

# SURREY'S NEW TREE STRATEGY SUMMARY

## Surrey's 1.2 million new trees initiative

As part of Surrey's ambition to be a carbon neutral county by 2050, our Climate Change Strategy sets out a target for the planting of **1.2 million new trees (one for every resident) by 2030**. This ambition is not something that the County Council can deliver alone, therefore our New Tree Strategy is for the whole of Surrey, including residents, businesses the public sector, including the borough and district authorities, with the County Council taking a coordinating role.

The very first of our 1.2 million new trees was planted on 5 October 2019 at the Surrey Hills Wood Fair by the Leader and Chairman of Surrey County Council. Subsequent tree planting events were held across the county as part of Surrey Tree Week in March 2020, with Surrey's MPs planting one or more trees in their constituencies.

Trees play an important role in capturing and storing carbon dioxide, mitigating climate change. Trees also support adaptation to the impact of climate change through shading and flood prevention as well as providing significant benefits in terms of air quality, biodiversity, health and wellbeing, education and the economy.

This strategy is part of a wider **Land Use Framework**, which the Council is developing with partners, and which will be completed by March 2021. The framework will inform decisions on how land and natural capital is used, managed and protected, as well as the role of the planning policy and maximising biodiversity net gain from future developments.



MP Michael Gove and children from Bagshot Infants School planting a tree during Surrey Tree Week 2020.

We have consulted partners and experts from a range of organisations in developing our strategy, which includes an endorsement from the Forestry Commission.

## Vision and strategic objectives

Our vision is that:

**‘BY 2030, SURREY WILL BENEFIT FROM 1.2 MILLION NEW TREES, WITH THE RIGHT TREES PLANTED IN THE RIGHT PLACE, INCLUDING BOTH URBAN AND RURAL LOCATIONS, AND SUPPORTED TO GROW TO MATURITY.’**

We will deliver the vision through the following strategic objectives:

- 1. Partnership working**  
We will collaborate with partners to facilitate the planting of 1.2 m new trees in Surrey by 2030.
- 2. Right tree, in the right place**  
We will adopt and advocate the “right tree, right place” principle to maximise benefits, reduce risk and build resilience for existing, and new, trees planted.
- 3. Effective planting and aftercare**  
We will adopt and advocate best practice in terms of planting practice, aftercare and protection to ensure both planted trees and naturally regenerated woodland survive and thrive.
- 4. Leading by example**  
As a major landowner in Surrey, we will identify areas of our own estate where trees and woodland can be planted, in order to increase overall tree coverage.
- 5. Valuing our existing green infrastructure**  
We will develop our approach to the management and protection of trees across the county. This will include the role of planning policy in supporting, where appropriate, the safeguarding of existing trees and planting of trees in new developments.

## Delivery and guidance

A Trees Officer Task Group is working with relevant partners to develop an action plan that sets out how the strategy will be delivered. We aim to publish the first iteration of this action plan in September 2020.

The County Council will support residents and organisations to plant trees through:

- Identifying relevant funding sources.
- Providing guidance on planting and aftercare.
- Maintaining a database on our website to monitor numbers, locations and details of trees planted.

For more information about tree planting including guidance on planting and tree maintenance and grant funding opportunities for planting schemes please visit the section on Surrey’s New Tree Strategy at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/climatechange>.

For more information about the Strategy please visit our website or email [trees@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:trees@surreycc.gov.uk)