



**CHIPPENHAM
TOWN COUNCIL**
Improving the quality of town life

Tree Planting Policy

Author: Arboricultural Officer

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1. Introduction/ Background Information

- 1.1. The benefits provided by trees, whether in rural or urban environments, have been well documented for many years. From tangible benefits such as intercepting rainfall, preventing flood and increasing urban cooling, to less easily quantifiable benefits such as increasing mental wellbeing and contributing to the historical and cultural character of an area, the benefits of a healthy tree population are many.
- 1.2. In recent years, increased tree planting has become an important aspect of climate mitigation strategy, with ambitious tree planting targets being set by the Government on a national scale. Public enthusiasm for increased tree planting is high, however successful tree planting is not as straightforward as simply putting trees in the ground. To persist in the landscape (especially an urban landscape) into maturity, the selection, location and aftercare of new tree planting must all be carefully considered (see [policy](#)).
- 1.3. Chippenham Town Council (hereafter referred to as CTC) is producing this tree planting policy to outline its broad policies regarding tree planting undertaken or funded by CTC, and outline some of the projects/ strategies which will implement these policies.
- 1.4. The first phase of formal tree planting is anticipated in Winter 2021/2022. This document should be regarded as a working draft which will evolve as the tree planting projects progress and more data becomes available on the existing tree stock and the success or failure of tree planting projects.

2. Land Ownership for Tree Planting

- 2.1. An important consideration of any Tree Planting Policy is the availability of land for tree planting.
- 2.2. CTC has freehold tenure of the following areas with varying degrees of tree planting potential:
 - John Coles Park
 - Monkton park
 - Donkey Fields
 - London Road Cemetery
 - Stanley Park
 - 6 allotments (Space limited due to nature of use)
 - Little Battens Play Area/Open space
 - Pewsham Play area/Open space
- 2.3. Delegation of services from Wiltshire Council (hereafter referred to as WC) to CTC also transferred the management responsibility of existing amenity trees (i.e., council owned trees which are not the responsibility of highways or privately owned) to CTC, along with environmental services such as grass and hedge cutting. However, the land to which these services/ management pertains remains under the ownership of WC and any 3rd party tree planting must be permitted by WC; therefore, such permissive tree planting will not be included as a policy or strategy to increase CTC's tree planting targets in this document as it is outside of CTC authority to grant permission.

Part 1- Policy

3. Broad Tree Planting Policies

- 3.1. Chippenham Town Council is committed to increasing tree cover through tree planting. It is estimated that CTC currently manage approximately 2,000 trees located on CTC owned land. CTC have set a target to double the number of trees on CTC land by 2026 through the following policies and projects.
- 3.2. Additional to the above target on CTC owned land, increasing tree cover may be achieved through funding tree planting on 3rd party land, where appropriate ([see CTC Funding of Tree Planting on 3rd party land](#))
- 3.3. Tree planting objectives will balance carbon mitigation and other tree benefits with biodiversity and amenity. Tree planting shall not be at the detriment of other valuable habitats.

By working closely with organisations such as Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, CTC will aim to increase tree planting whilst considering the impact on the wider environment.

- 3.4. Tree planting shall follow a policy of ‘right tree, right place’, in order to maximise the longevity of the trees being planted.
Factors in species selection such as tolerance to anticipated climate change, existing soil conditions and existing site constraints will be considered and professional arboricultural advice sought prior to planting new trees.
- 3.5. Tree planting shall be followed up with appropriate aftercare and management, including replacement of failed trees. *This may be provided/ funded by the council depending on the nature of the agreement/ planting project.*
- 3.6. CTC shall accept liability for any trees planted on CTC land for which it has granted consent.
- 3.7. CTC shall replace any felled trees under our ownership with a [Fixed Number Replacement Policy](#).
- 3.8. CTC shall incorporate tree planting guidance for new developments in its Neighbourhood Plan.

Part 2- Strategy

4. Tree Planting Projects on Council Owned Land (freehold tenure) 2021-2026

The following paragraphs outline some of the tree planting projects planned on land which CTC have freehold tenure for, and therefore do not require any 3rd party permission.

