

This document offers an overview of the application questions to help you prepare your submission and understand the type of information we are looking for. Please note that the questions may be subject to change and will vary slightly depending on the grant you are applying for.



The Tree Council's Community Tree Planting Grants - 2025/26

- ① Your Organisation ② Project Information ③ Project Locations ④ Pre-planting Site Assessment
⑤ Maps and Site Plans ⑥ Your Trees ⑦ Finance and Match Funding ⑧ Monitoring and Evaluation

Important Information

Thank you for your interest in The Tree Council's Community Tree Planting Grants. The deadline for the first round of applications is **Thursday 31 July 2025**. If the funds / free trees aren't fully allocated a second application window may open, but this is not guaranteed.

Getting Started

Which The Tree Council community planting grant are you applying for? *

- ☐ National Highways ☐ Network Rail ☐ Scottish Power Energy Networks (SPEN)

If you're unsure which grant best suits your project or organisation, please visit our [website](#) for more information. You're welcome to apply for more than one grant; however, a separate application is required for each, as the questions and eligibility criteria vary slightly.

How much funding are you applying for? *

- ☐ Under £2,500
☐ £2,500 > £10,000
☐ Over £10,000
☐ I am applying for free trees

National Highways offers free trees only, with no monetary grants available.

Your Organisation

Your name *

First	Last
-------	------

Your role within the organisation *

Email address *

Phone number *

Name of your organisation *

Company or charity number, if relevant

Registered address *

County *

Country *

If the organisation doesn't have a registered address, please use your own.

Organisation type *

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ School / Nursery | ☐ Registered Community Group (Volunteers / Allotments) |
| ☐ Further / Higher Education (Colleges & Universities) | ☐ Tree Warden Network |
| ☐ Local Authority / Council (inc Parish etc) | ☐ Tenants & Resident Association |
| ☐ Registered Charity / NGO | ☐ Care Home (charity or community funded) |
| ☐ Constituted Community Group or Community Interest Company | ☐ Private Landowner |
| | ☐ Other <input type="text" value=""/> |

Your organisation's website or social media page

Please share a brief description of your organisation *

Example: '... we are a charity working to create community food gardens across the Scottish borders....' You will be able to tell us about your tree planting project further down in the application form.

Are you completing this application on behalf of other organisations? i.e you are a Community Forest applying on behalf of a number of schools?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Does your organisation have public liability insurance? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending

Public liability insurance covers injury and damage claims brought as a result of the planting project. If your organisation does not have appropriate insurance, please get in touch with the Grants Team.

Is your project 'not for profit'?

☒ Yes ☐ No

We can only support projects that are 'not for profit'.

Have you applied for a grant from The Tree Council before?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Are Tree Wardens involved in your project?

☐ Yes ☐ No

To find out more about [Tree Wardens](#) please visit our website.

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Project Information

This is your chance to tell us about your project and explain why it deserves funding from The Tree Council and partners. Projects that closely align with the Selection Criteria will be scored more highly during assessment and will have a greater chance of being awarded a grant / free trees.

Project name (if applicable)

Please tell us about your project, including what you're planning to do, what you're going to plant (e.g., hedgerow, orchard), and why. What impact will your project have?

This is your chance to share your story. You don't need to list every tree species here, as the data is captured elsewhere. Please keep your story below 250 words.

Community Involvement & Benefit

We are looking to support projects that directly benefit people and communities. Please tell us who you are engaging with and how you are involving them in your project.

Which sections of the community will be involved with your project? Select all that apply. *

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Pre-school children (ages 3-5) | ☐ Adults (25-64) |
| ☐ Children (5-15) | ☐ Adults (65+) |
| ☐ Young adults (16-24) | ☐ N/A |

How will the community be involved in your project? Select all that apply. *

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Planning the project | ☐ N/A |
| ☐ Planting trees | ☐ Other <input type="text"/> |
| ☐ Tree aftercare and management | |

How will your project benefit people and communities? Select all that apply. *

- ☐ Planting is publicly accessible, publicly visible, or in community-used spaces
- ☐ Involvement of young people that includes elements of training, skills development or enterprise
- ☐ Planting will take place in areas of deprivation or of high social / environmental need
- ☐ Involvement of local community groups
- ☐ Other

Please share any further details on how your project will benefit and engage local communities.

