

[Detailed guide: Urban forestry](#)

Find out how to protect and manage trees and woodlands in urban areas from information provided by both Forestry Commission and urban forestry partners.

The Forestry Commission works in partnership with national and local urban forestry partners. Our partners lead the management of trees and woodlands within urban and peri-urban areas across England. The Forestry Commission's work demonstrates how protecting, expanding and improving woodland can help deliver the Government's priorities in urban areas.

Understand what the urban forest is

The urban forest is made up of all trees in towns and cities including:

- along linear transport routes and waterways – eg canals and rivers
- in amenity areas
- in urban woodlands
- in parks and informal open spaces
- along streets
- in domestic gardens
- on institutional land

[urban forest](#)

(PDF, 486KB, 2 pages)

is a big element of urban green infrastructure and contributes to all the wider benefits provided by these varied land use types.

Understand what benefits the urban forest brings to our towns and cities

The urban forest brings many benefits to our towns and cities. The Urban Forest and Woodland Advisory Committee Network (UFWACN) advises the Forestry Commission on urban forestry. Find out more about the work of the Urban FWAC Network. Their

[Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee \(FWAC\) vision for urban forestry](#)

(PDF, 2.9MB, 26 pages)

sets out how a resilient urban forest can deliver these benefits:

- strategic planning and infrastructure
- climate change
- natural environment
- human health and quality of life
- planning and development
- economy and growth

- value and resources
- risks and resilience

Look at

[The case for trees](#)

(PDF, 1.97MB, 28 pages)

to see great pictures of how trees improve our urban areas and to understand the benefits and evidence for the positive role that trees play as part of green infrastructure.

You can maximise the benefits of the urban forest by considering 3 principles set out in the Urban FWAC vision:

- do you know the scale and value of your urban forest?
- how well do you support the care of your existing urban forest?
- do you have a target to increase canopy cover in your town or city?

You also need to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place.

The Trees and Design Action Group have set out [12 principles](#) to help decision makers incorporate trees in the urban area.

Understand the scale and value of the urban forest

To understand how you can value the urban forest, read

[Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee \(FWAC\) – introduction to England’s urban forests](#)

(PDF, 5.76MB, 15 pages)

. The Urban FWAC Network has also published a

[guide to using tree canopy cover data](#)

(PDF, 922KB, 6 pages)

as an indicator of the extent, and to secure the benefits of the urban forest, using [i-Tree Canopy](#). It demonstrates [the variability in tree canopy cover across England’s towns and cities](#).

To more fully assess the value of the urban forest in your area, you can support or participate with i-Tree Eco surveys. In the UK this started with [Torbay](#) in 2011 and is still happening, the most current survey being in [Bristol](#). Forestry Commission led the development of iTree London, which estimated that the city’s 8.4 million trees provide more than £133 million worth of benefits annually. i-Tree Eco assesses the value of certain ecosystem services delivered by trees. Read their final report,

[Valuing London’s urban forest](#)

(PDF, 5.59MB, 84 pages)

[Find out where iTree Eco surveys have happened.](#)

Find out more on iTree Eco direct from [i-Tree](#), from [Forest Research](#), or the social enterprise [Treeconomics](#).

You can use [Treezilla](#) to help generate a 'monster map' of urban trees.

For London, you can access data on the status of woodland management with [Making London's woodlands work: summary](#).

(PDF, 3.59MB, 4 pages)

It outlines the proportion of London's woodlands in sustainable management and opportunities / barriers to management. Read the [full report](#).

(PDF, 5.94MB, 56 pages)

Ensure resilience of the urban forest

Data on the urban forest individual towns and cities enables effective management of the urban forest in those locations. This data can be the basis of a Tree and Woodland Strategy, which can outline objectives, management and monitoring approaches for a local authority area. Find out [how to develop a Tree and Woodland Strategy](#) (based on work in London).

The [Right Trees for a Changing Climate](#) database helps you decide what trees are suitable to plant in urban areas in face of a changing climate. TDAG have set out [species selection for green infrastructure](#).