4.1. Monkton Park Management Plan.

- 4.1.1. In 2019 CTC acquired freehold tenure of Monkton Park as part of a devolvement agreement with Wiltshire Council (hereafter referred to as WC), which comprises a significant tree stock. Previous management of this area was largely reactive and little recent tree planting has been undertaken, and there is a good opportunity to enhance the tree coverage of the area through new tree planting.
- 4.1.2. The Monkton Park Management Plan was produced by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust ‘Wild Landscapes’ team in collaboration with CTC and following several public consultations. The Management Plan was adopted in March 2021.
- 4.1.3. A new native hedgerow approximately 200m long has been planted at the boundary of the golf course, comprising approximately 530 close-spaced trees.
- 4.1.4. Extensive tree and shrub planting is proposed in ‘Area 4’ of the planting plan. This comprises the planting of 1,720 whips of native tree species, and 3,270 scrub plants/ shrubs.
- 4.1.5. A community orchard is also proposed to be planted as part of the management plan. The community will be involved in the selection and design of the orchard, and so specifications are not available at the time of writing.
- 4.1.6. The planting described in 4.1.4 and 4.1.5 is scheduled to commence in Winter 2022, to allow for ground preparation and funding applications.
- 4.1.7. ‘Next generation’ planting is recommended in Area 2 (‘formal parkland’) to compensate for the lack of recent new planting in Monkton Park. Further planting of semi mature trees is proposed to commence in Year 2 (winter 2022), focusing on areas where older specimens may decline or there is a biodiversity concern (e.g., ash dieback). Planting specifications and plans will be produced as the strategy evolves.
- 4.1.8. Further to these aims, a Tiny Forest is proposed within the formal area of Monkton Park, which will comprise approximately 600 densely planted trees and shrubs (quantities of trees: shrubs are to be confirmed following soil and site analysis) in a 200m² area, maximising biodiversity, carbon capture and community cohesion benefits in a compact area. Subject to Council approval, planting is proposed for Winter 2021.

4.2. Stanley Park Tree Planting

- 4.2.1. Stanley Park is a recreational sports complex for which CTC holds freehold tenure.

- 4.2.2. In 2019 Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Wild Landscapes carried out a preliminary ecological appraisal, assessing the existing biodiversity and habitats of the area, primarily located around the periphery of the site.
- 4.2.3. Additionally, The Woodland Trust assessed the site for additional tree planting potential under the MOREwoods project and produced a tree planting plan comprising native species to increase the tree cover at Stanley Park as well as giving provision for funding and trees.
- 4.2.4. It is proposed that the two schemes collaborate to establish tree planting which balances with the existing ecology of the area, with input from Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Wild Landscapes, The Woodland Trust and CTC.
- 4.2.5. It is proposed that an agreed planting plan for Stanley Park be produced and planting commence in Winter 2021.

4.3. John Coles Park

- 4.3.1. Historically, Chippenham Town Council has only managed one park within Chippenham, John Coles Park.
- 4.3.2. John Coles has dense tree cover, with approximately 60% canopy coverage of available tree planting space (this excludes the MUGA, tennis courts, bowls club and hard standing of the car park); this equates to approximately 32,000m² of canopy cover within the park. Tree planting in this park has largely been needs based, with trees replanted as the need to replace older ones arises, retaining constant canopy cover in the areas of the park allocated to trees whilst retaining open areas for recreation.
- 4.3.3. John Coles Park has a wide range of species, both native and non-native. Currently, there are 74 different species of tree within the park (not including the sub-species of Japanese cherry). Although planting of native trees certainly has benefits, there are also benefits to planting non-native trees, especially in an existing urban park setting such as JCP. Appropriate non-native trees still provide wildlife resources such as nuts and nectar, increase the resilience of the urban tree stock to pests and diseases by broadening the species diversity, and give an opportunity to plant trees which are better adapted to climate change challenges such as drought and heat stress.
- 4.3.4. Tree planting in John Coles Park shall continue to be needs based and will maintain a diverse species and age range within the park, whilst continuing to provide a valuable space for recreation.
- 4.3.5. Parkland trees should be encouraged to reach maturity and develop a full canopy to provide maximum benefits. Any additional tree planting should not impede on this.



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4.4. The Donkey Fields

- 4.4.1. In 2020 CTC acquired freehold tenure of The Donkey Fields as part of a devolvement agreement with WC, which comprise a significant tree stock. Previous management of this area was largely reactive and little recent tree planting has been undertaken, however this area is less formal than some of the other parks around Chippenham and by and large re-

stocking of the existing wooded areas in The Donkey Fields can be achieved through self-seeding, with minimal intervention other than to manage safety.

