



Great Northumberland Forest's Vision

Introduction:

The Great Northumberland Forest is a plan to plant millions of trees, creating more wooded landscapes across the County by 2030 to help tackle the big challenges facing society such as climate change, biodiversity decline, promoting health and wellbeing, and supporting a thriving local economy.

The idea is inspired by our determination to leave a better, more diverse, and more productive natural environment for the benefit of future generations of Northumbrians. By planting more trees, we will create new, natural environments that our children, communities, and businesses will benefit from for decades to come.

What will the new wooded areas do?

The new wooded areas will:

- Provide beautiful new and enhanced landscapes
- Absorb carbon and reduce climate change impacts, such as flooding
- Help grow our agriculture, forestry and wood processing businesses, creating jobs and prosperity
- Provide recreational areas to improve health and wellbeing, and offer new activities for visitors
- Improve and expand habitats for plants and wildlife
- Provide clean air and water
- Lead a green recovery in Northumberland as we emerge from the Covid 19 crisis.

A variety of different woodland types and sizes will be created to suit local needs, from the planting of individual trees, orchards, and small community woodlands to larger-scale schemes bringing together farming, forestry, biodiversity, and recreation. In some places there will be slow growing native woodlands providing habitats for treasured wildlife. In others, faster growing, highly productive woodlands will rapidly absorb carbon and produce timber.

New trees will be planted in places across our diverse county, from our rural and farming heartlands to our stunning coastal communities, on the fringes of our traditional industrial towns, to remote upland locations. Together they will be known as the Great Northumberland Forest.

What will it mean for farmers, businesses, local people, and communities?

For farmers and businesses, this will mean new opportunities to earn income from the land, diversifying into woodland management and outdoors-based tourism, or building sustainable forestry and wood processing businesses, creating jobs and wealth along the way.

For local people and communities, it will mean more opportunities to enjoy nature, live healthy lifestyles, appreciate our beautiful landscapes, and play our part in protecting the environment, fulfilling Northumberland's commitment to become a 'net zero carbon' place by 2030.

Conclusion

In creating new woodland areas, we will take great care to safeguard our most precious open landscapes and wildlife habitats, including in our National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), as well as preserving our best land for sustainable local food production. We will work closely with farmers and land managers, encouraging them to plant trees for the benefit of their businesses and local communities. People, communities, and land managers are at the heart of planning and leading the growth in tree planting across the county.

The Great Northumberland Forest will be a very visible expression of our unique identity and our passion for landscapes, nature, and the environment. A legacy from our generation to the next - created for the benefit of all Northumbrians from all backgrounds and communities, strengthening the distinctive character of the county for many generations to come.