

We are delighted that you are interested in applying for trees through our Community Tree Nursery at Townfield Head Farm. We want to make sure that our trees go to their new homes with a plan in place and that your community can benefit from the trees for many years to come.

Please read through the information below about eligibility, how to apply for trees and we strongly recommend reading through the FAQs to help you with your planting project. There are also plenty of resources online with the [Woodland Trust](#) that you may find helpful when planning your project.

We are more than happy to discuss your project with you, and we'll do our best to answer any questions you may have, so do not hesitate to contact us at gchsheffield@gmail.com

Your Project Eligibility

Checklist Groups & Org

- Will you be planting between December and March?
- Do you want 5 or more trees?
- Do you own the land or have permission to plant on the land?
- Are you planting directly into the ground? – i.e. not into pots.
- Is the location of the planting free of or away from (between 10 - 30 feet depending on tree species) under or above ground services such as electricity cables, building structures and/or underground pipes?
- Is the planting location out from under existing tree canopy?
- Is the planting location a minimum of 1m away from existing hedges? If not, are you planting to fill gaps in hedging or create a new hedge line?
- Does the ground have good drainage? – i.e. the ground isn't water logged.
- Is the planting location away from a main river?
- Do you have enough space to plant trees a minimum of 1m apart?
- Is your planting project under 2ha (two thousand square metres)?
- Is your planting area away from livestock?
- Do you have a plan for how to look after your trees?

If you did not answer 'YES' to all of the above questions, your project may not be suitable for this scheme. If you have any queries regarding your eligibility, you can contact us on gchsheffield@gmail.com to discuss.

What you need:

- A location for planting
- Spade/s
- Gloves
- Woodend stake/s (approx. 1.5m) or bamboo pole/s
- Rubber tree tie/s

How to apply

Our application form can be completed online using our Google form – [Planting Scheme Application Form](#). A downloadable Microsoft Word version of the form available for download on [our website](#) from Friday 15th October. The deadline for applications for the first-round of the scheme is **midnight 22nd November 2021**.

The form has 3 sections:

- You & Your Idea,
- Your Plan, and
- Your Partnership

1. You & Your Idea

This section is all about the ‘why, what, where, when, and who’ of your project. Read through the guidance below to help you write this section of the form.

Why? We want to know why you want to plant trees. Most of us who already love trees know that they are beautiful and amazing things, but we know that there are other important reasons why you might want to plant with your group and in the location you have chosen. It’s your opportunity to tell us *why* trees are important to you and your community.

What? We want to know what trees you want from our range of 7 species and how many.

Where? We also need to know where you want to plant and that you have the permission to do so. Use the Eligibility Checklist to check if your location is suitable. We will need to see evidence that you have permission to plant in the location you have chosen, and we will need an address and/or map reference so that we can map out where the trees have been planted.

When? For first-round applications we need to know when you are going to plant your trees in December – January – tell us if you have already decided on the date/time of your planting and if it will be an event or part of another activity. If you are intending to plant later in the season (between Feb-March) but want to apply in the first-round, please let us know where you will be looking after the trees temporarily before your eventual planting date.

Who? We need to know who is applying for the trees, who will be planting the trees, and who/what will benefit from the trees.

2. Your Plan

This section is all about the ‘how’ of your project. Use the information below to help you complete this section of the form.

How? This is crucial. We need to know how you have planned to plant your trees (on the day of planting) and how you plan to look after and maintain the trees for a minimum of 12 months after the planting day. Use the [Planting & Maintenance Plan template](#) to help you outline how you will look after the trees and to tell us about any other activities or events that might be associated with your planting.

3. Your Partnership

This section is about how you can help create a picture of community planting and contribute to creating a green, living heritage collection in Sheffield. If your application is successful, we will provide a short quarterly feedback report form for you to complete - please let us know if you agree to this.

This section is also your chance to tell us if you have plans to do any press about the tree planting – it is not a requirement and isn’t a criterion for a successful application, but it helps us identify ways we can help to promote each other’s activity. We would also like to know if your organisation/group has any events or activities planned outside of the tree planting – this helps us get an idea of how our work fits in with the other activities on offer across Sheffield.