- 4.4.2. In 2019, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Wild Landscapes carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of The Donkey Fields, which identified valuable grassland habitats which acted as wildlife corridors for small mammals and butterflies. Although there may be some potential to increase tree coverage by planting in these grassed areas, it is important that any such planting does not impede on their current wildlife value.
- 4.4.3. Additional tree planting in The Donkey Fields will be carefully considered in order to enhance the ecological value of the area, not impede it.

4.5. Tiny Forests

- 4.5.1. Tiny Forests are an innovative planting project provided by the charity Earthwatch UK that utilise urban areas with relatively limited space to maximise the environmental, ecological and social benefits of trees.
- 4.5.2. The Tiny Forest method involves specialist ground preparation methods (which use no chemicals or fertilisers) and dense, layered planting of 600 shrubs and trees which mimics a natural forest- all in a 200m² area, about the size of a tennis court.
- 4.5.3. Establishment is rapid and failure rate is low, and a woodland structure requiring low maintenance establishes in around 3 years, capable of attracting over 500 animal and plant species in the first 3 years and absorbing approximately 600kg of CO² annually once established.
- 4.5.4. Local communities are involved throughout the planting, maintenance and monitoring process. There is the opportunity to incorporate open learning spaces for schools, a ‘keeper team’ of 4-6 local volunteers is engaged in ongoing maintenance and periodic monitoring days encourage ‘citizen science’ to quantify the benefits of the Tiny Forest.
- 4.5.5. Tiny Forests are an effective means of increasing meaningful tree planting with significant longevity within the land available to CTC under freehold tenure. Several potential sites have been identified, with an initial site in Monkton Park proposed for planting in Winter 2021. Subject to the success of the initial site, there is the potential for further sites on CTC owned land and in the wider Chippenham area, subject to funding and permission from Wiltshire Council.

4.6. Play Areas and Allotments

- 4.6.1. CTC has the freehold tenure for two play areas and six allotments.
- 4.6.2. Although these areas have existing tree cover, there are currently no formal planting plans. These play areas and allotments provide valued recreational spaces for the community, and it is important that any additional tree planting does not impede on this, or encourage anti-social behaviour (e.g., by creating inappropriate screening around the play areas).
- 4.6.3. These play areas and allotments have a relatively low area of available land for tree planting and there are other areas within CTC ownership with more available space and therefore tree planting will have more benefit; these areas will be prioritised, however it is recommended planting plans for play areas and allotments are reviewed in 2024 as the other planting projects become established.
- 4.6.4. Any such planting plans will be in accordance with the broad tree planting policies ([section 3](#)).

5. Tree Planting on CTC Maintained Land; Non-Freehold.

5.1. Public Open Space (POS) Maintained by CTC and Owned by WC

- 5.1.1. There are several under-utilised areas of grass open space of low biodiversity and recreational use under the above category which, if planted with trees, could have a

significant impact on the landscape and contribute to the overall tree cover within Chippenham. However, such tree planting requires the permission of the landowner, (WC).

- 5.1.2. CTC will earmark potential areas for tree planting and work with WC to gain permission where possible. This is an ongoing process and will be reviewed annually.
- 5.1.3. CTC will plant any trees on such land in accordance with our Tree Planting Policies (section 3); this includes committing to aftercare and accepting liability for any such planted trees.

6. CTC Funding of Tree Planting on 3rd Party Land

CTC owned land only accounts for a small percentage of the land within Chippenham suitable for tree planting. However, CTC will establish the following funds to increase tree planting on 3rd party land.

6.1. Residential Tree Planting Budget (Subject to Approval by Full Council).

- 6.1.1. Commencing in financial year 2021/2022, CTC will establish a budget for residents within Chippenham whereby such residents can request a tree (whip) to plant in their private garden, paid for by CTC.
- 6.1.2. The fund will consist of an earmarked annual budget and trees can be requested via online booking on a first come, first served basis, up to the maximum agreed budget, with a cap of 2 trees per eligible household (eligibility criteria to be defined).
- 6.1.3. Residents may request a tree from a pre-defined list of species. Guidance will be made available as to which species may be appropriate.
- 6.1.4. Any tree planting will require the permission of the landowner.
- 6.1.5. Guidance on planting and aftercare will be made available.
- 6.1.6. CTC will assume no liability for the trees after they have been supplied.
- 6.1.7. Further specific information will be produced as the project is commenced.