Biodiversity Improvement

Projects must demonstrate biodiversity improvement.

How will your project improve biodiversity? Select all that apply. *

- ☐ Trees will be native species
- ☐ Tree species have been chosen with biodiversity in mind (i.e provide berries, blossom etc)
- ☐ Focuses on specific species or on habitat restoration/connectivity
- ☐ Part of a wider environmental initiative or strategy
- ☐ Contribution to climate resilience, (e.g. riparian planting)

☐ Other

Please share any further details on how your project will improve biodiversity.

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Project Location

This section helps us identify the sites where your planting will take place.

How many sites are you planning to plant on? *

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

A 'site' could refer to a specific, identifiable location where planting activities will take place, such as school grounds.

Please [get in touch](#) with the Grant Team if you have any questions or if you plan to plant on more than 5 sites, as you may need to complete more than one application form.

To help accurately locate your planting sites please provide a Google Pin reference.

1. Open Google Maps on your computer or smart phone.
2. Click on your planting site (in the middle of the site if possible)
3. At the bottom of the screen, you will see a reference (e.g 51.377829, -2.344961) - click on this
4. Copy and paste into the relevant box below.

Site 1: Google Pin reference

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Pre-planting Site Assessment

The questions in this section help us to ensure that you have considered key details whilst planning your project. Please read the '**Pre-planting site assessment**' section within the **General Tree Planting Guidance**.

Please fill out a separate form for each of your sites - unless the sites are very similar, in which case they may be grouped into one form.

When assessing grant applications we favour those that demonstrate a thorough understanding of site conditions and suitability for tree planting.

If your site already has information like species records, habitat surveys, or an existing site management plan, please attach these to your application in the "supporting documentation" section below.

How many pre-planting site assessment forms will you be filling in? *

☒ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5

If you are unsure, please get in touch with the [Grants Team](#) to discuss. We'll be happy to guide you.

Site 1 - Site assessment

Site 1 name: *

Please provide a name to help us distinguish between your sites—especially if you are planting on more than one. This can be something simple like 'Site 1' or something location-specific such as 'Blackberry Drive Planting Site' or 'Parkside School Playground'

Select the access level of the site.

☐ Fully open to the public at all times

☐ Private, no access

☐ Open during certain hours/days

☐ Other

☐ Access by permission only

What is the land ownership status of the site? *

If the land is leased we require security of tenure for a minimum of 10 years.

Are you aware of any future proposals for a change of use of your planting site?

☐ Yes ☒ No

The Tree Council is committed to 'the right tree in the right place'. We take a proactive approach to ensuring that the projects we fund achieve biodiversity improvement and do not threaten or degrade preexisting special habitats or protected species.

Describe the setting for your chosen planting site. Select all that apply. *

☐ School Grounds

☐ Woodland

☐ Farmland

☐ Public Park

☐ Street

☐ Riverside / Riparian

☐ Community Allotment

☐ Housing Estate / Residential Development

☐ SuDs (Sustainable Drainage Systems)

☐ Existing or new orchard

☐ Parish / Community Council Land

☐ Other

☐ Parkland

Briefly describe your planting site as it is now and which habitats are present. *

e.g. The planting site is located on unused land at Lakeside School. The habitats present include improved grassland, scrub (brambles) and 10m of mixed native species hedgerow, which was planted last year.

Are you aware of any special or protected species on site?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure

Does your planting site have protected status or a natural or heritage designation?

☐ Yes ☒ No

e.g National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Scheduled Monument etc.

Does your site (or close neighbouring sites) contain any buildings or structures which could be impacted as result of tree planting and future growth?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Are there any overhead or underground services / utilities that could be impacted by planting and growth over time?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Have you considered site access arrangements? E.g. how you'll get equipment to site.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Have you carried out a basic soil assessment to establish the suitability of the site for tree planting?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you confident that you've assessed your site thoroughly to confirm its suitability for tree planting?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, please get [in touch](#) with the Grants Team to discuss.

Permission to plant

Do you have permission to plant on your site(s)? *

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Pending

Please confirm even if your organisation owns the site(s).

Permission to plant - please upload written evidence here e.g. lease, letter from landowner.

or drag files here.

