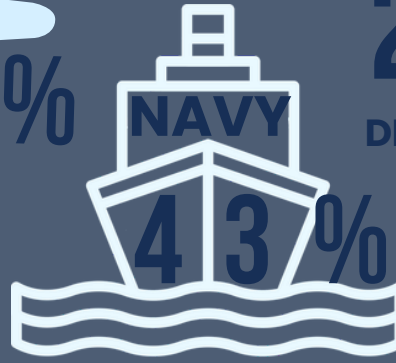
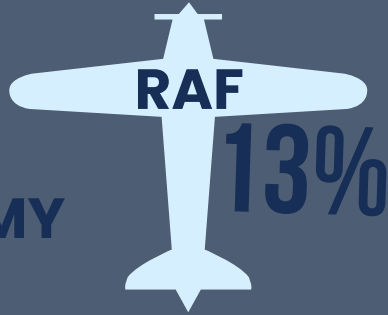
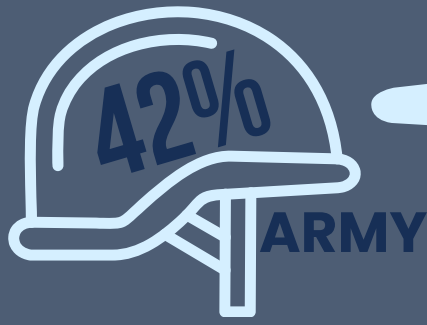


HOLLIE RICKARD
BUSINESS SUPPORT
& MARKETING

— LEARNERS —



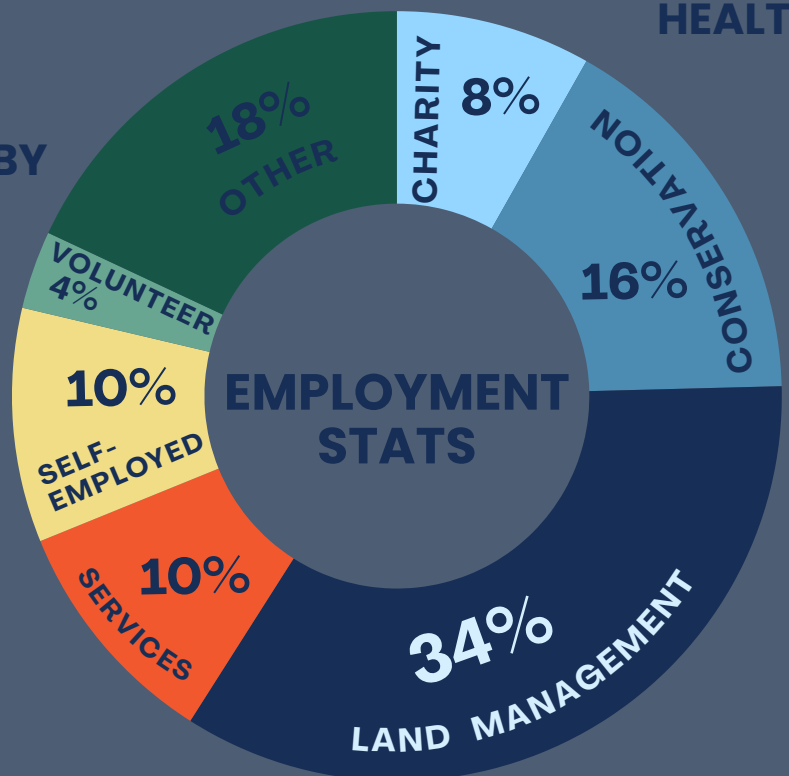
*PLUS SIX MORE! (THEY SEEM TO HAVE ESCAPED OUR CAMERA!)



TOTAL FIGURES



RECOMMENDED THE COURSE BY OTHER DELEGATES





2024.



2025.



2026.

MENTAL HEALTH

From 2024-25, 31% of the Secure Forests (SF) cohort acknowledged mental health issues, with 38% experiencing CPTSD, 39% depression, and 23% anxiety. While SF does not directly treat mental health, their programs have shown a 73% improvement in participants' mental well-being.

David McLean, a former Royal Marine and psychotherapist, evaluates the impact of their 7-week Land Management and Conservation course, which offers nature-based experiences and vocational training for military veterans and first responders. Participants reported increased confidence, motivation, and belonging, supporting research that outdoor conservation programs enhance mental health. Before the course, participants complete 70-90 hours of voluntary work, fostering social connections and a sense of purpose.

