

CLIMATE CRISIS

A NEW LEAF?

As a thirst for trees grips the nation, the Trust is galvanising councils and communities to act

ALMOST 130 COUNCILS across the UK have heeded a Woodland Trust call to put trees at the heart of their climate crisis response – and they're pledging to plant millions of saplings to combat carbon emissions.

"We're talking to over a third of all local authorities, and they are eager for our help," says the Trust's Oliver Newham, who wrote to 300 councils after the Government declared a climate emergency in June. "The UK's new 2050 carbon net-zero target means trees have rocketed up the agenda. Even the most cash-strapped councils are looking to set aside funds to tackle their green deficit."

The Trust is offering free trees, expert advice and access to grants – and councils are biting our hands off: "The Greater London Authority has pledged to plant a sapling for every person in the city, and councils like North Norfolk and Warwick are following suit. It's a goal that chimes perfectly with the Trust's own 10-year target to plant a tree for every UK citizen by 2025.

"Devon has promised three saplings to replace every large tree lost to ash dieback, while Cornwall plans to plant fully 2% of its land, creating a county-wide forest. Then there's Glasgow, which aims to reclaim failing golf courses to create wooded havens in the heart of the city. It's crunch time, and councils are getting creative."

Our map picks out some other eye-catching new pledges nationwide – and they come as the Trust prepares its first ever emergency tree plan, an ambitious blueprint for achieving 19% woodland cover across the UK by 2050. "The Government's own Committee on Climate Change calls for a minimum 17%," says Trust campaigns chief Adam Cormack. "But we're currently at a measly 13%, so there's a long way to go. Plus threats like HS2 and ash dieback mean we're constantly playing catch-up."

Our masterplan will demand new grant schemes for wide-scale woodland creation, boosting the annual total from 13,390 to 32,000 hectares and incentivising people to turn over land to 'natural regeneration', where trees take root under their own steam.

Meanwhile, the Trust is making strides. By the time you read this, the army of nature-lovers who promised to plant for our Big Climate Fightback on November 30 (far right) will be feeling justly chuffed with their efforts. Saplings are sprouting in gardens, in schoolyards and on farms – not to mention at the eight Trust woods that hosted planting events on the day.

Businesses and the media got on board too. A Channel 5 telethon invited viewers to fund 100,000 trees; furniture giant Sofology pledged a sapling for every order during its 'Green Friday' event; while Selfridges planted a miniature wood on the roof of its Oxford Street store.

➤➤ Lock up carbon by helping us protect our woods and trees: woodlandtrust.org.uk/mycarbon.

DEEP POCKETS

Your donations have flooded in to help us buy Ausewell Wood, a rugged wildlife refuge on Dartmoor. We're well on the way to the £1 million we need – restoring the wood could take £1.5m more.

WINGED WONDERS

One of our biggest moths is making a surprise comeback. The Clifden nonpareil boasts a 10cm wingspan, but hadn't bred in the UK for 50 years.

FRIENDS ELECTRIC

The Trust's new First World War Centenary Wood in Epsom will get 14 charging points, as a 70-space car park goes in. Plans for an eco-friendly visitor centre are still in the works.



SET FAIR

Barometer

UNDER PRESSURE



ROUTE MARCHERS

Protestors have set up camp in ancient South Cubbington Wood, near Leamington, as the stand-off with railway-builder HS2 escalates. Over 40,000 Trust supporters have backed our call for a halt to the works.

INVASION FORCE

Bugs and weeds are queuing up to invade the UK, according to MPs. An Environmental Audit Committee report calls for a dedicated border force to beef up biosecurity.

GAME OVER

The BBC sitcom *Still Game* ended this year, with beloved old codgers Jack and Victor leaping off Ben Lomond. Except eagle-eyed viewers might spot that the finale was really filmed at the Trust's Lang Craigs.

Belfast

The notion of 'a million trees for Belfast' was first dreamed up by a grassroots community group, but the plan has been adopted by the council, and the Trust is helping to make it happen. There is an added impetus: the city ranks high for mental health issues, and trees are known to boost well-being.



Carrmonee Hill

Cardiff

Cardiff is the UK's fastest-growing city, but its 360,000 people face a clean air emergency. The council intends to boost tree cover from 19% to 25% by 2030. The Trust will help it access funding for planting and offer advice on woodland conservation.



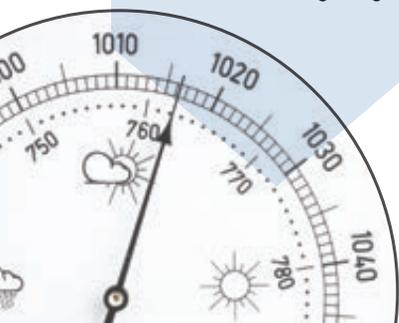
Hay Festival & National Trust



Brynau Farm

Bristol

The city's bold goal is to double canopy cover to 24% by 2046. It includes planting 250,000 trees under a scheme that encourages businesses to sponsor one for every employee. The Trust is helping to locate land, secure funds and drum up support.





Highland

The Scottish Government has trimmed five years off the national target, declaring the country will be net-zero by 2045, as it has more space for nature. The Trust is urging authorities across the Central Belt to map every inch of vacant and derelict land to winkle out where best to plant trees, while Highland Council has announced the most ambitious carbon neutral goal in the UK: 2025.



Newcastle

A city-wide tree survey, part-powered by Woodland Trust volunteers, has led Newcastle Council to pledge 20,000 new saplings over the next 30 years, increasing canopy cover from 18% to 20%. The findings showed less well-off parts of the city had fewer trees, so they're determined to right that imbalance.



North Lincs

North Lincolnshire has just 4% woodland cover, and is set to lose heaps more trees to ash dieback. Mindful too of the carbon impact of the region's steelworks, the council there is plotting a Herculean pushback – proposals include replacing every tree felled with 20 new ones.

Surrey

Surrey Council has pledged to plant a sapling for each of its residents by 2030 – that's a whopping 1.2 million trees. To assist, the Trust has sent advice on our free tree packs to schools across the county, and met with planners to talk up the huge value of trees in new developments.

Sandwell

New woods will take root in Tipton and Oldbury as Sandwell Council plants a tree for every four-year old who starts school this year. In all 15,000 saplings will be planted by 2021, part-funded by the Woodland Trust. It's hoped the scheme will roll on to 2030, too.

EVERY TREE COUNTED!

On November 30 the Trust rallied thousands of people to plant – at our own woods, at partner events and beyond. Here are three who got stuck in....

FELIX PEACOCK

Age 6, Nottingham

"Trees are important because birds nest in them and they give us oxygen. I planted a field maple in our garden with my daddy; I had a wild cherry sapling too, but I gave that to my school. When I was two we planted a pear tree in the park. I'll eat a pear from it one day."

NASEEM TALUKDAR

Eco-campaigner, Bristol

"Takeaway restaurants use mountains of plastic, most of it single-use, so I've a national campaign to help find alternatives. This was our first planting event, and we had 150 volunteers turn out, of all faiths and none. It's our duty to protect the plants and animals on our planet."

ANTHONY GOTHARD

Dairy farmer, Taunton

"My family has farmed here for five generations, so I'm just a custodian, passing through. Our 850-strong herd supplies milk to Sainsbury's, and our new wood is the 150th the company has funded this year through the Trust. Staff from local stores came to help, too."