

Biodiversity and climate change: the role of trees and woodland

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About the Woodland Trust

We want to see a UK rich in wood and trees, for nature and for people.

The UK's leading woodland conservation charity, founded in 1972, we now have over 500,000 members and supporters and own and manage over 1,250 sites across the UK, covering over 29,000 hectares.

Our aims:

- 1 - Work with others to plant more native trees.
- 2 - Protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future.
- 3 - Inspire everyone to enjoy and value woods and trees.

We are pleased to support the work of the LB Waltham Forest Climate Change Commission.



Dual crisis: biodiversity and climate

“Climate change impacts are already altering the land’s use, while the services provided by the natural environment are being degraded” UK CCC Land use report 2018

“The rate of global change in nature during the past 50 years is unprecedented in human history.”

IBPES Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services 2019

“There has been no let-up in the net loss of nature in the UK.”

State of Nature report 2019

41% of species have decreased in abundance, while just 26% have increased since the 2016 report.

The natural environment is already suffering the impacts of climate change, as well as changing land use.



We depend on nature: 70 of the 100 crop species that provide 90% of food globally are pollinated by bees



Responding to the biodiversity crisis

Identify and protect priority habitats

Buffer and connect; restore and extend.

Ancient woodland – dating from 1600 - has greatest value for biodiversity, as a complex, long-term habitat

Other valuable habitats in need of protection

- trees outside woods
- urban trees and hedgerows
- SuDS
- Green and blue infrastructure

Local plan and NPPF – sets protections and standards

Land use strategies – beyond the planning process

Nature recovery strategies

Natural capital investment strategies



**Ancient woodland
now represents
less than 3% of UK
land mass**



Responding to the climate crisis

Investing in our natural capital also has major benefits for carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

Trees are living carbon capture & storage mechanisms
Carbon accumulates in soils, especially in deciduous woodland.

Climate resilience

- **Shelter and shade**
- **Cooling through transpiration**
- **Flood protection**

Added benefits

- **Wellbeing, landscape, economy and culture**

Tree planting has become a priority solution, **needs a plan**

- **Right tree, right place**
- **UKI sourced & grown**
- **Future maintenance and protection**



A UK native broadleaf tree is estimated to take up 1 tonne of carbon dioxide during its full lifetime



Enable people to be part of the solution

From awareness and anger to action...

Trees and woodland offer deliverable and sustainable solutions to the nature and climate crises

Tree planting

- Large scale community events
- Require trees in all new developments
- Individual tree giveaways

Volunteer maintenance and conservation activities

Citizen science

- i-Tree, Observatree
- Nature's calendar

**It's time for a climate emergency tree plan
The Woodland Trust can help!**



The Woodland Trust supports an increase in UK woodland cover from its current 13% of land area to 19% by 2050 to tackle this country's biodiversity and climate crises.



Thank you for listening

Happy to answer your questions....

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