Large trees bring particular value to the urban environment. The Forestry Commission assisted [the Construction Industry Research and Information Association](#) (CIRIA) and partners to produce [The benefits of large species trees in urban landscapes: a costing, design and management guide](#), which you can buy. It highlights how to integrate large species trees into new and existing developments.

[Tree Preservation Orders](#) help to protect the urban forest, as a key part of green infrastructure. They are issued by local authorities.

Further guidelines, produced in London, can help in managing the urban forest:

- [woodland management](#)
(PDF, 2.41MB, 12 pages)
- [woodland management for bats](#)
(PDF, 2.67MB, 24 pages)
- [woodfuel](#)
(PDF, 2.63MB, 28 pages)

- [social dynamics of trees](#)
(PDF, 3.26MB, 24 pages)

Manage the risks, including tree health, in the urban forest

Find out about [tree pests and diseases](#) and make sure your [biosecurity measures](#) are appropriate.

The [National Tree Safety Group \(NTSG\)](#) brings together organisations with expertise in tree risk management who offer [free guidance for you to download](#).

The [Joint Mitigation Protocol](#) (JMP) sets out best practice in investigating building damage where trees are implicated as being the cause of building movement. Find out more from the [London Tree Officers Association](#).

Support people to enjoy and care for their local urban forest

These partners work in different locations across England to engage local communities with their urban trees and woodlands:

- [England's Community Forests](#) – the economic impact of community forests has been measured in a number of localities, including for the [Mersey Forest](#) and the [Forest of Marston Vale](#).
- [The Woodland Trust](#)
- [Tree Council](#)
- [Trees for Cities](#)

The [Northern Forest](#) will include tree planting in urban areas.

Evidence to help you manage the urban forest

Forest Research is the research agency of the Forestry Commission. They develop evidence on the benefits and value of [urban forestry](#), eg:

- planning green networks for urban communities
 - exploring urban health inequalities
 - identifying the social and economic value of street trees
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Detailed guide: Create a woodland management plan

A woodland management plan gives land managers a structured way to plan and organise the sustainable management of woodland to a common industry standard.

The [UK Forestry Standard](#) sets out the UK governments' approach to sustainable forestry and woodland management, including standards and requirements, regulations and monitoring, and reporting. It applies to all woodland and woodland operations, regardless of who owns or manages it.

Why create a management plan?

1. Creating a woodland management plan can demonstrate sustainable forest management and it supports the planning and implementation of work proposals and their long term monitoring.
2. Some grant schemes ask land managers to have an approved management plan in place prior to making an application.
3. The plan of operations which makes up part of the management plan means it is possible for land managers to plan for and be issued with a felling licence for up to 10 years of felling.

If you want to create a woodland plan, you should include all woodland on your property.

How to produce your plan

For woodland holdings over 3ha, you can develop a plan using the Forestry Commission's full Woodland Plan template, the Plan of Operations template, and your own maps. A grant is available to help fund the production of a woodland plan (Countryside Stewardship option PA3), where the full Forestry Commission template is used.

Use the [small woodland plan template \(macro enabled\)](#)
(MS Word Document, 560KB)

template for woodland of an area less than 10 hectares – this is to apply for a felling licence, but is not eligible for funding to prepare a woodland management plan through Countryside Stewardship.

For non-FC woodland plan templates that don't match the Forestry Commission's woodland plan template in structure or composition, use this [cover sheet](#)
(MS Word Document, 36.5KB)

that states the UKFS criteria being assessed and provides a consistent

framework for the Forestry Commission to review the plan. Non-FC woodland plan templates are not eligible for funding to prepare a woodland management plan through Countryside Stewardship.

Download and complete the [full woodland management plan template \(macro disabled file\)](#)
(MS Word Document, 1MB)

(for any size of woodland) using information about the woodland, its history, its previous management, structure and composition, risks and issues and how they will be addressed, and the proposed work you intend to undertake.

Download and complete the inventory and plan of operations. It sets out your woodland inventory and must relate directly to compartments and sub compartments shown on your map(s). The Plan of Operations also gathers information relating to felling and restocking and is necessary for issuing a felling licence. Use this [version with various formulas](#)
(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 1.19MB)

, which highlights where data entry errors exist on the worksheets so you can make corrections. Alternatively, you can use the [version with no formulas](#)
(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 341KB)

– it enables you to enter data more freely, but it has no error checking and we may have to return it to you for corrections.

