

Neighbourhood Portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Bath Grant Application

Project name:

Community Tree Network, More Trees BANES

Organisation:

More Trees (BANES) Community Tree Nursery Network

Project location:

Bath

Locality or Ward which will benefit from this project:

Citywide

Target start date:

September 2022

Target completion date:

September 2025

Have you or your organisation previously applied for funding from Neighbourhood Portion of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Bath?

No

Description of project:

Community-based nurseries: The project is for 10 new community-based tree nurseries and a new relocated central tree nursery Hub. 10 nurseries will be supported to grow 6,000 trees each year. Although the CIL funding would provide initial costs required to install and set up/equip the nurseries, our model is for them to become financially self-sufficient within 3 years. When setting up nurseries we ask the hosts to commit to at least 5 years but anticipate that most of the nurseries will continue growing trees indefinitely while being supported by the Hub.

Central Nursery Hub: The nurseries are supported by the central Hub (currently temporarily located in the BANES Council Parks Depot) which supplies tree saplings grown from locally collected tree seed. The CIL funding would enable us to part fund the new Hub which would be a permanent building/facility and is essential to support the nursery network by providing tree saplings, seed processing/storage and an accessible location for meetings, training, work experience and volunteers. The Hub

will act as a focus for developing skills and expertise in tree growing in order to disseminate this to the nursery network.

Vehicle: We are applying for capital towards a hybrid vehicle which is critical if we are to expand the project and serve the nursery network, delivering trees, equipment, tools and providing some transport for volunteers.

Planting 15,000 trees with local provenance. We are seeking support for the material costs of our tree planting projects. MTB mobilise volunteers to plant and care for trees each year, helping secure good retention rates and ownership of the City's trees. The trees will represent a permanent legacy, helping to green the city and tackle our climate and ecological emergencies.

Fruit Tree Growing: The CIL Funding will help us to extend our Community Fruit Tree Growing Initiative to supply local community orchards.

Volunteers: The CIL Funding will mean we can recruit, train and support approx. 200 volunteers including those from harder to reach groups and vulnerable adults, children and young people.

Reasons for supporting this project:

More Trees BANES have been planting trees with communities since 2008 in response to the climate and ecological emergencies. It is well known that trees (and hedgerows) provide nature-based solutions to, for example, flooding/surface water management, land stability and stock proofing as well as essential ecosystem services and mitigation for development e.g. improving soil health, air and water quality, providing wildlife habitats and connectivity, urban cooling and supporting health and wellbeing.

We also know that problems with loneliness, isolation, poor mental and physical health are on the increase and that as well as benefiting from trees and woodland, people gain huge health and well-being benefits from being involved in 'growing' and planting trees. By offering accessible community-based tree nurseries we are able to reach a wide range of adults and children and offer them a chance to reconnect with the natural world and others, whilst also doing something tangible towards addressing the climate and ecological emergencies.

The UK is committing to planting huge numbers of trees. Trees are essential for offsetting the impacts of development and associated carbon emissions and environmental impacts. But we know that:

- trees, especially UK grown trees, are in very short supply.
- almost all of the commercial tree seed is provided by just one or two companies in the UK. We are adding to the stock of tree seed and plan to collect around 80,000 tree seeds in 2022.
- even UK trees are grown all over the country and transported long distances to meet demand.
- tree planting targets aren't always reflected in subsequent retention rates. Lack of suitable aftercare can result in high percentage losses.

- there are significant health and wellbeing benefits for people getting involved in growing trees
- there is a national shortage of skills and expertise in arboriculture, particularly in growing and caring for trees

Is this a new project or does this project link into an existing project?

The Community Tree Nursery network was initially set up as a pilot. The pilot effectively ends in September 2022 although we continue to learn. We have some funding to continue the project into 2023 but we are seeking CIL funding to continue expanding the tree nursery network. We work mainly in and around Bath, although we are also aiming to set up nurseries in several other locations in Bath and North East Somerset. We are seeking funding from CIL to set up 10 community and school based nurseries in Bath over the next 3 years. This will bring the total number of nurseries in the City to 18. All of the funding we are seeking from CIL will be spent on 10 Bath based nurseries and the central nursery “Hub” also to be located in Bath.

Project milestones and targets:

1. The installation, development and support of 10 new community based tree nurseries in the City of Bath over the next 3 years. Community nurseries will be located in a wide range of settings including schools, community projects, vulnerable people's housing schemes, settings involving young people and older people. We are currently working with a range of partners and organisations to deliver nurseries for 2023 growing season and beyond and have already secured a number of potential locations.
2. Grow approx. 15,000 native trees, 80% of which will be from local seed collected by trained volunteers. Note that although the project funding request is for 3 years, these nurseries will continue to grow trees beyond the project e.g.: in 5 years the 10 nurseries will grow up to approx. 30,000 trees (on average 600 trees per nursery each year).
3. Assisting in the planting of 15,000 trees over next 3 years within the City of Bath including after care to secure high retention rates by working with our range of partners/landowners.
4. Training and supporting at least 200 local people including children and young people to learn about trees and develop skills in seed collecting, tree growing, planting and after care.
5. At least 7 of the new nurseries in Bath will either be in communities experiencing high levels of deprivation and/or based in settings which involve vulnerable or disadvantaged young people or adults.
6. Set up a new central nursery Hub in Bath, suitable for volunteers, work experience and training in tree growing, planting and care. The Hub will supply all the tree seedlings to the nursery from Spring 2024 onwards and grow approximately 3000 trees per annum. The building will be accessible and provide a small office space, storage and meeting/training room for volunteers with limited parking for a pool vehicle and disabled parking. We have been looking for an existing building with the option of land for growing trees, but so far none have been found to be suitable, so we are now planning a new, lowcost, sustainable building with sufficient space for