6.2. 3rd Party Landowner Tree Planting Fund

- 6.2.1. CTC will establish an annual earmarked budget (tbc) for larger scale planting for landowners with available space. This will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

7. Fixed Number Tree Replacement Policy

- 7.1. Wherever appropriate, CTC will replace trees felled on CTC owned land in the same area as they have been felled.
- 7.2. The replacement will be carefully considered so that the new planting does not have to be felled prematurely for the same reasons as the one being removed.
- 7.3. In some instances, it will not be possible to replace the value (ecological, amenity or otherwise) of a felled tree with a single new planting, e.g., the value of a veteran oak cannot be replaced with a single semi-mature tree.
- 7.4. In these instances, CTC will use the Fixed Number Tree Replacement Policy.
- 7.5. The above policies refer only to trees under CTC ownership and on CTC owned land; it is outside of CTC's power to undertake replacement planting in any situation otherwise.
- 7.6. The following Fixed Number Tree Replacement Policy is based on that developed by Bristol City Council and is endorsed by the Woodland Trust. Details are below:

Trunk Diameter of Tree Lost (cm measured at 1.5 metres above ground level)	Number of Replacement Trees
Less than 15	0-1
15-19.9	1
20-29.9	2
30-39.9	3
40-49.9	4
50-59.9	5
60-69.9	6
70-70.9	7
80+	8

- 7.7. Where direct geographical replacement can't be achieved, trees will be planted in the nearest open space where permission for planting can be granted.
- 7.8. Replacement trees will generally be of a 'standard' nursery specification, or larger where appropriate.
- 7.9. If space isn't available, CTC will contribute the value of the appropriate number of replacement trees at the current market rate into the earmarked 3rd party landowner tree planting fund (see section 6.2).

Appendix 1- Tree Planting Project Schedule 2021-2026

This section outlines the anticipated schedule for tree planting projects on Chippenham Town Council owned land, and the approximate quantities of trees proposed to be planted, in accordance with the Tree Planting Policies in section 3.

Site	2021/22	Nr. Trees Planted	2022/23	Nr. Trees Planted	2023/2024	Nr. Trees Planted	2024/25	Nr. Trees Planted	2025/2026	Nr. Trees Planted	2026/2027
Monkton Park	Tiny Forest Replacement Planting	-600 trees&shrubs -20 under replacement policy	Mosaic Block 1, 'Next gen' planting Community orchard	W1: 360 W2: 220 S1: 320 shrub S2: 150 shrub Community orchard approx 30 trees. tbc with public engagement. 20 next gen planting	Mosaic Block 2, 'Next gen' planting	W3: 230 W4: 220 W5: 390 S3: 170 shrub S4: 90 hrub S5: 290 shrub 20 next gen planting	Mosaic Block 3 'Next gen' planting	W6: 300 S6: 150 shrub S7: 580 shrub S8: 290 shrub S9: 430 shrub S10: 430 shrub S11: 370 shrub 20 next gen planting	-Replacement planting; needs based - 'Next gen' planting -Any shrub/ tree planting carried over	-Fixed number replacement policy -See previous quants -20 next gen planting	Review tree planting
Stanley Park	Initial additional planting	tbc	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Review tree planting
John Coles Park	Replacement planting; needs based	28 under replacement policy (predicted space for 27)	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Review tree planting
The Donkey Fields					Initial additional planting	-Potential for 600 trees and shubs (Tiny Forest). -20 additional	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Review tree planting
Play areas; Little Battens and Pewsham							Initial additional planting	Little Battens- 15 Pewsham- 15			Review tree planting
Allotments x6									Initial additional planting	TBC on a case by case basis as current usage permits.	Replacement planting; needs based
London Road Cemetery	Replacement planting and fixed number replacement policy deficit	10 direct replacement trees Space for additional 10 trees if insufficient space for replacement planting elsewhere	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Replacement planting; needs based	Fixed number replacement policy	Review tree planting
Tree and shrub planting: year total (nr.plants)		668		1,100		1,430- 2,030		2,600		20	