Produce a map – they're an excellent way to communicate information to support your management plan. Use several maps to show a variety of topics or themes affecting your woodland. You must ensure that each compartment you show on the map is reflected in the Inventory of the Plan of Operations. You can create a map using the [myForest service](#) or your own Geographic Information Systems.

You can use our guidance on [how to create a plan using the FC plan template](#)
(PDF, 386KB, 27 pages)

. This guidance will help you complete a woodland management plan successfully, using the FC plan template, the Inventory and Plan of Operations worksheet and your associated maps. Read this guidance thoroughly and refer to it regularly.

Submit your draft woodland management plan to the administrative hub covering your area. Make sure you include:

- a completed woodland management plan template
- an inventory and plan of operations
- a map
- a [plan submission proforma](#)

(MS Word Document, 16.3KB)

if you're receiving funding from the Countryside Stewardship scheme

Administrative hub contact details

Contact the [administrative hub](#), which covers your area, for more information.

Map request service

To create an appropriate map to support your woodland plan or a grant application you can [submit a map request](#) to the Forestry Commission.

Check if your woodland is designated or has special features

Designated areas or features should be indicated on one of the annotated maps within your plan. If a designation applies, please provide details.

Magic Map

[Use Natural England's 'MAGIC' map](#) to check if your woodland is designated, for example, as an SSSI. You can also search for other features – such as scheduled monuments, priority habitats and species – and information such as Countryside Stewardship scheme details in your area.

The Land Information Service

The Forestry Commission's [Land Information Search \(LIS\)](#) is another map-based tool that allows you to search for information about land designations or features that might already apply to your woodland. Examples of these features include:

- previous felling schemes
- grant schemes

Find out [how the Forestry Commission then supports you if you do own woodland on an SSSI](#).

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) are protected by law to conserve their wildlife or geology so you must declare designations, as some require consent before you begin work on your proposed plans. If you fail to disclose any designations or features you may be acting illegally.

Authorise an agent to act on your behalf

If you choose to appoint an agent to develop your woodland management plan you must sign a form to give an agent authority to act for you when dealing with the Forestry Commission. You can [submit this Forestry Commission agent authority form](#) as part of your application for funding.

You'll also need to set agent permission levels using the [Rural Payments service](#) to appoint an agent to act on your behalf if you're applying for Countryside Stewardship funding.

Contact the Forestry Commission

[Contact your local Woodland Officer](#) for advice and guidance on completing a woodland plan, and potentially having a pre-draft site visit.

[Collection: Email alerts \(eAlerts\) for Grants and Regulations customers](#)

Updated: The following eAlert has been added to this page:

– eAlert: 9 October 2018 – Drought, Woodland Creation and Felling Licence Online

Subscribe

[Subscribe to email alerts](#) to receive information on grants and regulations, and get the latest news from the Forestry Commission.

Unsubscribe

[Unsubscribe from email alerts](#)

[For eAlerts prior to January 2018, visit the National Archives website](#)

[Detailed guide: Create woodland: overview](#)

If you plan to create woodland in England you can get advice and grant aid from the Forestry Commission. You'll need to know how your woodland will be regulated and monitored. You may be eligible for a grant to create woodland.

Woodland creation funding and grants

You may be eligible for funding and grants to create woodland.

There are 3 major funding schemes available for woodland creation in England (plus funding for carbon sequestration):

Woodland creation funding to improve biodiversity and water quality

Countryside Stewardship scheme funding is available from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) under the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE). The Woodland Creation Grant (WCG) element of Countryside Stewardship supports you where your woodland will help one or more of the following:

- local biodiversity (priority habitats and priority species)
- water objectives (to improve water quality or help reduce flood risk)
- climate change mitigation or adaptation

You can apply for capital funding to establish new woodland, including planting trees and installing tree guards, fencing and gates. You could receive up to 80% of the standard costs for these items and a contribution of 40% of the cost of roads and tracks needed to support the woodland's establishment (including agent fees and VAT, where applicable). Payments are capped at an average £6,800 per hectare across the area for planting and protection (not including forest roads and tracks).

