

What is the Northern Forest?

The Northern Forest is an ambitious plan to plant 50 million trees in and around the cities of Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and Hull over the next 25 years.

In January 2018, the Government announced that they were allocating £5.7 million to help kickstart the project, which will be part of Defra's new 25-year plan for the UK environment.

The scheme is a partnership of four Community Forests together with the Woodland Trust.



In a nutshell: 25 years, 50 million trees!

CURRENT WOODLAND COVER:

Europe 44%

UK 13%

Northern England 7.6%

HEYwoods 2.6%



What is HEYwoods?

Established in 2002, the HEYwoods initiative aims to increase woodland cover and improve the management of existing trees, woods and associated habitats in Kingston upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire.

'The best time to plant a tree
was a generation ago,
the second best time is now'



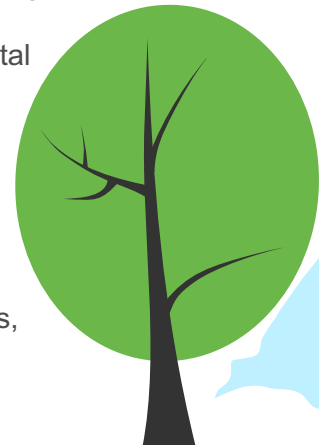
What will the Northern Forest look like in the HEYwoods area?

The landscape of the HEYwoods area is unlike the other community forests, because there is very little post-industrial or derelict land. The **rural** landscape is mostly intensive arable farmland. In **urban** areas, open spaces are under constant pressure for housing and other forms of development. Many areas are also protected for their existing environmental interest, for example wildlife or archaeology

So the Northern Forest in the HEYwoods area is unlikely to become wide swathes of new woodland. Our forest will have to fit in to the spaces available in the rural and urban landscape, taking shape through changing attitudes and greater appreciation of the vital role that trees have to play in our lives and our landscapes.

Existing tree cover is under threat from Ash Dieback and there are similar diseases and pests affecting many trees species. We need to plant a greater variety and a greater number of resilient tree species, in order to sustain and build on what we have now.

We also have to remember that woodland is not the only important habitat: hedgerows, grasslands and wetlands have important roles to play in a healthy, living landscape.



Vale of York

Low-lying rich farmland with occasional large stands of woodland. These need to be better-linked through hedgerows and copse planting. The major highway corridors (e.g. M62) should be better screened to reduce their impact on the countryside beyond.



Wolds

The Wolds form the highest parts of East Yorkshire and are characterised by a relatively steep scarp face to the west and shallow scarp slope to the east. The steep slopes can be well-wooded, but tree and hedgerow cover is generally poor, so soils are under threat of wind-blow. Tree cover is predominantly Ash, so much new planting is needed.



Benefits

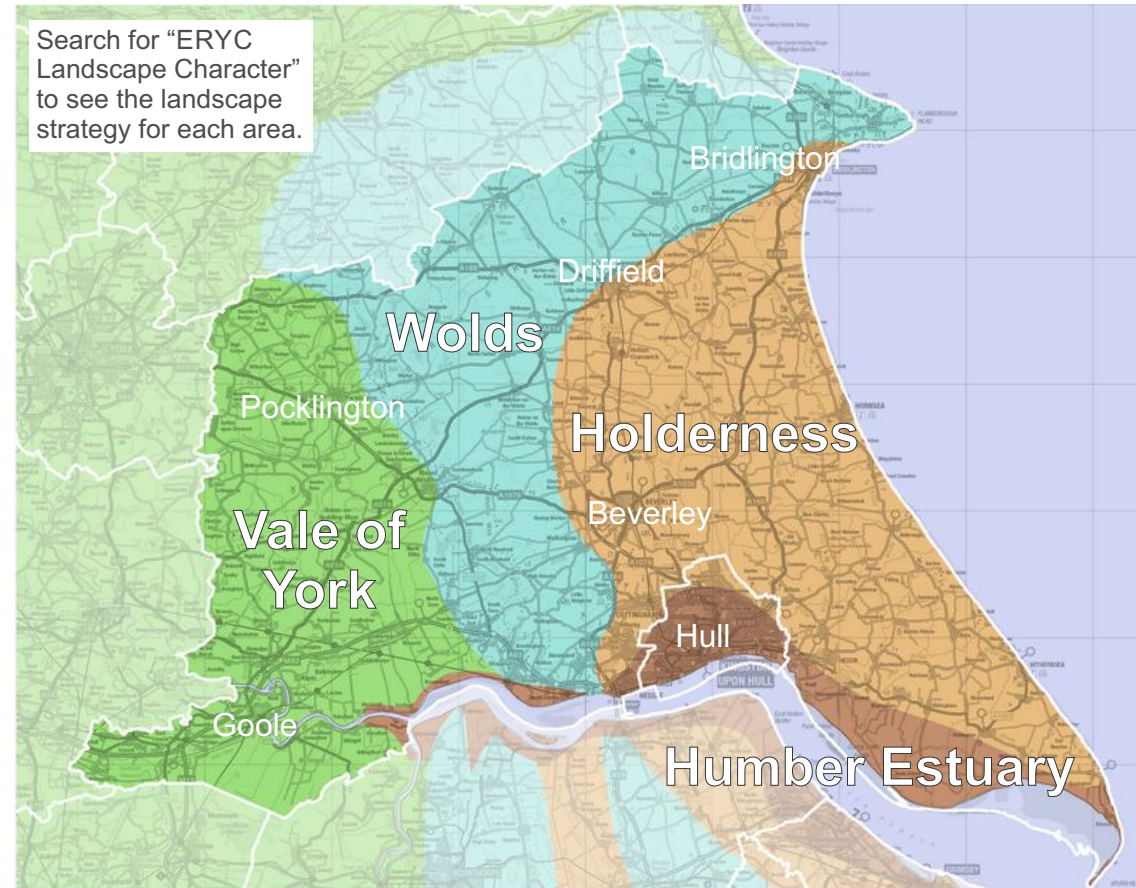
Higher levels of tree and hedge cover would:

- reduce exposure
- protect soils
- increase biodiversity and so reduce pest species
- improve pollination
- provide game cover
- produce much-needed timber

Landscape Character Areas

Natural England's Natural Character Areas give us clear indications of how we should shape the Northern Forest in rural areas.

HEYwoods Ash Dieback guidance provides more details on suitable species: <https://www.2bconsultancy.co.uk/ash-dieback.htm>



Issues

There are competing interests in land-use, and trees and woodland can be seen as a barrier for current and future priorities. Woodland can harbor pests, but improved biodiversity would result in more predators, such as hawks and beneficial insects, and a better balance overall.

Holderness

From the eastern slopes of the Wolds, across the valley of the River Hull, to the North Sea coast, Holderness is a gently undulating area of clay soils. Plantations are located sparsely, so more biodiversity and green corridors are needed.



Humber Estuary

Influenced by the wide open waters of the Humber Estuary, this area is not noted for tree cover, but would benefit from strategic woodland and hedgerow planting.



City and Town Centres

City and town centres are increasingly affected by climate change impacts, such as droughts, heatwaves, storms with high winds, rain-storms and consequent flooding. Planners are becoming ever more aware that we need green infrastructure to complement our grey and blue infrastructure, to make our towns and cities liveable - and in some cases, bearable - during extremes of weather.

We need to plant more trees in open spaces and verges, on boundaries, in paving (with enough soil!) and set about restoring the balance between grey, blue and green.



Flourishing street trees, Hesse Road

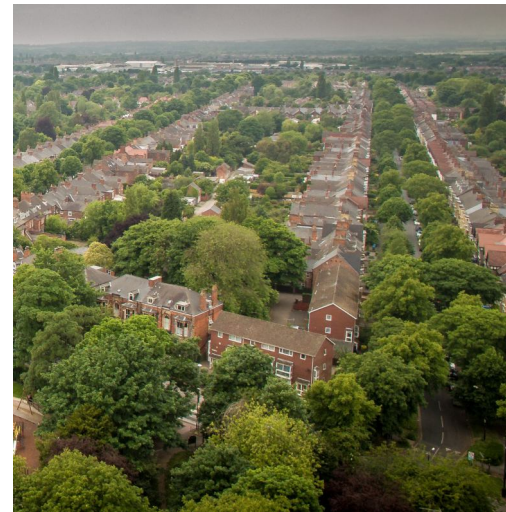


Planting as a setting for development

Suburbs/Rural Edges

Our suburbs are vitally important wildlife corridors and lungs for our cities, but they are under constant pressure from 'urban creep' - more parking, more extensions, more infill development. We need to shift the balance by also creating more opportunities for planting.

The edges of towns too often end abruptly with crude, un-designed edges to open countryside. Urban - rural edges should be planted, to act as buffer zones between town and country, and to provide critical green infrastructure and wildlife corridors.



The Avenues, Hull - a cherished asset



A wooded urban edge at Swanland - © Google Earth

Benefits

Urban trees and woodlands:

- make heatwaves more bearable by cooling and shading (increasingly important with climate change)
- absorb carbon dioxide and other pollutants to clean our air
- capture stormwater, reduce flooding and clean our water
- encourage investment
- help improve mental and physical wellbeing
- reduce Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) by helping with social interaction and integration
- provide attractive, comfortable outdoor spaces for recreation and play
- improve biodiversity and make town centres living, vibrant places which respond to the seasons.

