

# New tree fund for local communities announced

A brand-new funding initiative to increase tree planting and natural regeneration in local communities has been announced by the government today (Friday 12 March), with £2.7 million available this year, building the pipeline of projects for community planting in future years.

The [Local Authority Treescapes fund](#) is aimed at establishing more trees in riverbanks, hedgerows, parklands, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths, in copses and shelterbelts, including neglected, disused and vacant community spaces. Trees in these settings are particularly valuable as they can provide the greatest levels of benefit to ecosystems and society, such as carbon absorption, flood protection and support for biodiversity, as well as connecting fragmented habitats.

The fund will help the nation build back greener from the pandemic and will target landscapes that have been neglected in the past, ecologically damaged or affected by tree diseases like ash dieback – with ash being the most common species of tree found in non-woodland locations. Grants are available for local authorities, working together with community groups, volunteers, NGOs. Successful applicants will be informed by the end of July.

## **Forestry Minister Lord Goldsmith said:**

I am delighted to announce this new fund, which will get trees planted and land regenerated for the benefit of local communities and nature. This is an opportunity for communities to work with their local authorities to identify land, design projects and apply for funds. Trees and land restoration are central to our plans for nature recovery and to get to net zero emissions, and we know how much value people place on trees and green spaces in their local communities.

## **Forestry Commission Chair Sir William Worsley said:**

The Local Authority Treescapes Fund can play an important role in creating resilient new tree growth in our communities, particularly in areas which have lost trees to historical neglect and disease.

This year, £2.7 million will be available from the government's Nature For Climate Fund.

Applications will be open to all local authorities, via top tier authority applications. Local authorities are encouraged to work with other organisations, NGOs, community groups and private individuals to deliver the

most exciting projects. Bids will be accepted from early April 2021.

The Nature For Climate fund will help us deliver the English portion of the government's manifesto commitment to increase tree planting to 30,000 hectares per year across the UK by 2025, alongside peatland restoration and nature recovery.

Today's announcement will support the government's tree planting ambitions and support the goals set out in the [2018 Tree Health Resilience Strategy](#).

Trees are at the heart of our ambitious environmental programme. The Prime Minister reiterated our commitment to plant or naturally regenerate 30,000 hectares per year by 2025, as part of his [10 Point Plan](#), and we will be setting out how we achieve this in the coming months.