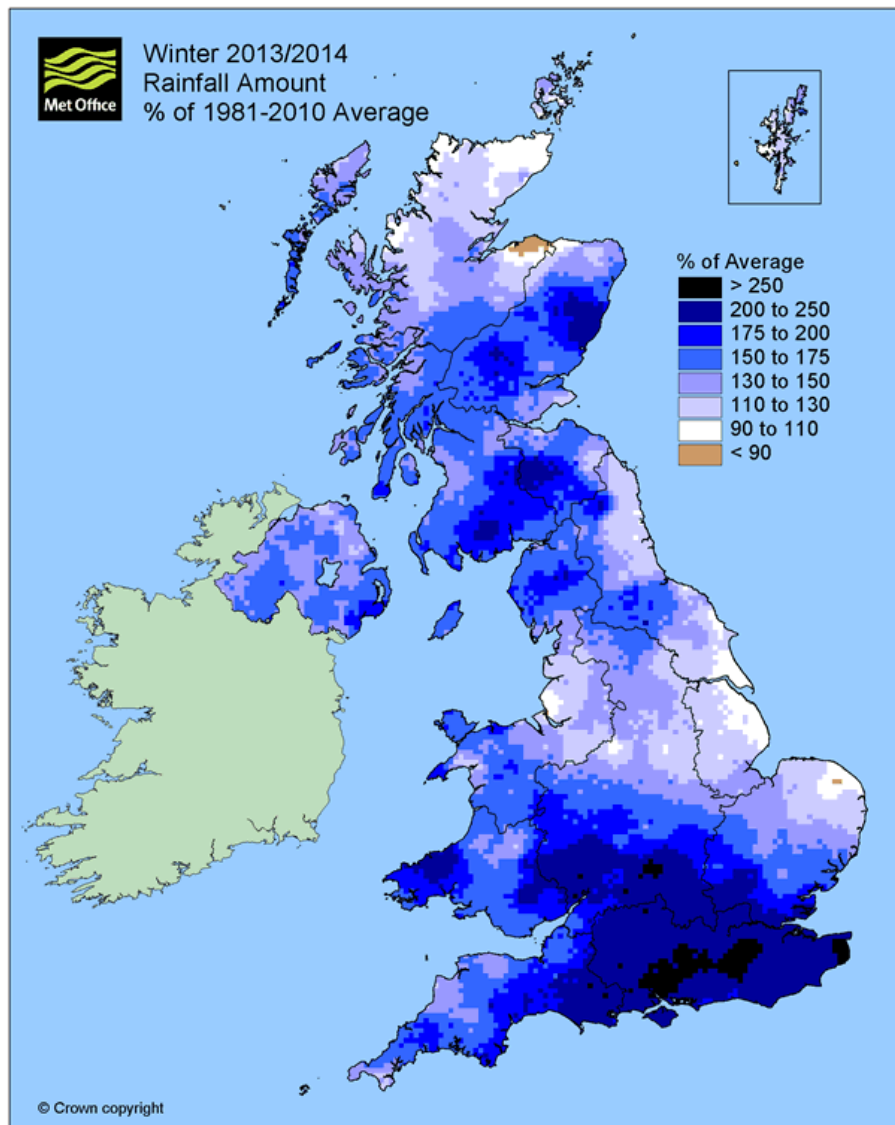


# **Windblow on the Public Forest Estate in South England following the 2013/2014 winter storms**





- Winter 2014 was an exceptionally stormy season
- At least 12 major winter storms affecting the UK in two spells from mid-December to early January, and again from late January to mid-February.
- When considered overall, this was the stormiest period of weather experienced by the UK for at least 20 years.
- Analysis by University of East Anglia suggests this winter has had more very severe gale days than any other winter season in a series from 1871.



- South England Forest District significantly affected by the winter storms
- Over 100 hectares of forest directly affected by windblow
- Over 20,000 cubic metres of timber windblown
- Current and future programmes of work significantly disrupted



- Over 2000 cubic metres of timber windblown in the New Forest Inclosures
- Numerous individual and groups of mature trees windblown across the A&O woodlands



1. Deal with blown, damaged or unstable trees that are an immediate danger to the public.
2. Deal with blown or damaged trees that are affecting ability to effectively access the forest
3. Deal with the remainder in accordance with existing plans and policies e.g. Forest Design Plans and Firewood Policy and adjust existing programmes accordingly.



- Clearance of windblow will be incorporated into existing programmes of work and is ongoing
- Planned programmes of work will be adjusted accordingly
- Forest Design Plans will be reviewed and revised where appropriate
- Replanting / regeneration of windblown sites will be carried out in accordance with the Forest Design Plan

- Clearance of windblow initially in accordance with immediate response principles
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC) policies presume retention of deadwood in most circumstances
- Operational guidelines agreed with Natural England guide any cutting up or removal of deadwood
- In general terms inaccessible windblow will be retained as deadwood resource; accessible windblow will be cleared and marketed
- In general terms – intervention is only for reasons of safety; reduced hazards to stock or drifting access





- Climate change predictions suggest that storm events are likely to be more frequent and severe in future
- Forest Plans to take this into account and plan for resilient wind firm forests
- Local guidance has been developed to coordinate response to storms from the point of a weather warning being issued
- Staff response during winter 13/14 has been exceptional and initial focus will continue to be on the safety of staff and the public