FAQs

We know that tree planting might be new to some of you and although we are by no means experts ourselves, we have tried to answer some of the common questions that come up in discussions. We strongly recommend that you read through these FAQs before applying. If you have a question that isn't answered below, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at gchsheffield@gmail.com

Where can we plant? You can plant on public and/or private land that will be accessed by the public and that you own or have permission to plant on. For example, you might have identified an open area of grass near where you live that is owned by the Council and have sought permission to plant there OR you may own a small patch of land that has a public footpath through it that can be easily accessed by the public OR you are developing hedging in a community space. If you are in doubt if your location is exactly what we are looking for, then please do contact us to chat this through.

Where can't we plant? You cannot plant on wetlands, archaeological sites, sites with rare and/or protected species, non-ploughed grassland, streets and pavements, or heathland.

Can we plant trees on the street? Street trees need extra care in planning, strategy and after-care. At this time, we are not able to offer trees for street planting. However, if you have a plan to plant street trees, make sure you have read up on Sheffield's Street Tree Strategy – you can find out more here from [Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust](#). You will also need to get permission from Sheffield City Council via their [Streets Ahead](#) team on 0114 273 4567. There are other organisations within Sheffield that are also working on street tree planting that you might want to connect with, such as [Nether Edge & Sharrow Sustainable Transformations](#) and [Abbeydale Street Trees](#).

Why do we have to plant between December and March? Our trees have been planted high in the hills in an exposed location and as a result they have gained a degree of hardiness that will help them fair well in lower altitude and sheltered locations. Our trees are barerooted when you collect them, which means they are at their most dormant phase in Winter - the deciduous trees have shed all their leaves. We do this to protect the tree from trauma and to lower the risk of the tree not surviving the process of being lifted, moved and re-planted.

When do we plant our trees once we've collected them? Ideally you would plant the same day, however, you can keep the trees in their root bags for a few days if you keep them off the ground outside to protect them from any frost. You can 'heel in' trees temporarily in your garden or allotment if you need to wait longer before planting. If you plant your trees a few days after collecting them, ideally you will soak the roots in a bucket of water for 30mins to 1hr max before planting.

Will our trees definitely grow? There are no guarantees with tree planting. The composition of the soil, the watering schedule, the weather, pests, people etc. – all these things and more can affect the chances of a tree growing, especially a tree that is in a new location. It is safer to assume that a third of the trees you plant will not 'take' and may die or take a lot longer to establish in their new home. This is another reason we recommend planting a group of trees. But don't be discouraged, it's often surprising how resilient trees are!

Why do we need to plant 5 or more trees? At this first-round of applications, we are looking to provide trees to groups and organisations that can take a number of trees at the same time. This is to limit any trauma to the trees in the Nursery during the lifting process and to reduce the risk of inefficient planting. It

is also more economical to do one collection run for 5 trees, than it is to do 5 collection runs for 1 tree. It also gives the trees a better chance of growing in their new homes – trees of the same species like to be planted near each other and the more trees you plant in the same area, the greater your chances that at least two-thirds will survive.

What is the maximum number of trees we can have? We have between 600 - 1,000 trees available. We are not capping the number of trees per application; however, we aim to make trees available to as many different groups and organisations as possible. If you would like to apply for over 100 trees, please contact us before applying gchsheffield@gmail.com

How do we know which tree species is right for our location? The Woodland Trust have a handy guide that gives you information about a variety of different species (including the species we have available). Please use this to help you select the tree that is best suited for your location. It will depend on the location you are planting on; taking into consideration things like surrounding buildings, access to water etc. You can download the Woodland Trust's guide [here](#). If you are wanting to plant hedging, then it is recommended to do a mix of trees such as a mix of Hawthorn, Field Maple, Dog Rose and Blackthorn.

