

## The Tree Council Branching Out Fund: grants for UK tree planting projects across the community

### General Information Sheet

Thanks to the generosity of donors, The Tree Council has funds available to assist schools and community groups proposing to undertake well-planned tree planting projects this winter (November 2020 – March 2021), preferably during **National Tree Week – 28<sup>th</sup> of November to 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2020**

A strong application will detail how the trees will be sourced, planted and cared for, whilst also demonstrating excellent value for money and active educational engagement of children and young people, up to the age of 21.

**NOTE: Trees can be understood to including hedging plants**

<p><b>Who can apply?</b></p>	<p>Schools, community groups, member Tree Warden Networks, parish and town councils. This list is not exhaustive, so please get in touch if you would like to apply. We do not give grants to individuals or intermediary organisations.</p> <p>Community groups should be constituted groups, with their own bank account.</p>
<p><b>How much can we apply for?</b></p>	<p>Between £300 and £1,500 (<u>excluding</u> VAT)</p> <p>If the cost of the planned project is likely to exceed the £1,500 limit, we suggest that a funding application is made for a standalone section of the project.</p> <p>The amount of grant offered is entirely at our discretion. Applicants should remember that a smaller percentage may be awarded, depending upon how many applications are recommended for support, but we would like to reassure you that nearly all strong applications are approved for 100% (excl. VAT) of the total.</p> <p><b>Applications to fund projects which have already been carried out are not eligible.</b></p>
<p><b>What is covered?</b></p>	<p>Trees, hedges and fruit trees.</p> <p>Reasonable costs of supports and aids – stakes, ties, cardboard guards (not plastic ones), mulch, fertiliser and <u>peat-free</u> soil amelioration products (only where conditions make this necessary).</p>

<p><b>What kind of trees?</b></p>	<p>Trees of appropriate species, size and numbers, including fruit trees, must be sourced from biosecure stock (see our biosecurity statement).</p> <p>Apple and pears must be grown on semi-vigorous, vigorous and very vigorous rootstocks (see separate guidance for more info).</p> <p>Trees must be planted in the ground.</p> <p>We prefer bare-root stock. If you plan to use container grown stock, then please explain to us why.</p>
<p><b>What kind of aids to establishment are funded?</b></p>	<p>As a conservation charity, we believe strongly in using environmentally friendly tree guards. There are several suppliers of cardboard tree and hedge guards on the market. The Tree Council has often worked with <a href="http://www.ezeetrees.com">www.ezeetrees.com</a>.</p> <p>Compost or mulches used to improve soil must be peat-free. Trees purchased in containers should ideally be in peat-free compost.</p>
<p><b>What information must be provided?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of items, excluding VAT</li> <li>• Full names of all the trees (e.g. 'apple' not sufficient, we welcome Latin names, but not essential)</li> <li>• Height of the trees.</li> <li>• Type of roots (i.e. if they are cell-grown, container size, bare-root or root-balled). All this information and above can be provided by your supplier</li> <li>• Number and price of each tree excluding VAT</li> <li>• Number, price and type of support and aids, justification for using this particular type of support, excluding VAT</li> <li>• An email from the person responsible confirming consent to plant on the site and a guarantee that the site will be secure for at least 5 years</li> <li>• Trees must be planted on public/trust owned/leased land</li> <li>• Location map - must show location in the local area and highlight the land on which the planting will take place (an annotated shot of a Google map will meet these criteria)</li> <li>• Site Plan - A larger scale plan of the area proposed for planting. It must include positions, number and species of the trees to be planted</li> <li>• A clear programme showing how the newly planted trees or hedging will be maintained over the next 2 years</li> </ul>
<p><b>What is NOT funded?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bushes, shrubs, willows, fan-trained, espalier, step-over fruit trees</li> <li>• Trees planted in tubs</li> <li>• Expensive guards and cages that are not justified</li> <li>• Applications from intermediary charities or organisations</li> <li>• Plastic tree guards or peat-based soil improvers</li> </ul>

<p><b>Who pays the VAT?</b></p>	<p>Our grant restrictions mean that we are unable to reimburse any VAT.</p> <p>If you are VAT registered, you will be able to reclaim the VAT from HMRC. If you are not VAT registered, you may be able to fund these costs from elsewhere.</p> <p>Some trees are not eligible for VAT – check with your nursery.</p>
<p><b>If our application is successful, what do we need to submit to claim our grant?</b></p>	<p>Digital photographic evidence of your planting day, and any supporting educational activities. We like good quality images which show the children/young people actively involved in the planting. Plenty of smiles and faces visible! You must ensure you have parental or guardian permission for us to publish these images on our website or share on social media platforms.</p> <p>All receipts must be scanned and sent by email.</p> <p>We will only pay the amount of the original application, and for the trees specified at application. Receipts must match what is being claimed. If there is a small change in prices, we will adjust accordingly, up to a maximum of 3%</p>
<p><b>KEY DATES</b></p>	<p>Applications will be considered as they are received. You will hear the outcome of your application within 4 weeks of receipt, so you should ensure there is sufficient time to plan your project and purchase your trees. As much scoping as possible should be undertaken before application, including research into the feasibility of the purchasing and planting timescales.</p> <p>Planting to take place between November 2020 and March 2021 (restrictions permitting) but preferably during <b>National Tree Week – 28 November – 6 December</b> or as near as possible afterwards, depending on when trees are available from supplier (seasonal variations affect this date)</p> <p>Deadline for claims to be made: <b>March 31 2021.</b></p>
<p><b>How are community planting projects affected by Covid-19 restrictions and social distancing?</b></p>	<p>At this time, it is unclear what social distancing rules will be in place when the tree planting season begins again. However, we are still keen to encourage groups to develop tree planting projects, managed by small groups in their communities. If Covid-19 restrictions allow, we hope safely-run tree planting activities will happen during National Tree Week – 28 November to 6 December 2020. If your funded project cannot go ahead at any time this winter due to social distancing restrictions, then the delivery deadline of your grant will be extended to the following year. So please don't let Covid-19 stop you telling us about your fantastic tree planting projects.</p>