



Tree-mendous Challenge



WHAT WE'D LIKE YOU TO DO

- Boost the wildlife value of the trees, hedges and woodland on your park.
- Plant new native trees and/or manage you existing woodland and hedges to make them more valuable for wildlife.
- Do something **NEW** that will make a significant positive impact for wildlife.
- The scope of the work should reflect the resources you have and the location and size of your park.
- For example, a large park might create a whole new woodland copse; a small park might just put in a small number of trees or a new line of hedge. A residential park might encourage each resident to 'sponsor' a new tree.

WHY TAKE THE CHALLENGE?

Well-managed trees, hedges woodland provide a vital home for an incredible variety of plants and animals. They're also great for humans, and growing trees helps to lock away carbon dioxide.

When you start and complete a challenge(s), you'll get a logo(s) to display to let everyone know what you are doing and what you have achieved.



1. DECIDE WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO

- Decide which area/s of your park to focus on – this might be an existing woodland area or a part of the park where you can plant new trees, or both.
- Take photos of the area as a visual record of your 'starting point'.
- Once you've decided to take up this challenge, let us know using the [online form](#). You'll get a logo to show that you've started the challenge.

2. MAKE A PLAN

- Focus on native tree planting and woodland management that boosts biodiversity.
- Work out what you can do to make your target area more valuable to wildlife in terms of the food and shelter it provides.
- Think about how you can boost both the variety and quantity of native wildlife growing and living there.
- Get help from a woodland expert or wildlife group.
- Use the good ideas and resources below as a starting point.
- Be ambitious!
- You can use the wildlife challenge plan template [here](#). We would be delighted to receive a copy of your plan along with any photos, so we know what you are working on.



3. PUT YOUR PLAN INTO ACTION

- Put someone with the necessary skills in charge of the job and give them the time and resources they need to get on with it.
- Let everyone know what you're doing and keep them updated on progress.
- Use your challenge to educate everyone. Make the challenge part of what your park is 'all about'.

4. REPORT ON YOUR SUCCESS

- When you've reached your project goal or a first major milestone let us know – send us details of what you've achieved and upload your report and photos of the results [here](#).
- If you're due an advisory visit, show your advisor what you've achieved.

5. WINNING THE CHALLENGE

- Once we've received details of what you've done, we'll review the information.
- If you have done enough, you'll win the challenge and get a “*We've completed Tree-mendous Challenge*” logo to display.
- If not, we'll let you know what you still need to do.



GOOD IDEAS FOR YOUR PLAN

- If possible, do a biodiversity survey so that you have a baseline from which to work. Repeat the survey at regular intervals to monitor progress. Your local Wildlife Trust should be able to help.
- Aim to create woodland areas that have a diverse structure and contain a wide range of tree, shrub and ground flora species and which are home to as wide a range of plants and animals as possible.
- Ensure any new planting maximises the benefits to wildlife by helping to link up existing areas of woodland. Ensure that any new planting will add wildlife value and not hurt existing wildlife habitat.
- Give yourself a target of planting a certain number of new trees, a certain length of hedge, or establishing a new copse, woodland area or an orchard – whichever is appropriate for your park's context.
- When planting, choose a variety of local, native species, drawn from the immediate vicinity if possible, to maximise the value of the new area to wildlife.
- Maintain a shrub understorey and encourage trees to regenerate naturally. Introduce woodland wildflowers and ground flora.
- Encourage the growth of wildflowers and other groundcover by judiciously removing plants such as rhododendron (NB: remember your goal is to maximise biodiversity).
- Develop glades and pathways through woodland to increase sunlight reaching the ground. Create a buffer strip of biodiversity or meadow grassland around the edge of a woodland.
- Leave logs and other dead wood in place to decompose, including standing dead wood where possible unless it constitutes a safety risk. Create brash piles to provide habitat for reptiles etc.
- Use coppicing to extend the lifespan of appropriate trees.
- Leave grass uncut underneath single trees, to a radius of 50 cm or more. Plant bulbs underneath single trees to provide Spring and Autumn colour.
- Encourage or introduce wildflowers underneath single trees to maintain display after bulb flowering. Consider initiating a pollarding regime on appropriate trees.
- Control invasive non-native species such as Japanese knotweed.



ONLINE RESOURCES

The Woodland Trust (woodlandtrust.org.uk) offers advice on tree planting and planning and managing a new wood.

The Wildlife Trust's (wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-advice/how-manage-woodland-wildlife) advice on how to manage a wood for wildlife.

A toolkit of information for woodland management for wildlife (woodlandwildlifetoolkit.sylva.org.uk/).

Small Woodland Owners' Group – swog.org.uk – works to conserve British woodland and is open to anyone interested in woodland management.

The National Hedgelaying Society – hedgelaying.org.uk – provides training and information on traditional hedge management.

Hedgelinek – hedgelinek.org.uk – a partnership for everyone interested in hedgerows; its website is a cornucopia of all things hedge-related.

English Hedgerows Trust – hedgerows.co.uk – website has a great Good Practice Guide and species list, amongst other information.

Grants and funding

It's worth knowing that the Woodland Trust offers subsidised packs of hedging and woodland via the subsidised landowner tree packs on its online shop (<https://shop.woodlandtrust.org.uk/landowner-packs>). These are available during the Winter months (October to March).

The Woodland Trust provides landowners with woodland and creation guidance and funding through its MOREwoods and MOREhedges projects. To apply for MOREwoods funding you will need to plant on at least 0.5 ha (1.25 acres) of non-wooded land in total. Hedge schemes are judged on merit with support directed towards those hedges that link areas of existing or newly planted woodland to the wider landscape. You can apply via the Trust's website.