How do we care for the trees after planting? The best thing you can do to help your trees get the best start is to get the planting right. If you are planting in grass, it is recommended that you pit plant (digging out a pit deep enough and wide enough to fully cover the roots) and turn the turf upside-down so that the grass is facing down to the ground and packed around the roots and the base of the tree firmly. You won't need to be concerned about watering the trees before the Spring/Summer unless we experience unusually dry and warm weather. During the Summer months, it is important to keep an eye on the weather and have a plan to be able to water the trees, especially if we have a lack of rainfall. If you are planning to plant a woodland, it is advised that you read the [Woodland Trust's information](#) on planning a community woodland and writing a full management plan.

Why are the trees barerooted? Our trees are grown in open exposed land rather than pots. As such, when the trees are at their most dormant (when the tree goes into a form of hibernation) they are lifted from the ground and the soil is gently loosened from the roots and the roots are covered with a bag to protect them from drying out. With this lifting from the Nursery ground, some of the roots are cut away – this process is usually good for the tree in the long run as it can help to produce a denser rootball. However, in the short term, it means that the roots can dry up a lot quicker in the Spring and Summer months, so a watering plan is key to helping the roots thrive in the ground at this time of year if rainfall is limited.

How do we get permission from the Council to plant? If you have identified a piece of land that you believe is maintained and owned by Sheffield City Council, you will need to contact parksandcountryside@sheffield.gov.uk FAO: Community Forestry or call the Council's switchboard and ask for the Community Forestry team on 0114 2500500. To help them identify the area you wish to plant, provide them with as much detail as possible – images of the site, map reference (you can use Google maps for this) and road names.

What counts as a 'community group or organisation'? We don't want to exclude groups of people who are not considered 'official' organisations. The aim is to encourage people who are collectively taking on the responsibility of planting and maintaining the trees as they grow through their lifetime. You might not be a 'constituted group', but if you have a collective that is working together, then you can apply. For example, your group might be an after-school club, a community football team, a charity or another not-

for-profit group, a GP surgery, a school etc. If you have any doubts, please contact us and we will happily discuss this with you.

Do you do a delivery service? At present we do not have the capacity to offer a delivery service for the trees. We will be holding 4 collection days in December and in January for the first-round of applications. If your application is successful then you will be contacted about the dates and times of these days.

How do we plant trees? We do not expect you to know how to plant trees or have any experience of planting before – we've all had to learn by doing at some point. The Woodland Trust provides a [simple step by step guide](#) to planting trees and the different ways you can plant depending on the tree size. There is a [great video](#) on pit planting, although our trees are bigger than the small whip tree in the video, the video will help to give you a guide. HOWEVER, you will only need to use a spiral or collar protection if you are planting in a wide-open space such as a field, or if you know you have wild rabbits or hares in the area. You will however need canes or stakes and rubber tree ties for your planting – we will advise you of this if your application is successful.

How do we know if there are any underground services in our planting area? If you are planting on Council land, they will do an assessment of the area to check for this. To help you identify potential services in other areas, look out for things like manhole covers, hydrant points and gas meters.

Do we need any equipment? Yes. You will need to use a spade for the digging, we recommend using a pair of gardening or work gloves and a gardening fork can really help with loosening up the soil especially on frosty days. You will also need to [stake](#) or [cane](#) your trees with a [tree-tie](#). Staking trees prevents the tree from being blown out of its position and helps to prevent damage to the tree while it is establishing. Although some of the trees may be small enough not to require staking and a bamboo cane will suffice, it is worth staking in preparation for when the foliage returns to the tree and it is more susceptible to wind damage, and you can adjust the stakes the following year as the trees establish.

The simplest way to approach staking a tree is as follows:

- LOW to the ground near the base of the tree (only a couple of inches from the ground with small trees)
- ANGLED into the ground so that you create a triangle gap between the ground, tree and the stake
- OPPOSITE side to the prevailing wind (take a look around to see where the wind is blowing from by how other trees and grass have grown, whatever direction it is leaning towards, the wind is coming from the opposite side)
- TIED not too tight (give a little bit of slack to the tie so that the tree can move a little but not so loose that the tie is drooping).

Here are a couple of quick videos to help you with how to stake your trees: [Gardeners World](#) and [Waitrose & Partners](#).