Issues

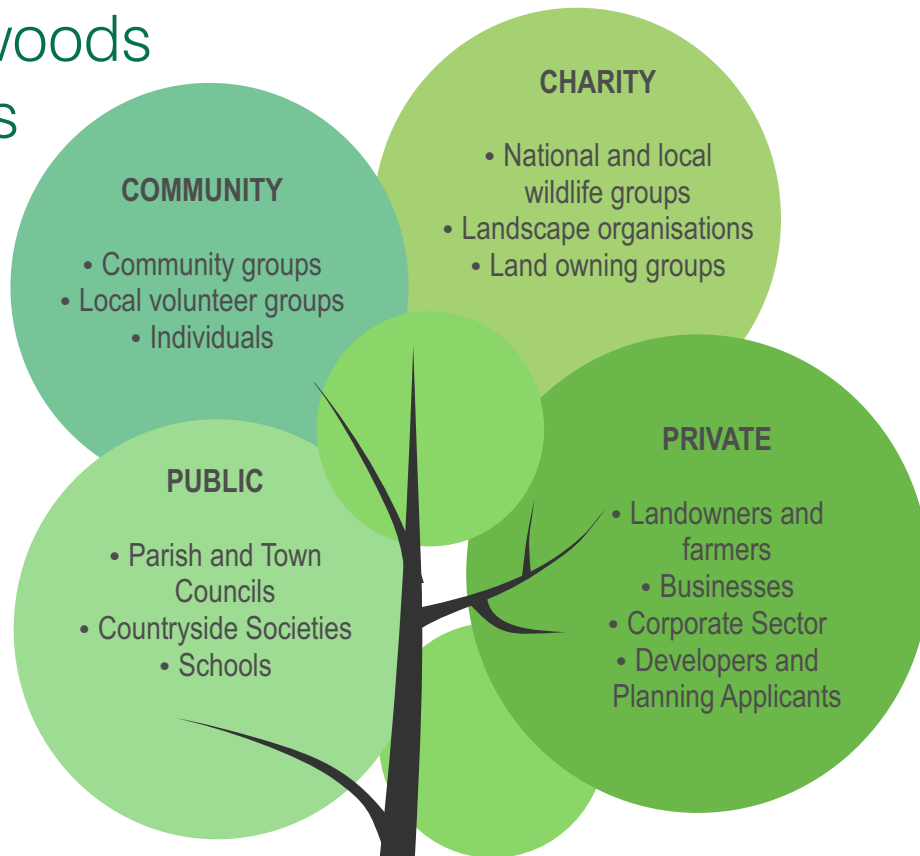
The 'wrong species' can have negative effects:

- tree roots affecting drains or foundations
- trees with 'honeydew' from aphids (e.g. some Limes) can stain parked cars
- leaf-fall can be an issue in some cases
- stressed trees can worsen air quality.

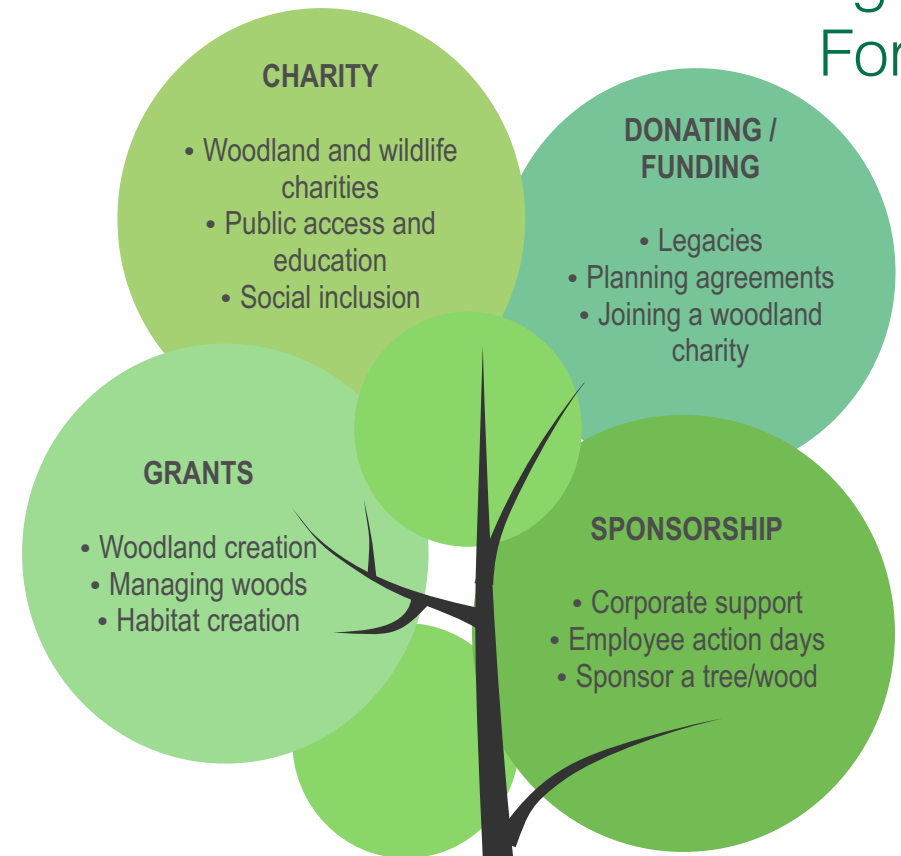
These issues can often be dealt with by selecting the right tree species for the right place - good design is critical to creating an urban forest we all want.



HEYwoods needs You!



Funding the Forest



Get in touch

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