poly tunnel and nursery beds. Curo have agreed in principle to providing some land for this purpose.

If planning permission is required for this project has it been granted?

We are likely to need planning permission for the installation of the new nursery hub on Curo land. We will not need building regulations, due to the size of the building (under 30sq m). We have in-house skills needed to submit the planning application and plan to submit a pre-application submission by the end of 2022 and secure planning permission and a legal agreement with Curo before drawing down any CIL funding in Year 2.

Are there any planned changes that will have an effect on the premises or location where your project is to be located?

We partnered with Grow Yourself CIC for the pilot year and GY have a 1-year MoU in place with the Parks Dept to use some of the space at the RVP depot to process, store and germinate/sow tree seedlings. We have been advised by the Head of Parks that this lease can be renewed in September 2022 for another year. However, the space available is limited and not easily accessible to volunteers, so we will not be in a position to expand the number of trees (and therefore tree nurseries) from 2024 when we plan to grow around 20,000 trees.

We are working with Curo who have offered their support in principle to including a nursery on some of their land, to create an accessible new central nursery Hub which will enable the project to expand the number of trees it can grow and extend opportunities for work experience and volunteering to a wider group of people. The precise location for this is yet to be agreed, however we anticipate the location and legal arrangements will be in place in 2023.

Are there any planned changes in circumstances to your organisations operation that we should be aware of?

More Trees BANES recently became a registered charity (CIO). No other changes are anticipated.

How does the project address the specific impacts of the new developments from which the funding has been generated?

Growing and planting trees will help to compensate for the loss of land to development and associated carbon emissions and other more immediate environmental impacts. Helping to “Green” the city will help to promote urban cooling, improve air quality, provide improved wildlife habitats and help re-establish greater connectivity between landscape and habitat features across the city. The visual impact of trees on health and wellbeing is now also well documented.

Using local tree seed and growing “whips” and larger trees locally and by mobilising volunteers to carry out after care, we will help to improve retention rates of trees more closely adapted to local soil and other environmental conditions, whilst minimising the carbon footprint of tree planting and risks to biosecurity.

Planting trees with the help of local communities, in partnership with a range of different organisations

How does the project provide links to the locality in the area where development has taken place?

The project is ultimately about helping to improve the green infrastructure in our city. It is also about improving connections between people and places by involving people in the growing, planting and caring for the trees. People will benefit from both the new trees when planted but also in the process of growing and caring for them. The project is about developing awareness about the multiple benefits of trees. We are working with Curo and a range of different landowners and developers to plant trees, finding new locations and settings for tree planting where people will benefit most.

Please provide evidence which shows how the community has been listened to and what support exists for your project:

We have regular meetings at our main Hub with volunteers and community-based tree nursery coordinators. We use these meetings to get feedback and ideas from the volunteers about how to develop the project, what support and training they need, how to recruit, support and retain local volunteers. The feedback is helping us to develop a resilient and inclusive project from the outset.

The project must show that it either supports the development of the relevant area by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure, or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area:

The project will result in the planting of native trees with local provenance and low carbon footprint to improve the city's Green Infrastructure and the multiple environmental, health and social benefits that are associated with this. In addition to helping to increase canopy cover, we are growing hedgerow and understorey plants that will support ecological networks identified in the Local Plan and West of England Local Nature Recovery networks.

The project also helps to develop community infrastructure by enabling the development of tree nurseries in a variety of settings and locations across the city. These nurseries are all supported (like the spokes of a wheel) by the central nursery Hub. The nurseries are supported by us to become as self-sufficient as possible and provide a focus for community activity encouraging community cohesion and capacity building by supporting increased community activity and mobilising individuals to get involved in positive ways to contribute to tackling our climate and ecological emergencies.

The community accessible tree nurseries promote mental and physical health and wellbeing by providing opportunities for supported outdoor activity. Most of our nurseries are in

peaceful, natural settings and offer an opportunity for people to connect with their communities and nature.

Total cost of project:

£128,765.56 (over 3 years)

Amount of funding sought from Neighbourhood Portion of CIL Fund:
£60,433.00 (over 3 years)

Does this project benefit from any source of matched funding?

