

North East Community Forest



Annual Report 2024/25

6 April 2024 - 5 April 2025



Foreword



As Forest Manager of the North East Community Forest (NECF), I am delighted to present our 2024–25 Annual Report. This publication highlights the progress we've made over the past year and reflects our shared ambition to transform landscapes, empower communities, and cultivate a greener, healthier future for generations to come across North East England.

This year has been a landmark for the NECF. The 2024/25 planting season stands as our most successful yet, with 228.40 gross hectares of new woodlands, trees, hedgerows, and open space habitats established across the region. This milestone brings us to a cumulative total of 500 hectares planted over the past four seasons, a key target for the NECF Partnership that we are proud to have achieved. To ensure the long-term resilience of these landscapes, we continue to carry out regular inspections across all sites, monitoring tree establishment and health with care and commitment.

Our success is rooted in collaboration: local authorities, landowners, delivery partners, residents, and stakeholders have played a vital role in shaping and delivering our vision. Their dedication to protecting and maintaining existing woodlands and planting the right trees in the right places has been instrumental in driving positive change across the region.

One of the most exciting developments this year has been the development of our draft Forest Plan (2025–2050), a long-term strategy to protect, maintain, and enhance the region's trees, woodlands, and hedgerows. Finalising and embedding this plan in the months ahead will be a crucial step in deepening our connection with the communities we serve and strengthening our collective vision.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the North East Community Forest Team and Forest Partnership. Their hard work and dedication are the backbone of the NECF, and without them, none of this would be possible.

Lloyd Jones

Forest Manager North East
Community Forest

What is a Community Forest?

The **North East Community Forest** is part of **England's Community Forests**, a diverse and growing network of 15 forests - each working in partnership with their local communities, landowners, and businesses to help nature recover and regenerate the landscapes in and around our largest towns and cities. Their roots go back over 30 years, with Community Forests now forming the biggest environmental regeneration initiative in England.

The network has planted over 8 million trees across the country since the Trees for Climate programme began five years ago – that's 35% of all government-funded tree planting since 2020.

