

NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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LAST CHANCE TO GET A FREE TREE!

Wokingham Borough Council is offering residents to apply for a free tree for their garden as part of their Garden Forest Scheme, closing on 31 January.

Launched In November 2021, the Garden Forest Scheme, forms part of the council's aspiration to becoming a net-zero carbon borough, and invites residents to apply for a tree, or trees, for their own garden. The first round of applications closes next week, on 31 January.

In order to apply to the Garden Forest Scheme, the council invites you to visit its [Engage platform](#), where you will find an application form and more information about the scheme, and the project as a whole.

Over the next five years, we are looking to plant 250,000 trees across the borough to increase carbon sequestration rates. Carbon sequestration is a process whereby the trees will draw excess CO2 from the atmosphere and store it.

The scheme is set to initially run for two years, after which it will be reviewed, and a decision made on whether to extend it. Applicants will be contacted throughout March, with successful residents being given more information on arrangements for collecting a tree, which will be early Autumn 2022 to coincide with planting season.

In order to be eligible, you must have space in your garden for a tree and permission to plant the tree if the garden is not yours.

- MORE -

Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

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Councillor Wayne Smith, executive member for planning and enforcement, said: "I am really excited that we are able to launch the Garden Forest Scheme, and offer residents another way that they can help towards reaching our goal of a net-zero carbon borough.

"We know that as a council we can't do this alone, so being able to offer residents ways in which they can help is so important."

John Tucker, Director of Woodland Outreach at the Woodland Trust added: "The Woodland Trust is proud to be supporting Wokingham's Tree Project through our Emergency Tree Fund. Planting new trees is a vital step in fighting climate change and nature loss.

"By joining in the Garden Forest initiative, residents across Wokingham can play their part and get the lasting benefits of trees to enjoy for years to come."

Councillor Gregor Murray, executive member for residents, communications and emissions added:

"The Garden Forest Project is just one part of our plans to plant 250K trees across the borough over the next five years.

"Through this project, we are inviting residents to get involved in greening up Wokingham borough. We know that we can't get meet our climate emergency aspirations alone – we need to work with residents, partners, businesses and town and parish councils. Sign up and get involved."

- ENDS -

Further information:

1. More from Councillor Wayne Smith at wayne.smith@wokingham.gov.uk
2. More from Gregor Murray at gregor.murray@wokingham.gov.uk