Major expansion of woodlands for communities across England

Communities all across England will see millions more trees planted thanks to Government investment to expand woodlands.

The investment will create larger, well-designed and more diverse woodlands which will be more resilient to climate change, as well as natural hazards such as wildfires and storms — playing an important role in helping us adapt to a warmer world. They will help to reduce flood risk in vulnerable areas, provide sustainable UK grown timber and provide more places for nature and biodiversity to thrive.

England's 13 Community Forests, including the Humber and Mersey Forests as well as partners including the Northern Forest and Great Northumberland Forest, are all set to benefit from the funding. As part of the Government's £750 million Nature for Climate Fund, these projects will expand woodlands near our cities, towns, villages and rivers — giving more people greater access to nature and improving health and wellbeing.

Collectively around 2,300 hectares of trees — equivalent to around 3,220 football pitches — will be planted as part of this year's £44.2 million funding allocation, playing an important role in Government ambitions to treble tree planting rates by the end of this Parliament and reach net zero. It is estimated the planting announced today will see 600,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide absorbed by 2050, valued at nearly £100 million.

The funding will also create more green jobs within the forestry and environmental sectors, helping spread economic growth across the country.

Lord Zac Goldsmith, Forestry Minister, said:

> Our economies, livelihoods and wellbeing all rely on nature.
>
> As well as tackling the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, this significant funding will create diverse treescapes across the country and improve the health and wellbeing of local communities by giving them more opportunities to enjoy nature on their doorstep.

Sir William Worsley, Forestry Commission Chair, said:

> The social, environmental and economic benefits of being in woodlands are well-documented, helping local communities to be happier, healthier and more pleasant places to live.
>
> It is a personal mission of mine to make sure as many people as

possible get to experience these benefits. This funding will ensure
we plant trees in areas close to where people live, as well as
providing job opportunities in new woodland creation through
planting, establishing and managing trees.

Paul Nolan, Chair of England's Community Forests, said:

England's Community Forests welcome the opportunity to establish
even more new woodlands close to people to deliver all the benefits
that we know they provide.

Over the past two years, England's Community Forests have worked
closely with Defra, Forestry Commission, Natural England, over 70
local authorities and a huge range of landowners to establish more
than 1000 hectares of new woodland. We are looking forward to
continuing this joint endeavour and helping the country reach our
net zero goal.

Community Forest plans contribute to the planning and regeneration strategies
of the local authorities they work with, providing the green infrastructure
needed to support regional growth. These plans are targeted to areas where
woodland cover is lowest and focus tree planting towards more deprived
communities – helping to level-up environmental benefits across the whole of
England.

Local authorities will also benefit from further support announced today for
the development of the new LA Tree and Woodland Strategies toolkit, launching
in September in partnership with the Tree Council, Fera, Forestry Commission
and Forest Research. This will help to build local capacity to plan for new
trees and woodlands.

This announcement forms part of wider Government action to recover and
restore nature, as part of the 25 Year Environment Plan, and commitments to
reach net zero by 2050.

To see what grants are available from our partners, please visit [Regional
woodland grants and incentives.](#)