Ideally this should be a letter saved as a PDF, on headed paper, e.g. a letter from the School or Parish Council. If you have different documents for different sites, please upload clearly stating which evidence document relates to which site.

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Maps and Site Plans

A site plan is an important element of the assessment. How will you send these? Select all that apply. *

- ☒ I will upload my plan(s) using Google MyMaps
- ☐ I will upload a hand-drawn / scanned site plan(s)
- ☐ I have the plan(s) mapped on another mapping system (i.e ArcGIS)

Please refer to the Application Guidance for information on our requirements regarding mapping and site plans.

Planting Plans

Please provide the total number of trees you plan to plant for each tree community across your sites. Where applicable, include the size of the planting area. This information will help us assess whether your proposed spacing and planting density are appropriate.

Your response should align with the site plans you uploaded in the previous section and correspond to the spreadsheet you will upload later.

At the end of this section, please also provide the total number of trees you are requesting through this application.

Number of trees

Which tree communities are you planting across your sites? Select all that apply. *

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☒ Orchard | ☐ Agroforestry |
| ☒ Hedgerow | ☐ Standard tree(s) |
| ☐ Microforest (Miyawaki) | ☐ Standard tree(s) in hedgerow |
| ☐ Shelterbelt | ☐ Other |

Number of orchard trees

Number of hedgerow whips

Length of hedgerow (m)

Total number of trees you are requesting

Include all the trees across your sites from the numbers above.

Total number of trees (across all your sites and all your communities) *

Note: If you are applying for free trees via the National Highways scheme, the number should be between 2,500 and 50,000. If your tree numbers are higher or lower please [get in touch](#) with the Grants Team to discuss.

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Your Trees

This section outlines how you are going to source (Network Rail & SPEN only), plant, and look after your trees. See the **General Tree Planting Guidance** for further information.

Site Preparation, Planting & Establishment

When do you intend to plant your trees? Select all that apply. *

- ☐ October ☐ November ☐ December ☐ January ☐ February ☐ March

Although it is not compulsory, we encourage applicants to plant between the end of October and December as this will allow for root development before the next growing season, and aid successful establishment.

Investing in the preparation of your planting site(s) before starting tree planting is essential. Therefore, please briefly outline how you will prepare your site(s) for tree planting and who will be doing the work (i.e. contractors and/or volunteers). *

*Please take time to read the **Site Preparation** information found in the **General Tree Planting Guidance**. You may want to include information on how you will remove vegetation ahead of planting, for example.*

Which tree protection methods are you planning to use? Tick all that apply. *

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Fencing | ☐ Fully biodegradable guards (e.g. Terra-Bio) |
| ☐ Weld mesh | ☐ Cardboard guards |
| ☐ Robust staking and ties | ☐ No tree protection |
| ☐ Bio-spiral (we will only fund non-plastic guards) | ☐ Other |

Please briefly explain why you're using these tree protection methods, or if you've decided not to use any, let us know why. *

i.e. guards are required as we have rabbits on site.

Which other measures will you be taking to ensure that your trees establish successfully? Select all that apply. *

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Irrigation / Watering | ☐ Weed management |
| ☐ Fertilising / Feeding | ☐ Formative pruning |
| ☐ Mulching | ☐ Other |

Use this section to provide further details about how you will plant your trees (e.g notch, pit, etc) and the measures you'll take to ensure your trees establish successfully (e.g watering and mulching). Also include who will carry out the work (e.g., staff, volunteers, contractors). Max 800 characters. *

*Please read the **Tree planting and establishment** information within the **General Tree Planting Guidance Document**.*

Finance & Match Funding

Budget spreadsheet

Please provide us with a budget for your project using the *Project Budget Sheet* template provided.

IMPORTANT - DO NOT USE YOUR OWN BUDGET TEMPLATE.

Before completing your *Project Budget Sheet*, please make sure you have read our *Application Guidance* and have an understanding of what we will and won't fund.

Please upload the Project Budget Spreadsheet - Excel file only

Upload

or drag files here.

Can your organisation claim back VAT?

☒ Yes ☐ No

We will only pay VAT if you are unable to recover it.

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If you are unable to commit to 3 years, reach out to the [Grants Team](#) to discuss.