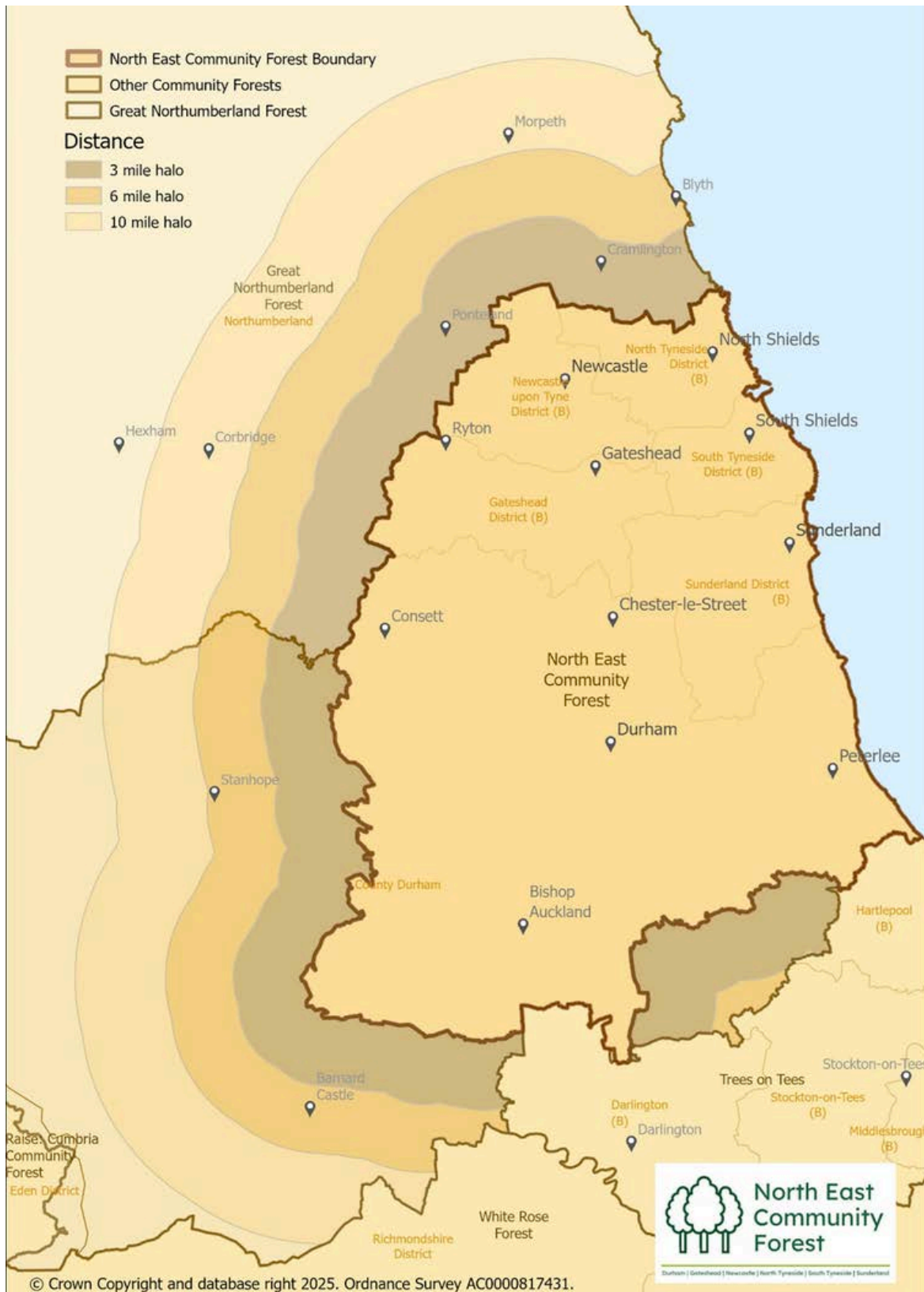


Map of the 15 Community Forests in England

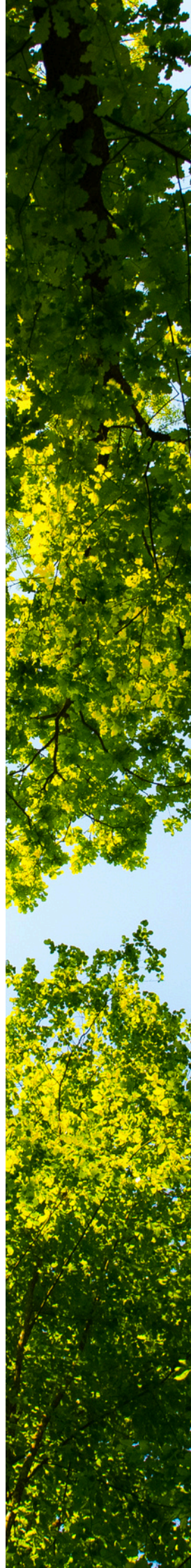


Where is the NECF?

The NECF spans 1,503 square kilometres across North East England, covering the southern parts of Northumberland and the full geographical boundaries of Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, and Sunderland, as well as the main urban areas of County Durham.

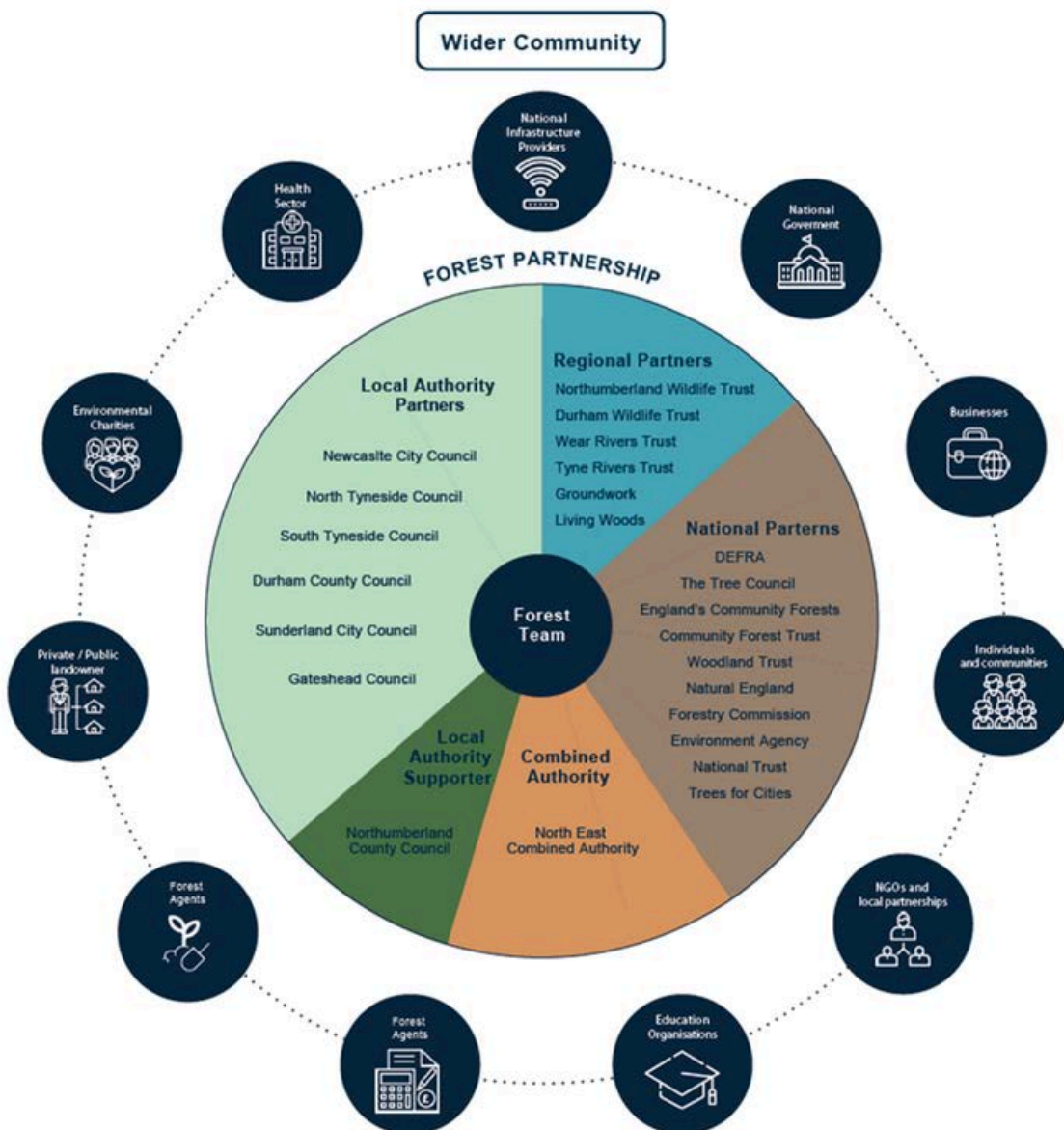


Map of the the NECF core boundary and 10 mile halo



About the NECF

The North East Community Forest (NECF) was formally established on July 21, 2021 following a successful expression of interest to England's Community Forests and the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It is overseen by the North East Community Forest Partnership, and supported by a dedicated Forest Team, with Newcastle City Council acting as the accountable body, employer and fund holder.



An operational diagram demonstrating the role and structure of the NECF Team, NECF Partnership, and the wider community.



