

# Expanding urban forests: The Urban Tree Challenge Fund

Planting trees for people in our towns and cities



## What is the fund?

The Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf) has been developed in response to the government's commitment to provide £10 million for planting both large and small trees in and around towns and cities in England.

This two-year fund will support a number of objectives in Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan, and is being delivered by the Forestry Commission, as part of their work to expand woodlands and tree cover across England.

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### Coronavirus (COVID-19):

As the situation around COVID-19 is rapidly changing, we appreciate the uncertainty this creates. We are continuing to open round two of the UTCf on the 30 March 2020 as planned, but we ask that you bear with us if we need to reassess this in the future.\*

As round two is partly targeted at community and volunteer groups, we ask you adhere to government guidelines and do not meet in person to discuss your application. Application forms are available online and we suggest are discussed by your group virtually.

The successful applicants of round two will not be expected to plant their trees until the next tree planting season (winter 2020/21), and it is our hope that COVID-19 will not impact on tree planting activity. However, due to the group nature of this activity we will reassess this in the future to follow government guidelines.

\* Issued March 2020.

## What support is on offer?

The UTCf provides capital funding to plant and establish large and small trees in urban and peri-urban areas. The fund provides three years of establishment payments following planting of the trees. Establishment payments will contribute to the cost of weeding, watering and checking trees.

In round one, the fund was open for block bids only, and, due to its success, the large tree allocation has now been fully committed. In round two, the fund is open for individual applications only (no block bids) for planting small trees only.

The fund provides 50% of published standard costs for planting small trees and their establishment costs. The remaining funding must be met through match funding, either in the form of money or labour.

The UTCf is a competitive fund and applications will score higher for delivering the greatest social and environmental benefits and value for money to urban and peri-urban areas.





## What are the benefits?

Urban trees offer a range of benefits, including temperature moderation, flood risk mitigation, and improved wellbeing – particularly when in close proximity to large populations. The UTCF will continue to contribute to delivering these benefits through the targeted planting of small trees in urban and peri-urban areas in round two.

## Am I eligible?

Round two of the UTCF is now open for everyone to apply to, from town councils, community and volunteer groups, and individuals to apply who want to plant trees in urban areas.

You must:

- have full management control or consent to use the land for the duration of your agreement;
- have no existing land management grant scheme on the land; and
- be able to provide 50% match funding for your project through either money or labour.

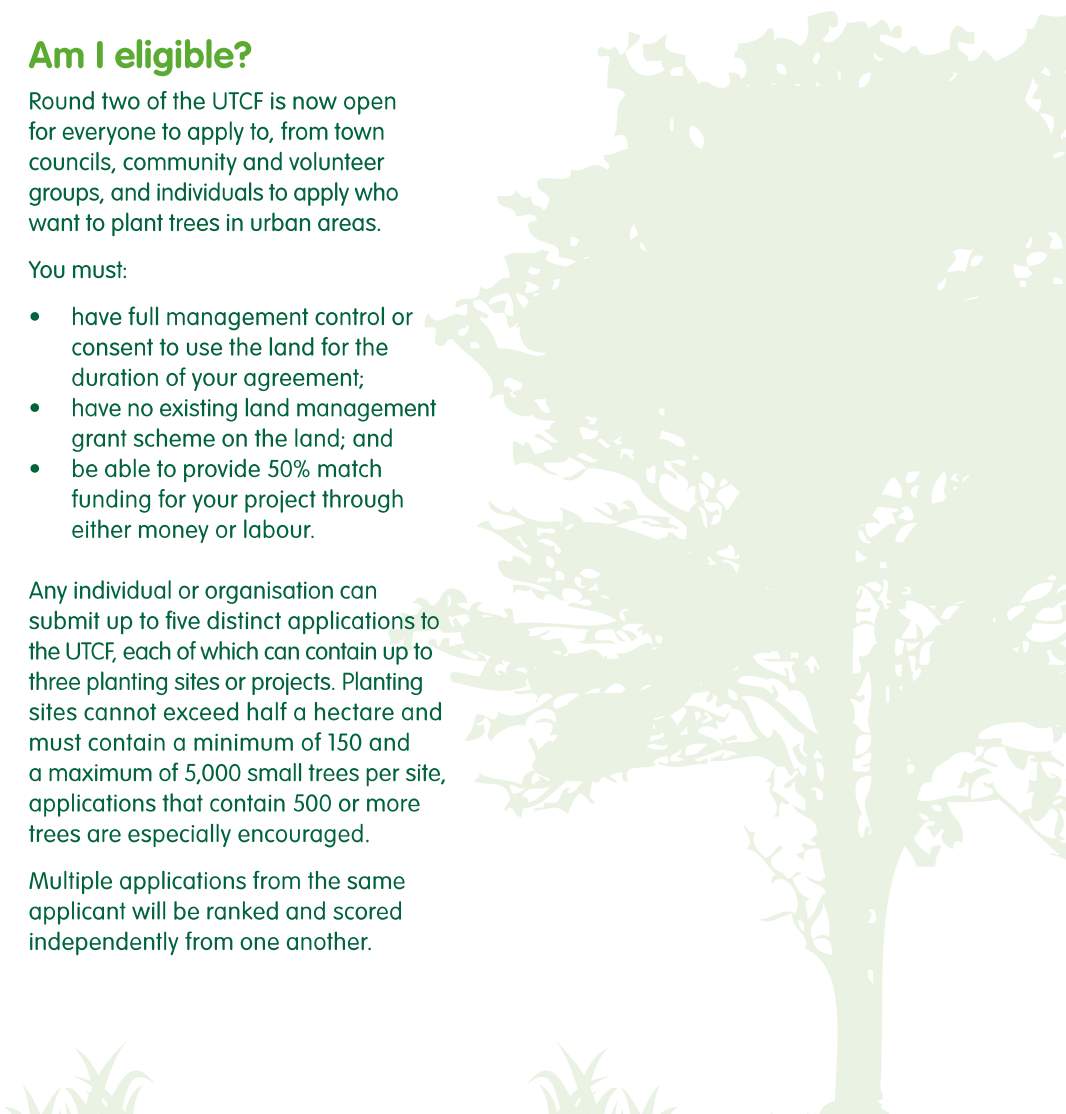
Any individual or organisation can submit up to five distinct applications to the UTCF, each of which can contain up to three planting sites or projects. Planting sites cannot exceed half a hectare and must contain a minimum of 150 and a maximum of 5,000 small trees per site, applications that contain 500 or more trees are especially encouraged.

Multiple applications from the same applicant will be ranked and scored independently from one another.

## How do I apply?

You can apply for round two of the UTCF between the 30 March 2020 – 31 May 2020.

The documents and forms you need to apply are available now – see **More information**.



## More information

For more information on how to apply to the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, please visit [www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund)

If you have any queries about the fund, please contact: [UTCf@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:UTCf@forestrycommission.gov.uk)



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