

HOW TO START A COMMUNITY TREE NURSERY

Our expert advice will help you set up and run a successful Community Tree Nursery, and ensure that when your trees are planted out, they enhance the landscape. Happy growing!



WHAT IS A COMMUNITY TREE NURSERY?

Growing small quantities of trees is straightforward and can be done with little horticultural experience as long as you have time and enthusiasm.

A Community Tree Nursery is when people come together to gather local tree seeds, plant them and care for them until they become young trees. It could be just a couple of people or a whole group. When the young trees are ready, the same people may also plant them or they may instead pass them on to others in their community to plant.

The newly grown trees can be used to create woodlands, hedgerows, orchards, or single trees in rural or urban areas. They might be planted in a local park, school grounds, on private farmland, in community or domestic gardens, or in private or community spaces. You'll need permission from whoever owns the land, of course.

Before you start gathering seeds, you need to know where your trees are going to be planted, to make sure you choose tree species that are suitable for the space. Being clear on *why* you want to grow trees and *where* you will put them, and choosing the *right* trees for the *right* place, will guide you on the growing methods you'll need, how many trees you need to grow and what help and resources you may need along the way.

Working together

A great way to start is to find out if there's someone already doing 'tree things' in your area. Maybe local conservation charities or community projects are actively growing trees. Ask yourself if you need to start up a new Community Tree Nursery or if you could support an existing one.

Working with parish and town councils,

schools, your local tree wardens and local authority tree officers and others can help you find a useful and sustainable outlet for the trees you want to grow. Growing trees can be a great opportunity to connect with others in your community – providing new trees or replacing ones that have been lost can bring you together.

Something for everyone

After you've successfully grown trees at home, setting up a Community Tree Nursery is a great next step. It can be run at different scales, levels of complexity to suit a local situation or reflect the people involved. A nursery can be:

- A collective of growers, growing seeds in their gardens for a shared purpose.
- A community working together in response to local climate or environmental issues.
- A group specialising in growing specific species or locally rare varieties that aren't commonly available.
- A school or youth group growing trees for an outdoor space that they will tend to and nurture.
- A social group for anyone who may benefit from horticultural therapy.

There is no single right way to run a Community Tree Nursery. As long as your activities are compliant with the law, the scale and approaches you can take to growing trees are as varied as the trees themselves. Your aim should be to enjoy the process and hopefully share the experience with family, friends and your community. 🌱