Funding the NECF

The six core local authorities (Newcastle, North and South Tyneside, Gateshead, Sunderland, and Durham) have committed circa £75,000 a year in total towards the ongoing costs of the Forest Team, with additional staff funding provided from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

These monies then allow the Forest Team to secure and manage additional funding from a range of other sources, including grants, consultancy work, corporate social responsibility, carbon finance, unrestricted donations, green finance, and other innovative mechanisms such as through the planning system.



What is Trees for Climate?

Trees for Climate is a bespoke woodland creation funding programme only available within the Community Forest areas in England. It is part of Defra's Nature for Climate Fund which is a national Government scheme to support woodland creation and peat restoration in England.

What does Trees for Climate offer?

The grants offered through Trees for Climate are tailored to the landowner requirements and available for a large variety of projects. Our expert woodland creation team is here to provide landowners and land managers with free support and impartial advice to help plan, fund and plant tree planting projects of all sizes in the North East Community Forest area.

How much grant funding is available through Trees for Climate?

A Trees for Climate grant could cover all costs associated with woodland creation, for eligible projects, as well as providing ongoing funding to support the maintenance of the trees. It is one of the most flexible and competitive tree planting grants in England.

Trees for Climate is committed to:

- Mitigating carbon through tree planting, and making a significant contribution to net zero
- Improving climate resilience, by supporting natural flood management, providing shade and reducing the heat island effect
- Improving water and air quality
- Supporting increased public access to woodland, especially for those in areas of greatest need
- Enhancing habitats for wildlife and biodiversity
- Increasing opportunities for community engagement, supporting better levels of health and wellbeing, especially in areas of greatest health inequality
- Taking innovative approaches and delivery practices, and sharing learning to advance the whole sector
- Supporting employment and skills development (including aiding a reduction in reoffending through targeted schemes)



NECF Local Supporters

During the previous year, the NECF has continued to strengthen its partnerships with local businesses, offering a valuable opportunity for organisations to invest in the communities where they operate.

By supporting NECF, businesses have contributed to the enhancement of the region's natural environment while also helping to stimulate the local economy and foster community wellbeing. As part of our recognition efforts, we are planning to feature supporter logos on our new website for 2025.

In 2024/25, **£9,458** was raised through donations from residents and companies via the website's 'Donate Now' button, directly supporting projects across the six core local authority areas. Continued support from the public is vital—scan the QR code here to donate and help grow and care for woodlands across the North East.



2024/25 planting season

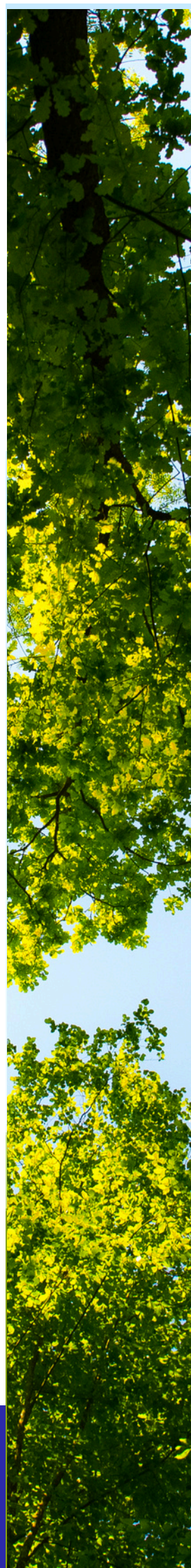
We are proud to announce our most successful tree planting season to date, marking a significant milestone in our mission to create greener, healthier communities across the region.

During the 2024 / 2025 planting season, the NECF has planted 156,451 trees across Newcastle, Gateshead, North and South Tyneside, Sunderland, and urban County Durham, with 228.40 gross hectares of new woodlands, trees, hedgerows, and open space habitat created.

Our planting projects have included 7,461.5 linear meters of new hedgerow established, including in-hedge trees, 12.5 kilometres of new footpaths laid within woodland creation sites and 45.68 hectares of open space developed, including rides, glades, pathways, grasses, and herbaceous plants.

6,480 people engaged with the NECF programme, including 2,160 volunteers who planted 11,610 trees across 88 events, contributing over 5,000 hours.

This has all been possible thanks to £4.7 million in funding secured to support woodland creation and community engagement. This remarkable work is projected to remove approximately 70,857 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere over the next 30 years.



2024/25 planting season



228.40 gross hectares created



156,451 trees planted



7,461.5 linear meters of new hedgerow with in-hedge trees



124 sites with trees planted on



45.68 hectares of open space e.g. rides, glades, pathways, grasses, and herbaceous plants



£4.7m of funding secured



Engagement highlights

- 88 volunteer tree planting events
- With 2,160 volunteers
- 11,610 trees planted by volunteers
- 5,338 hours of volunteer time planting trees
- 109 staff involved in facilitating the volunteer tree planting
- 6,480 people engaged in the overall 2024/25 NECF programme
- 60.1k digital reach and engagement across our social media channels