[Find out if you're eligible and how to apply.](#)

Funding to plan and design a new woodland

The Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) provides funding to help cover the costs of producing a UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant woodland creation design plan, which can support applications to other funding sources for woodland creation, such as the Woodland Carbon Fund.

This grant contributes to the costs of gathering and analysing information needed to make sure that your proposal for productive multi-purpose woodland (over 10 hectares) considers impacts on:

- biodiversity
- landscape
- water
- the historic environment
- local stakeholders

The grant also:

- ensures the tree species you want to plant are productive today and in the future to mitigate climate change
- helps to meet timber productivity thresholds in England

You can apply for up to £150 per hectare, capped at £30,000 per project.

[Find out if you're eligible for the Woodland Creation Planning Grant and how to apply.](#)

Funding for woodland creation to support carbon storage

The Woodland Carbon Fund supports the planting of productive, multi-purpose woodlands to store carbon. It also provides opportunities to work in partnership on landscape scale projects and open up public access to woodland and increase environmental benefits.

The scheme offers capital funding for the creation of new woodland. This includes the planting of trees and costs of protection items including tree guards, fencing and gates. You can also get funding for the installation of forest roads and recreational infrastructure.

A one-off capital payment of £1,000 per hectare is available in year 5 following successful establishment of the trees.

[Find out if you're eligible for the Woodland Carbon Fund and how to apply.](#)

Earn extra income from selling carbon

If your project is not cost-effective with Woodland Carbon Fund grant alone, you might be able to earn further income by selling carbon credits from your project. To do this you need to register with the Woodland Carbon Code within 2 years from the start of planting. Validation/verification to this standard provides assurance of the carbon savings and access to the voluntary carbon market.

Read an overview of
[The Woodland Carbon Code leaflet](#)
(PDF, 630KB, 3 pages)

Find out more about the [Woodland Carbon Code scheme for buyers and landowners.](#)

Woodland creation design plans

You need to carefully design new woodlands to fit within the landscape and accommodate features of interest. Find out more about the forest design process in the [UK Forestry Standard](#) and practice guide on [Design techniques for forest management planning.](#)

You need to develop a written plan supported by a:

- site context map
- site appraisal plan
- design concept plan
- final woodland creation design plan

To develop these documents you can apply for the [Woodland Creation Planning Grant](#).

Tax planning

To preserve and protect national heritage – including woodland – for the benefit of the public, the government introduced the ‘Conditional Exemption Tax Incentive Scheme’. Find out if you might [get relief from Inheritance Tax and Capital Gains Tax because you own a woodland](#).

Case studies

At

[Cherryrock Farm](#)

(PDF, 290KB, 2 pages)

Mr Howes, a farmer from Bristol, worked in partnership with the Forestry Commission and the Woodland Trust to improve biodiversity and enhance wildlife on his land through tree planting.

In this second case study,

[Common Farm](#)

(PDF, 1.79MB, 2 pages)

] was designed after extensive consultations with local groups, organisations, elected councillors and residents – hundreds of people got involved in tree planting events.

Environmental impact

When you apply to plant a new woodland via a woodland creation grant from the Forestry Commission the application will automatically be considered under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999, as amended. The Forestry Commission is responsible for the assessment of the effects of certain public and private woodland projects on the environment, and will work with you to make sure you don't break the rules.

If you want to plant a new woodland without grant support you may, depending on the size and location of the proposed project, need to submit an [EIA enquiry form].(government/admin/publications/839736)

Create sustainable woodlands: UK Forestry Standard

[Read the UK Forestry Standard \(UKFS\), the reference standard for sustainable forest management across the UK.](#)

This guidance applies to all UK woodland and explains the international agreements and conventions that apply to sustainable forest management to address climate change, help biodiversity and protect soil and water

resources. It covers all forestry activities in the UK and sets out the legal requirements and best practice standards for owners of woodland.

You can find country-specific advice on which tree-species to plant in the UKFS publication. Find further information on [species and provenance choice for adapting England's woodlands](#) from Forest Research, the research agency of the Forestry Commission.