Yes

Additional Funds which have already been agreed:

Dixon Foundation £15,000

Tree Sales: £7,500

Bath Building Society (BIBS) £6,000

Services in Kind worth £500

Tree Council Funding £7,500

Funds which have been applied for but are awaiting a decision:

DeFRA Tree Production Capital Grant

Volunteering hours:

1. Nursery Volunteers = 5400 (10 locations with approx. Average 4 volunteers at each nursery spending 1 morning a week approx. 45 weeks of the year).
2. Regular ("core") volunteers = 540 hours each year (average 5 volunteers at the nursery Hub 3 hours a week for 45 weeks of the year).
3. Woodland Survey and seed collecting and processing volunteers = 96 hours (average 6 people at 12 sessions for 2 hours).

Total = 6,036 hours per annum

Breakdown of the costs for the delivery of this project:

Total cost and request for CIL to deliver the following between 2022-2025:

- Installing 10 new Community based Tree Nurseries located within the City of Bath 7 of which are either in deprived areas or settings involving vulnerable adults, children or young people.
- Growing 15,000 tree saplings in 10 Bath-based nurseries
- Planting and caring for 15,000 trees in Bath

Description	Total project cost 10 new community tree nurseries	CIL funding request	Other funding secured	Other funding applied for or TBC
Vehicle: Work van to transport trees/equipment/tools across the network. Hybrid Vehicle/ 2-years old.	£20,373.60	£10,186.50		DEFRA
Volunteer Expenses (for 200 volunteers over 3 years)	£1,250	£1,250		
Insurance	£450	£200		
Installation (materials and labour) for 10 community nurseries	£10,000	£10,000		
Equipment, tools, compost	£1,750	£1,750		
Seedlings: Cost of providing 15,000 tree seedlings (up to 15cm) @ 40p per seedling.	£6,000	£6,000		
Tree Planting 15,000 trees (biodegradable tree guards, canes/supports and wish mesh protection, mulch mats).	£15,000	£7,500	£7,500	
Central Bath-based Nursery Hub (off-grid)	£50,913	£25,456.50		DEFRA
Salaries: staff time for identifying and setting up 10 new tree nurseries including Volunteer Coordinator (£23k-£26k 0.4 FTE incl. Employers NIC)and Community Tree Nursery Coordinator Tree Nursery Co-ordinator (£27k-£30k 0.6 FTE incl. Employers NIC)	£7,673	£3,900		
Transport costs	£1,250	£0		

Website development: Essential for mobilisation of volunteers, fundraising, tree sales	£2,400	£1,200		
Sub total	£117,059.60	£67,443		
Project Management @ 10%	£11,705.96	£0		
Total Project Costs	£128,765.56	£67,443		

Match funding

Source	Amount
Dixon Foundation	£15,000
Tree Sales (5000 @£1.50)	£7,500
Local Photographer Simon Taylor (in kind) towards website	£500
Bath Building Society (BIBS)	£6,000
Tree Council	£7,500
Total match funding	£36,500
Outstanding fundraising Target over 3 years for 10 Bath Nurseries and central Nursery Hub (if CIL application is successful)	£24,822.56

Request for CIL Funding

Year	Reason	Amount
2022/23	3 new community tree nurseries	£12,595.95
2023/24	3 new CTNS and 1 central Hub	£38,052.45
2024/5	4 new CTNS	£16,794.60
Total requested		£67,443

Notes:

1. DeFRA Tree Production Capital Grant -launched May 2022. Community Nurseries encouraged to apply for 50% of capital costs. We have applied to DeFRA for funding towards a vehicle and the central nursery hub.

2. Note that we receive in kind costs from BANES Council Parks Dept and the Urban Garden who provide serviced accommodation, training space and glasshouse.
3. Provided by More Trees central nursery including: compost, root trainers, equipment (NB. central nursery space and utilities provided by BANES Council 2022-2023 only). Majority of the tree seed is free (collected by volunteers)
4. These are unrestricted Funds
5. A proportion of our trees will be sold where funding is available to the recipient.
6. See separate breakdown sheet for costs of the "off-grid" hub.
7. BBS have pledged 6,000 but timing is yet to be confirmed.
8. CTN = Community Tree Nurseries
9. The salary costs represent an estimate of the average time it takes for the CTN coordinator and volunteer coordinator to set up and support a new nursery over 3 years, based on our experience during the pilot project.

Central Hub Nursery - detailed breakdown of costs

Building Specification: 30 sq m timber framed/clad insulated single storey building with pitched roof.

Use: Community Use, to include kitchen (for volunteers and seed processing), small office area and training/meeting space for volunteers.

Sustainability: FSC wood only. Wood burner (using dead ash supplied by Curo). Solar Panels installed to cover minimum 50% of electricity requirements.

Description	Quantity	Cost
Accessible Timber Clad insulated building 30sq m (materials, installation and delivery)		£3,000
Foundation/based materials and preparation		£2,000
Solar Panels (inc installation) (price assumes purchase under group buy scheme)		£5,000
Wood Burning Stove (including installation)		£1,188
Rainwater Harvesting Equipment (reconditioned IBC x 2)		£350
Deer/Security Fencing	10m x 21m	£2,750
Polytunnel	9 x 5.5m	£1,975
Kitchen installation including 2 large fridges (for seed stratification)		£1,150

Mains water and foul water connections		£6,500
Total costs		£50,913