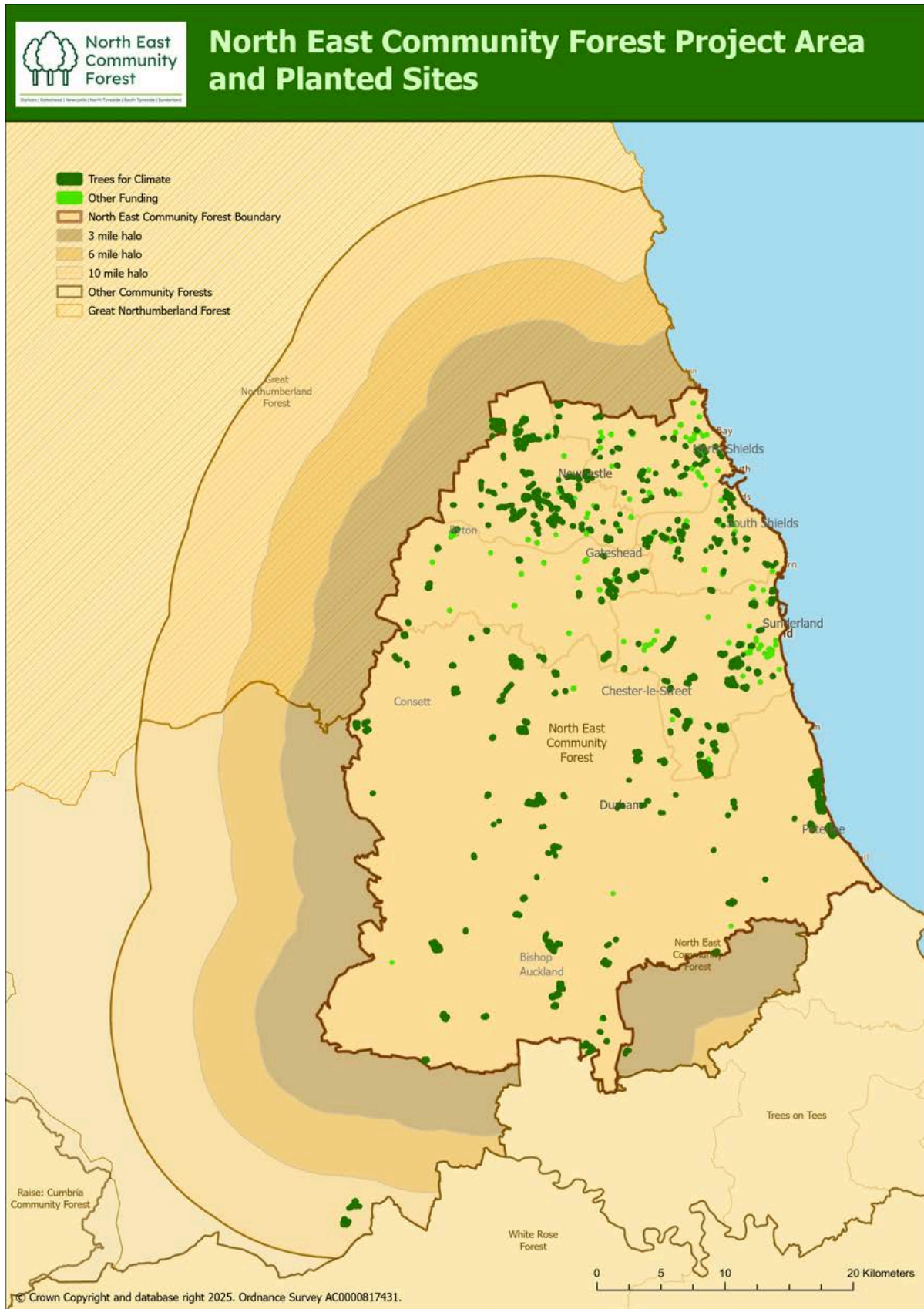
70,857 tonnes of carbon dioxide captured from the atmosphere by year 30



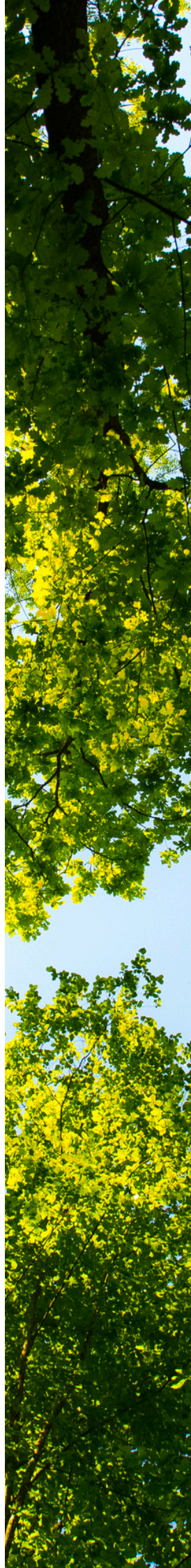
12.5 kilometres of new footpaths created within woodland creation sites



