

# Kirklees Parks and Greenspace

## White Rose Forest Tree Planting Programme – Scoping Document

### 1. Introduction and Aims

Kirklees Council is committed to the White Rose Forest concept, which aims for an increase in tree canopy cover by 2044 of 30%, as part of its wider commitment to the climate emergency. This document aims to clarify the planting requirements for the programme and to set out how the Parks and Greenspace Department proposes to take the programme forward.

#### ***Programme aims:***

**To contribute towards an overall increase in tree cover within Kirklees by 30%.**

**To create sustainable and healthy woodlands with good structural diversity supporting a wide range of biodiversity.** *We feel that it is very important that our approach to the White Rose Forest tree planting programme addresses both the climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis, with new tree and hedgerow planting planned as part of a matrix of wildlife rich habitats across the district.*

**To compliment the diverse use of greenspaces and to visually enhance the natural offer.** *People's access to and engagement with our greenspaces is of huge importance to their physical and mental health and to support healthy communities. In many cases trees can add to the amenity value and aesthetics of our green spaces but we need to make sure we do not compromise the ability of our spaces to support our communities by planting trees everywhere.*

### 2. Overview of requirements

#### **30% requirements for tree cover for Kirklees district:**

- Total area of woodland in Kirklees district **6199ha** (as measured by recent fly over data, Bluesky International Ltd)
- Increasing this by 30% would require **1860ha** of new planting (approx. 3100 football pitches)
- Approx. 2,657,143 feathered whips at 3.5m planting (*we would like to plant at a wider spacing than as previously been undertaken for block woodland to allow healthy growth and reduce thinning requirements*)
- Approximately 265,714 trees per year 2020-2030 to achieve full canopy cover by 2044

#### **Possible Council contribution towards overall totals**

- Total area of woodland owned by Kirklees Council approximately 600ha -
- Increasing this by **30%** would require **180ha** of new planting (approx. 300 football pitches) or **257,143 feathered whips** at 3.5m centres

OR

- Kirklees Council (not including Ramsden estate) 2,614ha as compared with total district area of 40,890ha - Council owned land represents approximately 6.4% of district land. With Ramsden estate included the total Council land holding is 3,755ha (9.2%).
- A proportional Council contribution towards the overall tree planting total required in the district would be **119ha (c. 170,057 trees @ 3.5m centres**, or 17,006 per year 2020-2030) or including the Ramsden estate land **171ha (c. 244,457 trees @ 3.5m centres**, or 24,446/year).

### 3. Programme planning and site identification

Three work streams:

- Parks and Recreation Grounds (land vested with Kirklees Parks)
- Other Kirklees owned land areas vested with other services, e.g. corporate landlord
- Private landowners - supporting to enable planting on their land

Parks and Receptions Grounds: possible planting patterns

- Avenue lined footpaths
- Standard tree planting
- Community orchards
- Smaller copse planting areas
- Native hedge planting around boundaries

#### **Site selection**

Key considerations for site selection:

- Links to White Rose Forest priority areas – Greenstreets, Landscapes for Water etc.
- Links to existing habitat networks. *Should aim to improve the connectivity of natural sites.*
- Links to existing woodland
- Links to ancient woodland
- Open Land survey assessment data – to identify local deficiencies in woodland/natural and seminatural greenspace
- Proximity of housing - be mindful of potential issues of planting too close to residential properties - design out future problems
- Site survey - Existing important/priority habitats or other important cultural uses
- Other site uses/users – for example sports pitches, dog walking, playable space

Site selection on KC land:

- Strategic mapping/data processing exercise

- Corporate landlord (PRP) land – identify low value sites which could be released for planting -
- Engagement with ward councillors, partner organisations and the public - to suggest sites

#### 4. Planting design

- Creation of structurally diverse functioning woodland habitats
- Woodland areas should form part of a mosaic of different habitat types rather than blanket single age coverage – look at staged planting, using smaller shrub species, consider under planting with herb layers, and planning in open areas, glades and rides.
- Tree stakes and guards have proved problematic in some planted woodland area so consider not using them unless site conditions warrant it.
- Consider likely future management – this may be minimal so plan for non-intervention practice - planting at wider spacing to reduce the need for thinning
- Planting of hedgerows, copses and shelter belts to be considered
- Species selection – native species – possible changes/allowances due to climate change e.g. use of drought tolerant species

Tree planting densities (taken from *Woodlands: a practical handbook* (BTCV, 1988))

Tree planting formula;  $2N=A/d$

N - number of trees

A - Area of land

d - distance between trees

Spacing of trees dependant on size at planting

- Feathered whip approx. 3.5m - ideally using cell grown whips
- Standard 275 -300cm = 10m plus – high establishment resource requirements so only use where really needed