

## Guidance to applicants

### Introduction

The Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) will fund Local Authority-led tree planting and natural colonisation of trees outside woods, establishing more trees in settings such as hedgerows, parklands, urban areas, beside riverbanks, roads and footpaths, in copses and shelterbelts. The fund targets treescapes that have been neglected or suffered damage in the past, including neglected, disused and vacant community spaces and those affected by tree diseases such as ash dieback, with ash being the most common species of tree found in non-woodland locations.

The Fund aims to improve landscape connectivity outside woodland, increase natural colonisation where appropriate and provide benefits to ecosystems and society, such as carbon absorption, flood protection and support for biodiversity. Trees outside woodlands are particularly valuable trees to society as they can provide the greatest levels of ecosystem services, including cultural benefits and support for biodiversity. They can also have strong local amenity benefits, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas.

The Fund is part of the Government's Nature for Climate Fund and will directly contribute to achieving our ambitious tree planting targets to restore habitats in England.

Funding will be awarded as capital only grants under Section 31 of the Local Government Act (2003) as amended under Section 78 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (amended 2021).

In financial year (FY) 2021/22 LATF funding will provide £2.7 million for tree planting and natural colonisation where appropriate within this financial year. The LATF is inviting **bids from £50,000 to £300,000 through competitive bidding**. This guide provides details on the eligibility criteria and how to apply.

### Who is running the Fund?

The Forestry Commission (FC) will be assessing applications and administering the LATF. If successful in your bid, you will be required to submit annual reports to the FC for three years after planting and may be subject to on-site checks.

### What will the Fund pay for?

The funding is exclusively for planting or activities relating to natural colonisation of trees outside woodlands (areas of trees below 0.5 ha), and three years' of maintenance costs.<sup>1</sup> If your application area has been awarded the Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCF) or is eligible for UTCF, it should be excluded from your LATF bid.

As well as funding for planting, funding may be made available for promoting natural colonisation where it may be effective, for instance via fencing areas close to a suitable seed source to protect from herbivore damage.

---

<sup>1</sup> Woodlands are defined as groups of trees of 0.5ha and over with a minimum width of 20m, with a canopy cover of 20% or greater and would not be eligible under the LATF.

Capital funding will be awarded via the following schedule:

**Table 1. Work schedule**

Financial Year	FY 2021/22	Three equal annual payments		
		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
<b>Funded activities</b>	Planting and/or establishment of conditions for natural colonisation	Maintenance of trees established in FY 2021/22	Maintenance of trees established in FY 2021/22	Maintenance of trees established in FY 2021/22

Administrative costs and staff costs will not be covered. There is no requirement for evidence of match funding, however you can provide evidence of any match funding undertaken within your application. Any match funding commitments will contribute to your value for money score.

Applications can only cover activities related to tree planting or natural colonisation where appropriate carried out in FY 2021/22. Funding will not be awarded for work undertaken prior to the start date of an LATF grant funding agreement (the date when the MoU has been signed by the LA and by the Forestry Commission).

## Eligibility

- You must meet all the criteria listed below to be awarded LATF funding. Failure to do so will prevent the FC from assessing your bid for FY 2021/22.
- Applications are invited from strategic level, top tier Local Authorities (hereafter referred to as 'the LA') in England. This will allow coordination of other LAs, organisations, and private land managers to deliver tree planting or natural colonisation plans. You can find a list of the eligible unitary and top tier LAs here.
- Lower tier LAs, including District, Borough and Parish Councils, will not normally be eligible to apply individually. They are instead encouraged to form part of an 'umbrella bid' led by the relevant top tier authority. If the top tier authority does not wish to lead a bid, we would be interested in receiving group applications from lower tier LAs. If you would like to participate in the Fund, you should contact your top tier LA in the first instance to understand if they will submit an application. Group applications must identify one LA as the point of contact to submit the application and work with the Forestry Commission.
- Group applications must be limited to one group per top tier LA area.
- The LA is limited to one application in FY 2021/22. The bid must be between £50,000 to £300,000. The highest scoring applications will be awarded funding until all capital has been allocated.
- Administrative costs and staff costs, other than the costs of labour for planting, maintenance and associated work cannot be included in your cost calculations. Capital funding will pay for the establishment of trees, planting or natural colonisation and 3 years of maintenance costs only.