2021 - 2025 NECF projects

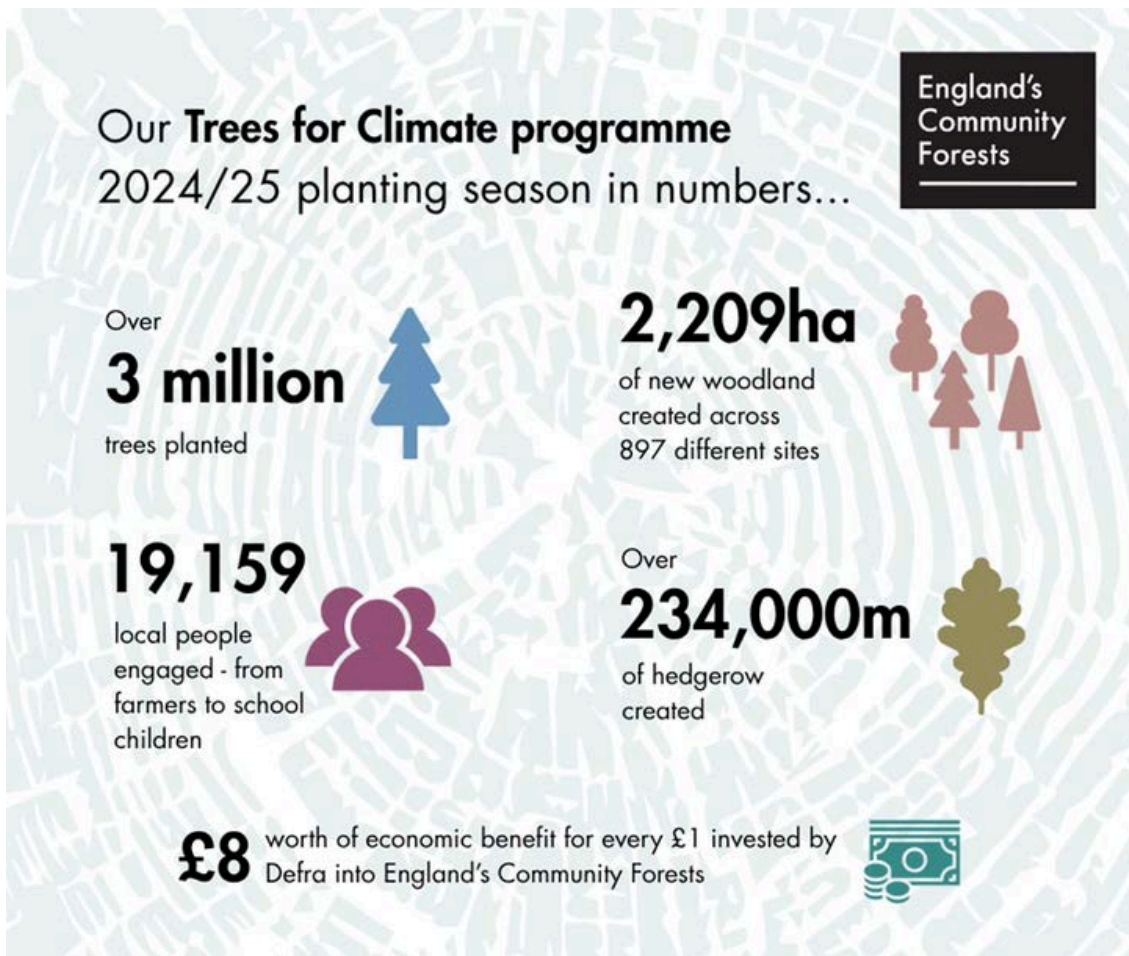


Map showing all the new tree planting sites in the NECF core boundary and halo area (2021 - 2025).



Trees for Climate - national figures

Figures reflect achievements across all 15 England Community Forests.



[England's Community Forests plant record 3.1 million trees to boost woodland creation across the country - England's Community Forests](#)

[Trees for Climate year 5 in numbers - YouTube](#)



The Forest Plan

‘A thriving, resilient, and sustainable multipurpose forest that delivers lasting benefits for the people, nature, and environment of North East England for generations to come’.

Over the past year, our dedicated Senior Woodland Officer, has been developing our draft Forest Plan - setting out a bold, long-term vision for transforming the landscape of North East England. This work has been shaped through close collaboration and consultation with the NECF Team, stakeholders, partners, and most importantly local communities.

The plan will guide our work here at the NECF, outlining how we will enhance, protect, and celebrate our region’s trees, woodlands, and hedgerows.

Draft objectives of the Forest Plan

- Expand and Connect Trees, Woods, and Hedgerows

We will encourage and support the establishment of well-connected, diverse, and thriving trees, woods, and hedgerows, prioritising areas of greatest need. By doing so, we will maximise benefits for people, nature, and climate.

- Protect, Restore and Sustain Woodland Ecosystems

We will support responsible and sustainable management practices to protect, restore, and improve the health, biodiversity, and resilience of trees, woods, and hedgerows—ensuring long-term benefits for nature, people, and climate.

- Foster a Thriving Tree and Woodland Culture

We will inspire and support greater participation in the creation, management, and use of trees, woods, and hedgerows. By raising awareness of their value, we will cultivate a stronger connection between communities and the natural environment.

A live survey is now open, inviting community input to help shape priorities within the Forest Plan. Scan the QR code below.

 **Have your say - scan the QR code**



Engagement activities and staffing

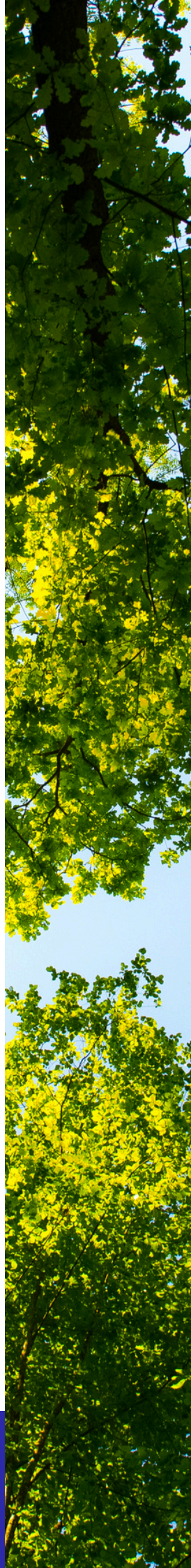
Throughout the year, the Forest Team have actively engaged with the public by attending agricultural shows and community events, promoting their work and fostering connections. They have also participated in conferences, training sessions, and site visits with partners—strengthening collaboration and sharing expertise across the sector.

Staff Structure : April 2025

- Ross Weddle, Chair of the NECF Partnership
- Lloyd Jones, Forest Manager
- Kelly Graham, Senior Woodland Officer – Forest Plan
- Paul Hyde, Senior Woodland Officer – Trees for Climate Lead
- Bethan Kelly, Community Advisor
- Elle Hopkins, Community Woodland Officer (Sunderland and Durham)
- Roy Bearpark, Community Woodland Officer (Newcastle and South Tyneside)
- Brijesh Pal Yadav, Community Woodland Officer (North Tyneside and Gateshead)
- Phill Hammond, Community Woodland Officer (Schools)
- Herman Parkhomenko, Senior Business Support Officer



In addition the NECF has been successful with obtaining a Green Start placement in 2024/25. Green Start is delivered by Newcastle City Council, the accountable body of the NECF, and is funded through the North East Combined Authority. The aim of the project is to provide a paid 6-month trainee placement for local residents to develop skills and start a career within the green, low carbon, or environmental sector. The Target audience supports individuals who are entering employment for the first time, returning to work after a break, or looking to change careers and gain new skills.



Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Rayleigh Drive, North Tyneside

To celebrate National Tree Week, North Tyneside Council partnered with Living Woods CIC and the North East Community Forest to deliver a community tree planting event in Wideopen.

Over 20 volunteers put on their gloves to plant 200 whips and 12 standard trees. The planting brings additional woodland and trees to a large public green space, enhancing the existing tree line and increasing the wildlife corridor.



The Rayleigh Drive site was initially scoped by a multi-disciplinary group of council officers, including ecologists, arborists, landscape architects, and planners. Once the site was selected, a round of internal and external consultation exercises were undertaken, including writing to local residents for their feedback.

Living Woods CIC ran the tree planting event, showing volunteers how to plant a tree whilst explaining the wider benefits of tree planting. 200 whips and 12 standard trees were planted, comprising a mix of species native to the North east, such as Silver Birch, Hawthorn, Oak, and Cherry. Living Woods will also run summer maintenance sessions to ensure the trees are looked after.

The new trees at Rayleigh Drive will offer numerous benefits to the local community and environment. The additional woodland will increase biodiversity in the area and mitigate flooding by reducing excess surface water. They will enhance the area's aesthetic appeal, creating a more pleasant and inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors alike, and provide shade during warmer months.

Overview

- Total trees planted - 12 standard trees, 200 whips
- Over 20 volunteers engaged in the community planting event
- Ongoing volunteer aftercare events to be embedded into the programme

Project Impact



As part of National Tree Week, the project was supported by North Tyneside's Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency, **Councillor Sandra Graham**:

"Trees are essential to the health and sustainability of our natural environment, so it's wonderful to see National Tree Week being marked here in North Tyneside. The project in Wideopen will not only boost biodiversity but also create a welcoming space for the whole community to enjoy. My thanks go to the volunteers and partners whose efforts are helping to enrich our green spaces in this way."

Contribution to Net Zero: The trees will help sequester carbon emissions from the nearby A1 Road, contributing to the councils net zero target of 2030.

Nature and Biodiversity: The local wildlife corridor which leads into the Little Waters nature reserve will be enhanced by the trees, improving local biodiversity.

Flood mitigation: As the area is prone to flooding, the trees' root systems could help manage rainwater runoff, reducing the risk of localised flooding.

Public access and community engagement: As the trees are planted on public green space, the community will be able to enjoy them and also help with maintenance. This could foster a stronger sense of community pride and encourage outdoor activity, supporting both mental and physical wellbeing.

Employment and Skills: Over 20 volunteers were shown how to plant a tree and explained the multiple benefits of increasing woodland.

Health and Wellbeing: The trees will improve air quality by absorbing pollutants and releasing oxygen, contributing to better public health. Enhancing the natural environment in public spaces is also associated with improved mental wellbeing.



Watch the project video

Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Tina's Haven, Durham

In 2023 the National Trust purchased a 34 hectare (84 acre) field at Warren House on the Durham coast with grant funding from the North East Community Forest Trees for Climate fund. Planted with crops for many years, this former farmland is being restored to a natural state with the aim of enhancing recovery for both people and nature.

The new nature reserve has been named **Tina's Haven** in memory of Tina Robson – a young woman who lost her life to trauma-based addiction in 2020. In 2022, Tina's mum, Dr Sue Robson, founded and collaboratively developed a ground-breaking arts and nature-based programme (also named Tina's Haven) in East Durham, designed to nurture self-empowerment and support women's recovery from addiction and trauma.

Thanks to grants from the North East Community Forest, Species Survival Fund (a partnership between Defra and the National Lottery Heritage Fund), and additional funding from HSBC UK, a nature reserve with a mix of woodland, wood pasture, grassland, hedgerows, ponds and wetlands will be created on the site. It will form part of a wider programme of nature and habitat restoration work happening locally. Nearby, a project at White Lea Farm in Easington Colliery began last year with the creation of 8.2km of hedgerows, woodland and wood pasture that now connects Hawthorn Dene and Foxhole Dene.

Local community is at the heart of this project. Monday 31 March, chosen to mark Tina's 40th birthday, saw the beginning of a week of tree-planting at Tina's Haven. Community groups, partner organisations and schools were invited to plant saplings along with their messages of hope, written on heart-shaped biodegradable paper.

21,575 trees have been planted within the nature reserve. Also a 'Tree of Hope' – one of 49 saplings grown from seed from the illegally felled Sycamore Gap tree at Hadrian's Wall and gifted to communities across the UK will be planted later in the year.

"The planting of the Sycamore Gap sapling on the land later this year will symbolise that even after the worst adversity and tragedy, there can be recovery, healing, new beginnings and hope can grow in abundance." - Dr Sue Robson

Overview

- 21,575 new trees planted
- 310 volunteers involved over 5 planting events
- 1,767 trees planted by volunteers
- A mix of woodland, wood pasture, grassland, hedgerows, ponds and wetlands are planned

Sue is now working closely with the National Trust and local organisations including Addictions Northeast, The Barn at Easington, Women in Empowerment and Recovery (WiRE) Project, No More Nowt, Durham County Council's Horden Together, the Coalfields Regeneration Trust, Free Women's Community, Recovering Justice Women's Group, Steps into Recovery and Rainbow Promise, to ensure the Tina's Haven site embodies strength in community. The project provides a place for people to connect with each other, spend time outdoors and work together to create the nature reserve.



