

Trees

Trees are good for humans and good for the planet. They are an important part of our landscape, and are often the defining feature. They are also extremely fragile and can easily be mismanaged or completely removed from a landscape.

What trees can provide for us

- Fruits and nuts in various settings, including hedgerows and orchards.
- Timber and craft materials.
- Wood for fuel.
- Protection from the elements by providing shade, wind and noise-breaks.
- A sense of well-being and a spiritual connection; their size and long lifespan can provide a sense of 'permanence' and connection with the past.

What trees can provide for the environment

- Shelter and habitats for wildlife.
- Corridors for the movement of wildlife.
- Shelter for growing crops.
- Absorption of pollution
- Long-term storage of carbon - known as 'carbon sequestration'.
- Stability for the soil; root systems can help to prevent soil erosion and land-slides.

The Leicestershire County Council owned trees remove nearly 9.3 tonnes of air-borne pollutants each year and store over 25,000 tonnes of carbon.

These trees divert an estimated 31,700 cubic metres of storm water runoff away from

the local sewer systems each year. This is worth £48,100 in avoided stormwater treatment costs

annually. The total structural replacement cost of all LA trees in Leicestershire currently stands at £99.5 million

Threats

Trees are sensitive organisms and threats include:

- Poor management.
- Removal for building development or other works.
- The impacts of Climate Change.
- Environmental and chemical pollution.
- Disease and pest species.
- Wind damage.
- Changes to land drainage systems.

What you can do

There are three main actions for managing trees and woodland - pinpointing, protecting and planting.

- **Pinpointing**

We may see plenty of trees in a landscape but not always appreciate them as individual organisms. By using the Tree Register, you can record and report the trees in your local landscape, helping contribute to a larger database. See <https://www.treeregister.org/> for more information.

- **Protecting**

In the local community, you may wish to conserve particular trees or groups of trees for their environmental or social significance. You can do this by approaching your Local Planning Authority and requesting that a [Tree Preservation Order](#) be made. This can help protect a tree or group of trees from being wilfully damaged or destroyed.

You may also wish to appoint [Tree Wardens](#), who can act as an information source on local trees, help to protect their health, and also get involved with planting projects and fundraising events.

- **Planting**

The Forestry Commission may provide funding for tree planting projects.

www.gov.uk/government/news/grants-for-creating-woodland-available-all-year-round

The Woodland Trust can provide advice on how to go about tree planting.

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/

Proceed with caution

Make sure you plant in the right places. Areas which may look rough, untidy or uninteresting - such as grasslands and grass verges - can be important feeding and breeding sites for all kinds of wildlife including various birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. Before you plant anything, please make sure that your project will not damage or destroy a less obvious but already valuable wildlife habitat.

Further reading and advice

- Arboricultural Association - Guide to Trees and the Law
www.trees.org.uk/Trees.org.uk/media/Trees-org.uk/Documents/GuideToTreesAndTheLaw-Web.pdf
- Forestry Commission, Forestry Regulations
www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/biomass-energy-resources/technical-and-regulatory/regulations/forestry-regulations/
- Government advice on Tree Preservation Orders and Trees in Conservation Areas
www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas
- Tree Wardens -Leicestershire and Rutland
www.leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk/uploads/low-res-q0255-a4-tree-warden-leaflet-20-6-16.pdf
- Tree Guide - Paul Sterry, Collins Complete British Trees, (Harper Collins 2007)
- Ancient Trees - Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/ancient-trees

- Ancient Woodland Restoration - Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/ancient-woodland-restoration/
- Campaign in Your Community - Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/campaign-with-us/campaign-in-your-community/
- Key Tree Pests and Diseases - Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/tree-pests-and-diseases/key-tree-pests-and-diseases/
- Street Trees - Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/street-trees/
- Threats to Woods and Trees - Woodland Trust
www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/threats-to-woods-and-trees/
- Tree Council
<https://treecouncil.org.uk/>
- Tree Council - Tree Warden Scheme
https://treecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Tree_Council_Tree_Warden_Leaflet.pdf