Use the Forest Research tool – [Ecological Site Classification Decision Support System \(ESC-DSS\)](#) – to help you select species ecologically suited to your site.

Plan for sustainability: best practice and voluntary certification

Climate change

When designing new woodlands, it's important to consider how tree species suitability is likely to change in the future. Find out about [tree species and resilience to climate change](#). This information is available from Forest Research.

If you're planting trees you should source trees grown in the United Kingdom from a Forest Reproductive Material Certified supplier. Find out more about [working with seeds, cuttings and planting stock](#).

Habitats and species protection

You need to consider habitats and species already present on the land when planning a new woodland. Find out more about [habitats and species protection](#) and how to [benefit species and habitats biodiversity in your woodland](#).

You also have to work out how best to protect the trees that you plant from [tree pests and diseases that pose serious threats to woodland](#). For tree pests like squirrels and deer read guidance on [managing threats from destructive animals and invasive species](#).

Plan to manage woodland once it's established

Once you've created woodland you'll have to follow the rules on:

- [tree felling licences](#)
- [tree health, pest and disease control](#)
- [Environmental Impact Assessments \(EIAs\)](#)
- [woodland species and habitats protection](#)

If you decide to trade in wood products you'll also have to meet regulations and monitoring requirements. Find out more about [trading in wood materials](#).

Read guidance on [Managing ancient and native woodland in England](#)

(PDF, 1.13MB, 71 pages)

including information on woodland assessment and monitoring, management planning, woodland structure, tree species, restocking, species management and conservation and recreational, educational and sporting uses.

Read guidance on

[The management of semi-natural woodlands](#)

(PDF, 934KB, 36 pages)

including information on the need for management, harvesting, weeding, tending and thinning, tree regeneration, grazing and pest control.

For further information on woodland management and mitigating the impact of climate change read

[Climate change: impacts and adaptation in England's woodlands](#)

(PDF, 1.92MB, 16 pages)

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Use online tools to find out more about your land

The Land Information Search

If you plan to purchase woodland or land to plant with trees you can use the [Land Information Search \(LIS\)](#). This map-based tool allows you to search for information about land designations or features that might already apply to your land. Examples of these features include:

- special protection areas
- grant schemes
- Countryside Stewardship targeting layers
- low risk areas for woodland creation
- sites of special scientific interest
- scheduled monuments

Public registers

You can find useful information – such as proposals for woodland creation and tree felling – using the [Forestry Commission public registers](#).

The Forestry Commission consult with other statutory bodies such as Natural England when proposals may affect protected sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Open access land

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act) normally gives a public right of access to land mapped as 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. These areas are known as 'open access land'. You can find out if the public has a right of access to land under the CRoW Act using [CRoW and Coastal access maps](#).

Much of the coastal margin that's being created as part of the work to implement the England Coast Path is also open access land.

Find out more about [managing public rights of way and access and to your land](#).

Contact the Forestry Commission, England

Find the [Forestry Commission's Area Office and Administrative Hub contact details](#) including, address, telephone number and email address.

Forest Research

The research agency of the Forestry Commission offer a range of services which will [help with pest and disease control](#) and also offer resources such as [publications, statistics and datasets](#).

[Detailed guide: Request a map from the Forestry Commission](#)

Allow two weeks for delivery if you plan to apply before an application window closes.

The Forestry Commission only accepts application maps if they are on an Ordnance Survey MasterMap® base.

We have adopted Ordnance Survey MasterMap® as the required map standard for applications. MasterMap® is the most up-to-date large-scale digital map of Great Britain and is recognised as the mapping standard.

Request a map for your grant or felling application

Download, print and complete the [Map Request Form](#) and send it to your [the Administrative Hub](#).

You should provide a copy of another map clearly highlighting the full area that needs to be on the print that shows the National Grid Reference of a point near the centre of the highlighted area.

Alternatively, give the grid references for the 4 corners of the area you need. Make sure that the whole area of the application is included within the 4 points.

We provide all maps at A3 size and orientated landscape or portrait depending on the application area.

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Please note, these maps must only be used as part of a Forestry Commission application process. If you use the map we give you for any other purpose, you will be in breach of copyright.