“The project is a brilliant example of partnership working. As well as nature restoration, the funding and support received means we can improve public access to this part of the coast too. A circular path around the field will be created, joining up with the King Charles III England Coast Path along the cliff edge. Connecting people and nature is a hugely important aim of the project.” Eric Wilton, General Manager for the National Trust’s Derwent, Wear and Coast Portfolio.



Credit photos - National Trust; Rebecca Hughes



Watch the news report

Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Whiteleas Way Street Trees, South Tyneside

As one of the main arterial routes Whiteleas way in South Shields, forms an important avenue in the borough of South Tyneside enhancing and lining this main throughfare with valuable street trees will enhance the landscape and its visual amenity.



12 heavy standard *Quercus robur* 'Koster' (columnar oaks) have been successfully planted in the landscape along the western fringe of Temple Park highway verge adding amenity to the area, increasing tree cover in the ward and enhancing the street.

This columnar variety has been successful in other areas of the borough, and they provide tight up right crown to fit into a narrow grass verge and not impact into the highway.

Numerous research studies have shown that Street trees can reduce traffic calming measure by their natural form impacting the visual landscape and slowing and calming drivers.

The three ward councillors from across party memberships all welcomed the addition to the local ward and attended a planting event in March 2025 alongside South Tyneside councils Tree Officer and Tree and Woodland officer who created this years across borough planting scheme and were appreciative to the North East Community Forest who grant funded these plantings.

Overview

- Total trees planted - 12 standard *Quercus robur* 'Koster' (columnar oaks)
- Part of an already existing greening initiative at Temple Park

Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Crooks Farm in Barnham, Durham

Crooks Farm in Barnham, County Durham is continuing an ambitious woodland creation project that will see approximately 40,000 trees planted over 30 hectares of land.

The project, supported by the North East Community Forest (NECF), the Woodland Trust, and Carma, is a significant step towards improving wildlife connectivity and promoting regenerative agriculture practices.

Planting at the farm began in 2024, with 5 hectares already established. Another 9.04 hectares were planted in Spring 2025, and the final phase will be completed in 2026. When finished, the new woodland will offer vital habitats for local wildlife and provide environmental benefits for generations to come.

An official launch event for the latest phase of the project took place on Wednesday, 5 March 2025, with guests including Mike Butterwick, the Deputy Lieutenant of County Durham and Councillor James Rowlandson from Durham County Council.

Project impact

- Planting trees at this level will contribute significantly to carbon absorption within County Durham. It will also provide important habitats for wildlife and protect biodiversity. By involving pupils from our schools in the tree planting, we're also encouraging future generations to think about the important role trees have in our ecosystem and balancing our climate.
- Located in the beautiful River Greta Valley, we wanted to create a farmed landscape of connectivity with a network of new woodlands and wetlands in which cattle could graze. The design respected existing wetland habitats used by ground nesting birds and will enable the woodland flora and fauna to move more widely through the landscape.
- The project is a reflection of a partnership approach, without this intervention it would not have happened. Initially the Woodland Trust worked with the tenant farmer to help bring the project vision to life, which included the new woodland connecting onto ancient woodland. The project was then referred to the North East Community Forest Team who worked with the landowner and woodland trust to obtain regulatory consent from the Forestry Commission, in turn achieving a UKFS complaint woodland.

Overview

- Total trees planted 10,511
- Planted adjacent to existing ancient woodland and public rights of way footpath
- Blended finance package (Defra Trees for Climate and Carma funded)

This project has been made possible via the North East Community Forest Trees for Climate Grant and has been part funded by Carma who are committed to making social and environmental impacts via tree planting in the UK.

Rob Lowes, Crooks Farm Tenant Farmer said: “This is a great opportunity to vastly improve our already conservational minded approach to Farming and Land management while improving public rights of way so that others can also enjoy what we do.”



Eleanor Hopkins, Community Woodland Officer, North East Community Forest said: “Planting these trees will not only create a thriving environment that supports local wildlife, buffer ancient woodland, and improve soil and water quality it will hopefully inspire others to adopt regenerative agricultural practices.”



Watch the project video

Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Birtley Woodland creation, Gateshead

During March 2025, over 9,100 trees were open planted across two areas of rough grassland, in the middle of Birtley, a town in east Gateshead. Funded by Trees for Climate, the new woodland will bring benefits for health and wellbeing, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and community.

Project description

After receiving funding from Trees for Climate, these areas of uncut rough grass were planted up with whips to become a new woodland, with improved public access, visual amenity, air quality, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration benefits.

The two planting areas lie to the east and west of Birtley golf course. The western section borders a housing estate and Old Durham Road, while the eastern section is adjacent to Portobello Primary School. The site provides continuity with the Tiny Forest project, which took place within the school grounds last year, and will give future opportunities for further forest school learning and outdoor education.

Due to the presence of heavy fly-tipping, there was great potential to improve the area, especially immediately alongside the housing estate. Significant fly-tipping and litter was removed from the area ahead of work commencing on the site, including clearance of illegal bonfire sites. Vegetation was cleared and whips were planted without tubes, to reduce plastic and minimise the risk of attracting further anti-social behaviour.

Under the initiative of delivery partner Microsite, the strip of land immediately adjacent to the houses (which attracted the majority of the fly-tipping) is being transformed into a wildflower meadow in an effort to deter further dumping.

A consultation drop-in event took place at a local community centre in the early stages of design, allowing local people to have meaningful input and influence on the scheme. The design was developed to maintain the existing informal footpaths, while enhancing the routes around both fields.

The planting mix was based on an oak woodland, with a wider diversity of species as a precaution against the potentially inhospitable ground conditions, and the changing climate. Mulch was applied around the base of each tree in the areas where ruderal vegetation had been particularly dense. Going forward, the site will be cut regularly to keep the whips free from competing vegetation. Litter will be regularly removed, and lost trees replaced as required.