‘The program fosters purpose through structured activities and social connections, enhancing mental health. Over seven weeks, participants gain qualifications and new skills, with nature-based activities—known as ‘green exercise’—reducing stress and improving mood. Research shows even brief nature exposure enhances well-being.

Learning in challenging environments boosts confidence and resilience, with outdoor education positively affecting self-efficacy. Group belonging enhances resilience and mental health, while shared identity interventions improve well-being. Collaborative learning and conservation work build trust and support, stabilising confidence levels.

The course’s combination of nature exposure, physical activity, meaningful skill-building, volunteer-style engagement, and peer support aligns strongly with multiple evidence-based mechanisms for mental health improvement. The scale of improvement — a 73% increase in confidence, motivation, and overall mental health is well-supported by peer-reviewed evidence across multiple disciplines.’

D. McLean

David McLean
SF Delegate & Psychotherapist



David McLean (right) stone hedging
Photo: Jarrad Hulm

TESTIMONIALS

The Secure Forest journey is more than I ever expected. It's taught me so much about myself and what I'm capable of

I've made new friends, learnt a load of new skills and information, been introduced to future opportunities. Most of all had the chance to explore a part of the world I didn't particularly know. I'm sad to leave and very keen to work with Secure Forests again

Completely transformed my idea of the possibilities of work in the rural sector

I have loved every second of this course. The people, the place, everything! Couldn't recommend highly enough

It's refreshing to be around other like-minded people. It's reassured me that I really do want to work in this industry

Best thing I've done to re-engage with a community since the Army. Great mentality, there is an atmosphere of wanting to challenge yourself in a really positive and transformative way

Great to work with like-minded people, learnt a lot you don't know. Have found a thirst for new work

Open eyes to a new life...first time I've been excited about something new. I'm back to belonging to something great





Exeter INNOVATION

Throughout 2025, we have been working with University of Exeter's Business Accelerator programme. Key results of this:

- MBA study outlining business development
- PhD student working closely with scientific and data collection development



UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

We have also been working with Plymouth University to develop the hardware for Secure Forests projects. Through this we have been introduced to the impressive team at Robotriks. They work to make affordable and sustainable tech for farmers and landowners.

ROBOTRIKS

The Lest We Forget Association has enabled the expansion of the operational and admin team. Since 1937, volunteers have raised funds by selling snowdrops to provide lifelong care for soldiers from the world wars. Over 100 years later, the organisation continues its mission to support former and current service men and women.



SECURE FORESTS INTERNATIONAL



In December 2025, Secure Forests Int. was founded. A partner company to Secure Forests CIC- to help create a self-sustaining system where the non-profit is eventually funded by a profit-making carbon protection company.



Richard Pyshorn, director and founder of Secure Forests, was nominated for the annual English Veterans Awards, which celebrate the achievements of armed forces veterans, reservists, and their supporters in business, sport, and community service across England.



The Royal Marines Charity have entered into a partnership with Secure Forests to fund any former royal marine's PPE. This includes trousers, gloves, and boots for chainsaw and brush-cutter.



We became a City & Guilds approved centre, offering three qualifications:

- L2 CHAINSAW & CROSSCUTTING**
- L2 BRUSHCUTTER & TRIMMER**
- L2 SAFE USE OF ALL-TERRAINS VEHICLE**

Soon to be offered to wider community through commercial courses.



City & Guilds

APPROVED CENTRE

DEVELOPMENTS

WOMEN OF SECURE FORESTS

While women working in Agriculture, Forestry and Farming was in steady decline since 1997, recently there has been an rise.¹ For example, in recent years the Forestry Commission's female workforce has increased from 35% to 47%.²

We understand the vulnerability and difficulty some women may feel joining a sector which notoriously male-dominated. But we ensure that all our learners feel listened to, supported and comfortable.

“ I had a **serious attack of imposter syndrome** throughout this course and often felt like I was extremely lacking in knowledge and experience compared to the other members of the course. However, **I was never made to feel unwelcome or that I was in the wrong place.** I still don't know what I want to do but I now know what I can do and the possibilities that are out there...I will forever be grateful of my time with Secure Forests and look forward to any upcoming opportunities where I can come back again ”

We've had seven amazing women through our courses throughout our three years. Numerically not very many but their impact has been much bigger. Including Fi who has set up her own gardening business employing other veterans.



