

Calling landowners and land managers within the Taunton, Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills National Landscapes area

Are you interested in a government funded tree planting opportunity?

Somerset Council and its partner organisations are inviting **landowners and land managers** to consider adding trees into the landscape as part of a geographically focussed project that aims to connect the urban centre of Taunton to the Blackdown Hills and Quantock Hills National Landscapes.

We are submitting a bid to the [Local Authority Treescapes Fund \(LATF\)](#) and within that will include appropriate proposed planting schemes from land owners and land managers in the area.

If successful, funding will be made available to applicants who have put forward viable planting schemes to enable planting during autumn 2024.

Somerset Council has previously won bids for similar funding and is confident that this latest application to the LATF will be successful.

Background

- The LATF is designed to **support the restoration of tree cover** in non-woodland areas which may have been impacted by issues such as disease, habitat degradation or ageing tree stock.
- The fund is focussed on **planting and natural colonisation** of trees in areas outside of woodlands, including parklands, riparian zones, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths as well as trees in hedgerows and field boundaries.
- LATF funded trees can be small or large, and in **urban or rural** settings.
- The Fund aims to **improve landscape connectivity** outside woodland, increase natural colonisation where appropriate and provide benefits to ecosystems and society, such as carbon absorption, flood protection and support for biodiversity.
- The fund is part of the Government's **Nature for Climate Fund** and will directly contribute to achieving ambitious tree planting targets to restore habitats in England.

The fund

The benefits of individual trees and small areas of woodland within urban and rural settings is well understood and can not only enhance biodiversity and landscape aesthetics, but also play a vital role in supporting the development of resilient agricultural systems.

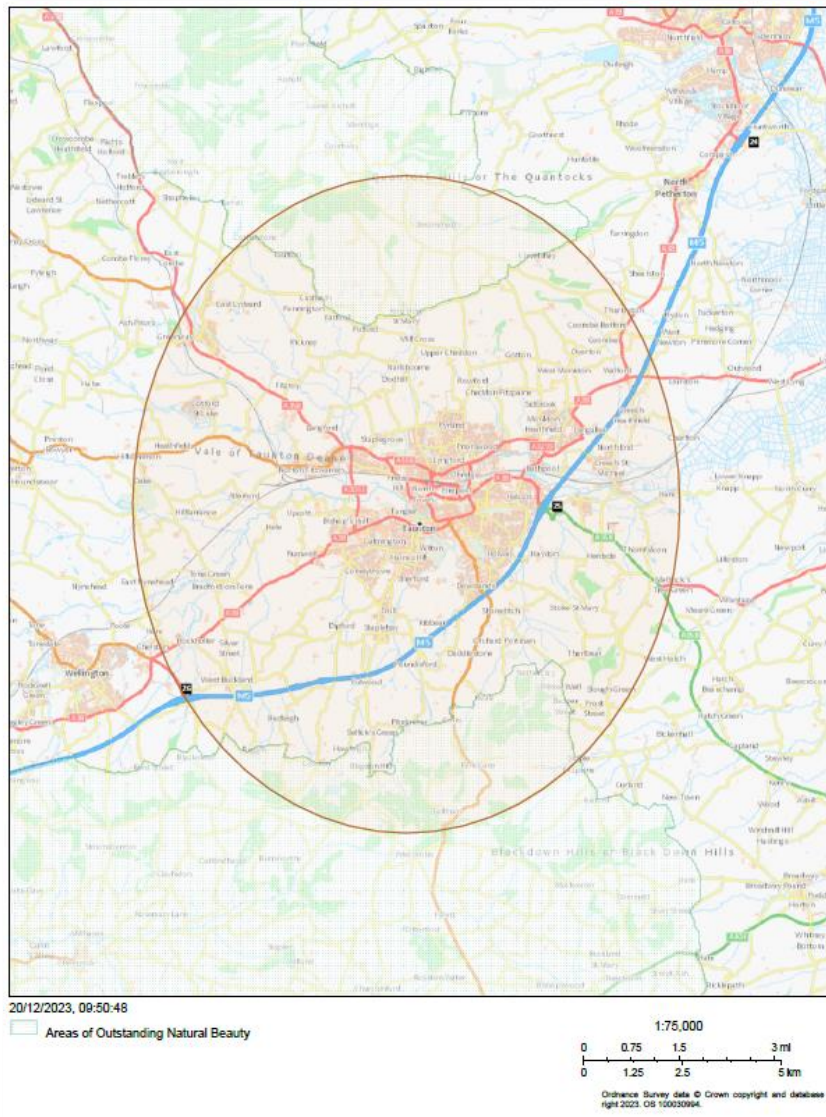
Copses, shelterbelts, trees within existing hedgerows, small linear woodlands alongside roads, footpaths and watercourses are all potential options.

As is enabling the natural colonisation of small areas (less than 0.5ha.) and the planting of 'Miyawaki forests' (small scale intensive planting).

The LATF will provide capital funding to

- **purchase and planting of trees**
£270.44 for standard trees (as a direct replacement of 'lost' trees)
£3.79 for feathers
£2.29 for whips
- **prepare the ground for planting**
For natural colonisation/re-generation only
- **capital costs such as fencing and gates**
Similar rates to Countryside Stewardship
- **maintain the trees for three years**
£189.00/tree/per year for standards
14p/tree/per year for feathers and whips

The project area is centered around Taunton



Who can apply?

The fund is open to landowners and land managers who have management control over the land for the duration of the funding agreement (autumn 2024 to autumn 2028), within, or close to the project area.

Eligible landowners and managers include

- Town and Parish Councils
- Estates
- Businesses
- Private landowners
- Farmers (including tenants)
- Schools
- Sports clubs
- Community groups

Applications that show good **value for money** are encouraged. This can be achieved through ‘match funding contributions’ from the applicant or an external source. This could be monetary (for example, private contributions) or in-kind (for example, volunteer time), but shows support for the project in addition to the grant requested.

Next steps

Register your interest and tell us about your tree planting proposals. We would like to hear from you and discuss any thoughts, ideas or tree planting plans you may have.

At this early stage, your plans and ideas do not need to be fully formed as there will be opportunities to develop them further with a member of our Woodland Creation Team.

Please complete before 27th March 2024

[Local Authority Treescape Fund expression of interest form](#)

Application timeline

Action	To be completed by
Expression of interest submission	27 th March 2024
Woodland Creation Team contacts landowner/manager and undertakes a site visit	3 rd April 2024
Develop proposals with landowner/manager	17 th April
Somerset Council to submit full application to Forestry Commission	30 th April 2024
Confirmation of grant from Forestry Commission	30 th June 2024
Completion of Agreement between Somerset Council and Landowner/manager	30 th August 2024
Commence planting/regeneration preparation	Oct to Dec 2024

Further information and guidance will be provided during the proposal development stage, but if you have any specific questions please get in touch woodlandcreation@somerset.gov.uk