

# Urban Tree Challenge Fund 2024

## Taunton Town Council

### Planting Proposal

#### Proposal

#### Total planting opportunity

Location	Style	Number
Lyngford Park	Individual, infill, boundary, woodland expansion, shading	62
Priorswood Park football	Individual, infill, boundary, woodland expansion, shading	46
Taunton Green	In-field, avenue, boundary, woodland extension, shading	59
Leslie Avenue	Avenue, in-fill, shade and fruit	49
Galmington Playing Field	Avenue, boundary, woodland extension, shading	53
Hamilton Park	Individual, infill, boundary, avenue, shading	43
Victoria Park	Individual, boundary, woodland expansion, shading.	49
Pennys Field	Individual, boundary, woodland expansion	42
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>403</b>

#### UTCf will contribute at the following rates

Activity	Rate	TOTAL for 403 trees
Supply and plant a tree in grass	£216.36/tree	<b>£87,193.08</b>
Establishment	£151.20/tree/yr (for three years)	<b>£60,933.60/yr</b>
<b>TOTAL contributions</b>		<b>£269,993.88</b>

The payment rates are set, regardless of expenditure.

Any overspend would remain the liability of the landowner/manager.

Any underspend would not need to be returned to Somerset Council or the Forestry Commission but should be 'ringfenced' within budgetary accounting to support ongoing maintenance as and when required.

### Planting conditions

Supply and plant a tree in grass.

Supply a standard tree, with a clear stem up to 1.8m from ground level with a head of branches. Standards come in a range of sizes and age is dependent on species and growth rate. Funding is based on a 14-16cm standard.

Prepare a tree pit in grass.

Plant tree with twin stakes, watering tube and mulch.

Supply a lightweight steel mesh tree guard (the protection must be suitable for the planting location).

### Creation of tree avenues

The creation of new tree avenues within parks is an exciting and rare opportunity and has the potential to add significant value to green spaces for many hundreds of years to come.

With that proposition comes a great deal of responsibility to ensure that any planting proposals have been fully assessed and considered in terms of the benefits, outcomes and long term impacts.

Somerset Council will be developing a 'Tree Avenue Working Group' to develop a protocol to guide these assessments, which will help and guide land managers in making the correct decisions around location, species choice, spacing, long term management and community engagement.

### Establishment conditions

Within the funding guidance, the Forestry Commission stipulate '*Water young tree in pit via tube applying a minimum of 60 litres per visit, 14 visits per season. Weed and check stake and ties, 7 visits per season*'

Somerset Council take a pragmatic approach to ongoing tree care to ensure long term success and would not necessarily demand that such prescriptive treatment be undertaken.

As the weather/climatic conditions within the four year 'establishment period' are not able to be determined in advance, we would advocate that '*all reasonable steps be undertaken to ensure the healthy establishment of each tree*'.

This would of course mean watering each tree with sufficient quantities of water at regular intervals if rainfall within a specific period was low.

It would also mean ensuring a sufficient 'mulching' system is in place at all times, as well as ensuring that any grounds maintenance tasks undertaken near to trees does not adversely impact their healthy establishment,

As all of the trees planted will be ‘standards’, it is not necessary to create a weed/grass free zone around the base of the tree. Indeed, the presence of a sward of long grass would reduce soil moisture loss through evaporation so should be encouraged.

The growth of scrub species within the planting zone and encroaching vegetation from adjacent hedgerows should be removed however.

Regular checks on each tree should be undertaken throughout the year to ensure that all stakes, ties and guards are in place and secure.

As the width of the stem increases during the ‘establishment period’, it will be necessary to adjust guards and ties to ensure that they are not impeding growth or causing bark to be rubbed or damaged.

### Payment terms

All capital expenditure will need to be undertaken in advance and claimed back via the Forestry Commission once per year.

A single payment will be transferred to Somerset Council, which will then be distributed to landowners according to their planting scheme.

The deadline for submission to the Forestry Commission would be 31<sup>st</sup> March within any given year, although claims can be submitted anytime before that date.

The Forestry Commission aim to settle all claims within three months.

Anticipated claim and payment schedule

Activity	Claim submitted	Capital receipt received
Tree planting capital expenditure	Feb 31 <sup>st</sup> 2025	Mid June 2025
Year 1 establishment payment	Nov 1 <sup>st</sup> 2025	Mid March 2026
Year 2 establishment payment	Nov 1 <sup>st</sup> 2026	Mid March 2027
Year 3 establishment payment	Nov 1 <sup>st</sup> 2027	Mid March 2028

### Recording and reporting

It will be necessary to retain evidence of expenditure: for example, invoices, till receipts, bank statements, delivery notes, evidence of using your own labour.

These may be required upon request by the Forestry Commission to support claims.

All records kept must be dated on or after the Agreement commencement date and be kept for at least 7 years.

It will be necessary to record the position (6 figure grid reference) of each tree planted, which will then be used in all future claims.

The Forestry Commission will undertake inspections of a selection of sites contained within an Agreement during the maintenance period, to verify the requirements of the Agreement have been met.

Landowners will receive 48 hours notice of an inspection and must allow authorised inspectors to access land.

Any pending claim payments will not be made until after a satisfactory inspection outcome.

### **Tree species selection and sourcing**

Trees within urban and peri-urban settings can provide a range of benefits such as providing shade, cool air temperature, increase rainwater absorption, improve air quality, reduce road noise, screen unsightly aspects, increase health & wellbeing, increase biodiversity, provide colour and aesthetic interest, connect with surrounding landscapes and absorb carbon.

By carefully selecting species that provide the range of needs of the site as well as suit and compliment soils, hydrology, aspect and the existing tree species present, it is possible to plant and invest in trees that will enhance the site and provide multiple benefits for decades and potentially centuries to come.

Native tree species will be the preferred choice in most situations.

Non-native species can be considered but should not exceed 10% of the total number planted within any one location.

Species choice should take into account the existing species present to maximise the potential for maintaining or creating a diverse and dynamic treescape and planting not more the 10% of any one species is considered to be a sensible guide. Creating areas or avenues containing only one or two species is not recommended as it increases the risk of multiple tree loss in the advent of attack from pests and diseases.

The Woodland Trust provide a useful guide to native trees and although its not an exhaustive list, it's a useful starting point [A-Z Guide - British Trees - Woodland Trust](#).

It is essential that the plants and trees you use are free from pests and diseases. You must source your plants from suppliers who can provide evidence that they meet the requirements set out in the Plant Health Management Standard [Directory - Plant Healthy](#)

### Next steps

Please send any questions or requests further information or clarification about the above proposed planting plan to [woodlandcreation@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:woodlandcreation@somerset.gov.uk).

It will be necessary to decide on exact numbers and the specific species choice, which can be undertaken by yourselves, by us, or a combination of both. Please share your thoughts and ideas about this.

In order to formally state your ambition to be included within the submission of the wider UTCF and LATF bids being developed by Somerset Council, please send an email to that effect alongside all relevant information to [woodlandcreation@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:woodlandcreation@somerset.gov.uk) by **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024**.

**Craig Daters**  
**Woodland Cration Officer**  
**27<sup>th</sup> March 2024**  
**(Updated 4/9/24 C. Daters)**



**Somerset**  
Council