Fi during Cornish Hedging week. Photo: Richard Pyshorn

We had our first Women-Only Open Day in November of this year. This was very successful with 15 attendees and 12 signing up directly for courses in 2026! In fact, our eighth course in February 2026 has our first **50/50 split male to female**.



Female learner during gamekeeping week.
Photo: James Silson

Another inspiring woman of SF is Patricia, who came to our base at Mount Edgcumbe for the volunteering opportunity and to take some time away from her everyday. She wrote a beautiful piece named, 'Winter at Mount Edgcumbe: Notes from a Transitioning period'. Here is an excerpt:

“ Cremyll ferry. Tuning into internal pulsations – a God send of a practice. Ahoy, sea mist. Thoughts crossing the salt:
Healing will happen here
I am so grateful to be here today

It is clear to me now that I will never settle if I force a life not meant for me.

*Fine art, nature, botany, temperature
rainforest, survival skills, seaweed, sport, yoga,
vitality*

A commute worlds away, on the same water.

Never arrive without a packet of biscuits

Continuing my walk to the relic garden, I looked at roots caving their way into discarded stones and sturdy rubble heaps. These plants felt intuitive. Unique, raw, unprocessed. The gone danger of fallen rock.

There was a period where I struggled to string a sentence together.



SOCIAL VALUE

Since November 2021, 72 people have been trained and supported by Secure Forests CIC. With 62 veterans and ex-blue lights completing the seven week programme.

David McLean, a previous SF learner and who conducted the mental health study (see pages 11-12), has calculated the social value of Secure Forests. This was conducted through a TOM framework which produces a standardised monetary value to community impact (via local employment, community benefits, etc).

Using the National TOMs Framework (2024), Secure Forests CIC has generated approximately £673,600 of social value across 62 participants to date. This includes reduced benefit dependency, improved employability, NHS cost avoidance, and increased economic contribution at both local and national levels. Please see Figure 1 (local) and 2 (national) for total social value figures and in which area

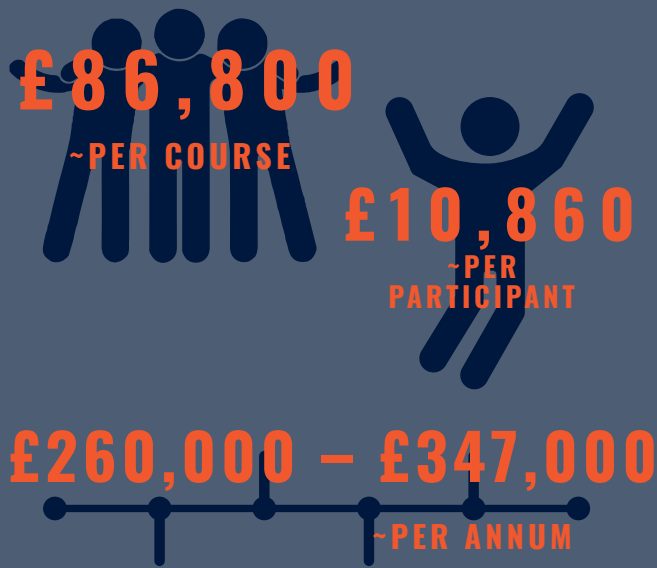
AREA	VALUE ESTIMATED	WHO BENEFITS
Improved employability & local jobs	£175,000	Local economy & employers
Reduced Jobcentre engagement	£35,000	Local authority/ DWP delivery
Reduced mental health referrals	£42,000	NHS ICB (local)
Community integration & resilience	£30,000	Local services & communities
Local Social Value	~£282,000	CORNWALL & PLYMOUTH COUNCILS

FIGURE 1: Secure Forests **Local** Social Impact figures (this includes both Plymouth & Cornwall councils)
Conducted by David McLean.

AREA	VALUE ESTIMATED	WHO BENEFITS
Reduced benefit payments	£57,600	DWP
Sustained employment (national proxy)	£264,000	UK economy
Long-term mental health savings	£42,000	NHS England
Skills pipeline (land management sector)	£28,000	UK workforce
National Social Value	~£391,600	UK GOVERNMENT & SOCIETY

FIGURE 2: Secure Forests National Social Impact figures (UK Government & Society)
Conducted by David McLean.

SIMPLY PUT...



... **SAVED** FROM
**NATIONAL AND
LOCAL
RESOURCES**

**While not all impact should be reduced to economic value it helps to visualise something so relative*



SECURE FORESTS®

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