

Planting begins in Greater Manchester for huge 50 million tree forest spanning 120 mile corridor

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Seymour Park, where Trafford is planting its first trees (Image: Trafford Council)

A huge forest stretching from Liverpool to Hull is coming to the North and planting has begun in Greater Manchester.

The Great Northern Forest scheme has kickstarted, with plans for more than 50 million trees to be planted in a 120 mile corridor across the north of England within a 25 year window.

The forest will connect Liverpool, Manchester and Lancaster to the West with Sheffield, Leeds and Hull to the East. By October 2019, 600,000 trees had already been planted as part of the scheme.

Now, local councils have received funding for their areas to get involved in tree planting, with Trafford Council among them.

The Government's Urban Tree Challenge fund has handed out £10 million to get the scheme going.

Coun Stephen Adshead, Trafford Council's executive member for the environment, said he was "delighted" after the region was awarded cash to fund the planting of trees in urban areas. In Trafford, 162 new trees are being planted, starting in Old Trafford and Stretford.

The work involves City of Trees working with the council's tree unit, the council's contractors Amey and local community groups.

The Urban Tree Challenge Fund provides regions with money for planting both large and small trees in and around towns and cities in England.

In tandem with The Forestry Commission, the scheme aims to expand woodland and tree cover across England, including the Great Northern Forest.

Across Greater Manchester's ten boroughs, the hope is over 2,500 trees will be planted across the city region, including 650 small sapling trees and over 1,900 large, high impact trees.

The trees are set to contribute to reducing Greater Manchester's carbon pollution levels as part of the region's five year environment plan and "its vision of a clean, carbon neutral, climate resilient city region with a thriving natural environment".

Coun Adshead, said: "This is fantastic news for everyone in the region and I am delighted that some of these trees will be planted in the Stretford area. Trees are not only beautiful to look at but are of vital importance to our environment.

"They help in the battle against climate change and provide a massive boost to those living in urban areas. This supports Trafford Council's priority to provide a greener and cleaner future for everyone across the borough."

Last year charity City of Trees undertook the largest physical survey of trees outside the United States to better understand the extent, function, and value of Greater Manchester's urban forest.

The 'All Our Trees' survey found that Greater Manchester's 11 million plus trees lock up 56,530 tonnes of carbon and produce 122,450 tonnes of oxygen each year, justifying the need for tree planting, especially large trees which deliver much greater benefits.

'All Our Trees: Greater Manchester's Tree and Woodland Strategy' was also launched recently and includes recommendations for managing woodlands for public health benefits, to boost biodiversity and nature recovery networks by creating and restoring habitats for species in serious decline.

Source:<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/planting-begins-greater-manchester-huge-18343607>