



## **Growing your future: Putting woods and trees in your neighbourhood plan**

Trees are critical not only for the future of the planet but for our own wellbeing, health and happiness. The Woodland Trust believes you can use neighbourhood planning to shape your local environment's future, keeping woods and trees at the heart of it.

Maybe you don't have many woods and trees near you - take this opportunity to benefit from woods and trees. Or it could be that there are already lots of trees near you and you want your plan to support their future.

### **Incorporating woods and trees into your plan**

As part of the neighbourhood planning process you need to develop a number of key topics or issues that are important to your neighbourhood.

For each key theme trees can play a positive role in the realisation of your community's aspirations. The following pages set out how woods and trees can contribute to your community's aspirations.

### **Writing tree friendly policies**

Neighbourhood planning is such a new tool that plans are still only in development. There are however examples of policies written by local planning authorities that form part of existing local plans. The benefit of these policies is that they have already been passed by a planning inspector. So they are in principle sound. This does not of course mean they are necessarily right for your plan; these policies should not just be copied. Also it's important to remember that your neighbourhood plan policies should not duplicate national or local policy, it should just build on these giving it a more specific and local approach.

Here are a few pointers to help you think beyond standard policies:

- No loss of ancient woodland and no net loss of woods and trees in general.
- Canopy cover – if a street tree canopy will be lost immediately. Any replacement tree will take decades to replace what has been lost. Consider having a specific requirement that trees are replaced on a two/three to one ratio.
- Think of all trees, ancient and veteran lone trees as well as ancient woodlands and hedgerows. Definitions of all of these can be found on our website.

- Root protection areas - Roots are vital to keep trees healthy and upright and can often stretch further than the height of the tree.
- Think about ways of maximising the benefits of woods and trees for people and wildlife.
- Replacement planting (this is not suitable for ancient woods and trees), for every tree felled by development do you just want to plant one tree or do you want to aim for more trees? Some local authorities have adopted 2 for 1 or even 3 for 1 replacement policies.
- Do you want to specify a certain number of trees for new developments? For example you could stipulate that 3 trees should be planted for each new residential property.

This is just a start, we have more information on our website:

<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/campaigning/woodwatch/neighbourhoodplanning/Pages/default.aspx>

Alternatively if you would like to discuss anything in more detail please speak to Victoria Bankes Price on 08452 935767 or [victoriabankesprice@woodlantrust.org.uk](mailto:victoriabankesprice@woodlantrust.org.uk)