Overview

- 9,100 trees planted
- Wildflower meadow creation to discourage ASB
- Links to Tiny Forest project at the school, supporting future forest school and outdoor education

Project Impact

Contribution to Net Zero: 9,100 new trees will sequester increasing amounts of carbon as they establish.

Nature and Biodiversity: The new woodland will extend historic woodland creation efforts in the area, dramatically increasing the area of habitat with an additional 3.64 ha of native woodland, and 2.43 areas of open space.

Public access and community engagement: The long-term development and management of the site, including the regular removal of litter and fly-tipping, greatly improve the area for residents

Health and Wellbeing: The trees will improve air quality and provide a screen against Old Durham Road, as well as enhancing the greenspace around Portobello Primary School, and offering a cooling effect in summer.



Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Links with Nature Tree and Hedge Planting, Sunderland

Links with Nature is a project to improve greenspaces across 13 sites within the Coalfield area of Sunderland, funded by National Lottery heritage Fund, Sunderland City Council, North East Community Forest and Northumbria Water Bluespaces fund.

During the 24-25 planting season trees and hedges have been planted on six of the sites through collaboration with the North East Community Forest.



The Links with Nature project is creating a network of greenspaces where people and wildlife can thrive across the Coalfield area of Sunderland. The two-year project was developed by partners Durham Wildlife Trust, Sunderland City Council and Wear River's Trust and combines capital investment in restoring habitats and increasing biodiversity on the sites with a varied activity programme of volunteering, green social prescribing, engagement and wellbeing activities to improve health and wellbeing of local residents through actively linking with nature.

Ecological assessment of the sites during the planning stage indicated that six of the sites would benefit from tree and hedge planting. Two of these sites, Herrington Country Park and Hetton Lyons Country Park are popular country parks created on former colliery sites, where hedgerows, standard trees and orchard trees have been planted.



Copt Hill is a Magnesian Limestone grassland site which will benefit from new hedgerows. Flint Mill, poor quality grassland between housing estates, has had 2000 whips planted, along with standard trees and another poor-quality greenspace at Herrington Burn now has 40 standard trees planted across it. Finally, a hedge with standard trees has been planted adjacent to Red Burn, along the entrance road to Rainton Meadows Nature Reserve.

Three community planting events took place during the planting – one at Copt hill planting hedge plants and two to plant the whips at Flint Mill.

Overview

- Greenspace Enhancement Across 13 Sites
- Funded by multiple partners including the National Lottery Heritage Fund and North East Community Forest
- Improves biodiversity and public access across Sunderland's Coalfield area

Project Impact

Contribution to Net Zero: A total of 2281 trees and 4805 hedge plants have been planted so far as part of this project. Over 30 years the trees planted will sequester the equivalent of approximately 3,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Nature and Biodiversity: The trees and hedgerow planting will improve biodiversity on the sites, particularly on sites where habitats are degraded. Hedge planting at Copt Hill and Redburn will provide vital wildlife corridors linking other habitats.

Flood mitigation: Hedgerow and trees planted along Red Burn should help to reduce flooding, which occurs regularly along the entrance road to Rainton Meadows

Public access and community engagement: The community planting events allowed local people to get involved in improving their local greenspaces and for some people created a way in to further volunteering opportunities with Links with Nature. Local residents have engaged positively with DWT and SCC staff about the planting.

Health and Wellbeing: Through community planting events and other volunteering opportunities on the sites, residents are gaining an insight into improving their environment and getting health benefits from connecting with nature. The new tree planting has created visual improvements to the greenspaces and it is hoped that this will be a contributing factor in people using the sites more and therefore gaining health benefits from being outside in nature. At Herrington Country Park fifty-two orchard trees have been planted to create a community orchard with wildflowers, to provide fruit and an opportunity for community connection.



Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



Tree Planting at Slatyford Dene, Newcastle upon Tyne

The North East Community Forest joined forces with Newcastle City Council, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, Microsite, local community groups, and residents to plant 361 standard and feather-sized trees at Slatyford Dene.

The project includes extensive avenue planting along existing footpaths, enhancing visual appeal with added colour and variety. Across open spaces, smaller groupings and stands of trees were introduced to create interest while maintaining clear sightlines through the park.

To support biodiversity, grass mowing regimes were adjusted around tree clusters, allowing meadow habitats to establish naturally. Plans also included extending tree belts and hedgerows to help screen the boundary of the Stagecoach depot.

Tree species have been carefully selected, with a focus on native varieties that support local wildlife. Larger species such as Beech, Oak, and London Plane are well-suited to the site's open areas. Reflecting the site's history as a former waterway running parallel to Silver Lonnen, Silver Birch trees with their striking white bark and dappled crowns were be planted to evoke this heritage.



Overview

- 361 trees planted
- Significant community involvement with initial tree planting
- Nod to local heritage through thoughtful species selection

Trees for Climate Grant Case Study



How Tree Planting at Slatyford Dene Contributes to Key Outcomes

Net Zero

- The planted trees will absorb and store carbon dioxide
- Large species like Oak and Beech will provide long-term carbon storage

Nature and Biodiversity

- Native trees support local wildlife including birds, insects, and mammals

Flood Mitigation

- Tree roots will improve soil structure and absorb rainwater, reducing runoff

Public Access

- Avenue planting will enhance footpaths and encourages walking
- Tree placement maintains visibility and safety throughout the site

Community Engagement

- Local groups and residents were actively involved in planting
- Silver Birch trees reflect the site's heritage, creating educational opportunities

Health and Wellbeing

- Access to green space will improve mental and physical health
- Seasonal colour and variety will encourage regular outdoor activity



North East Community Forest Partnership

Local Authority Partners



Local Authority Supporters



Combined Authority



National Partners



Regional Partners



Website www.northeastcommunityforest.org.uk
Email info@necf.org.uk