- Applications must only cover planting or natural colonisation activities carried out in FY 2021-2022 and maintenance for and maintenance activities for the duration of the 4 year LATF.
- Proposals intending to use natural colonisation must show that the activities will take place within 50m of an existing tree seed source.
- Applications must include details of the project plan to deliver FY 2021/22 funding objectives, including an outline of costs to support the bid.
- Applications must include written confirmation from key confirmed delivery partners outlining their role and commitment to relevant funded activities.
- The LA must agree to all mandatory statements in section six of the LATF Application Form.
- The LA must agree in principle to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the FC as part of the Application Form.

## Basic Payments Scheme (BPS)

The LA should check whether the land on which recovery planting takes place is used to claim payments under the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), and whether such planting will make that land ineligible under the BPS scheme rules. Details on the eligibility of trees under the BPS can be found on pages 34-35 12 of the [BPS Guidance](#) for 2021. In cases where planting will make that land ineligible, the LA must notify the BPS claimant in question. If the land will become ineligible before the 31 December 2021 and the BPS claimant has already submitted a BPS 2021 claim for that land, the LA must remind the BPS claimant to withdraw the corresponding parts of their BPS claim, as per instructions on page 12 of the [BPS Guidance](#). Failure to do so will result in penalties for the BPS applicant.

## How to apply

LATF applications will be received from 22 April 2021 until 23:59 on 30 June 2021.

The Application Form requires LAs to give a brief description of the current distribution and condition of the non-woodland trees in the LA area, outline a high-level restoration plan for planting and natural colonisation where appropriate, and present an overview of plans to deliver the project. The LA will also be asked to estimate the costs of their plans, which the FC will check against existing standard costs for tree planting outside of woodlands. As well as the written application, the LA will be expected to commit to reporting requirements and confirm they have carried out required due diligence in compiling planting plans.

You will need to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) before receiving any funds. This document will underpin the relationship between the FC and the LA as permitted under section 31 (Local Government Act 2003). For more information relating to the MoU see pgs. 11-12 of this guidance.

The approximate time it will take to assess your application, inform you of our decision and finalise the MoU is outlined below.

**Table 2. INDICATIVE TIMELINES FOR EVALUATION**

Application window	22 April – 30 June 2021
Application review	July 2021
Oversight panel sits	By late July 2021
The FC communicate application outcome	By early August 2021
MoU drawn up (£100,000+ reviewed by Director of Forestry Services)	By mid August 2021
MoUs sent to LA	Mid August 2021
Deadline to return signed MoU to the FC	Late August – Early September 2021

## How will applications be assessed?

Bids will be assessed using the following criteria, further details on evaluation and weighting of the below criteria can be found pg. 15 of this guidance.

- Severity of estimated ecological depletion of non-woodland treescapes in the LA area, including quality of evidence
- Rationale for the approximate planting locations
- Species/provenance and size choices for planting locations and how this will contribute to increased ecological resilience
- Proposal for obtaining necessary consents, permissions/due diligence for planting locations
- Plans for maintenance **and** replacement of newly planted trees which have failed within three years of planting (wherever practicable and proportionate).
- Anticipated benefit to local biodiversity
- Anticipated increase in ecological connectivity
- Anticipated benefits to local people
- Rationale for any enhanced natural colonisation to be undertaken including location choice.
- Effective and realistic project outline
- Ability to deliver planting plans i.e. partnerships, and supporting statements, resource and co-ordination of resource to reflect planting plan
- Value for money, including evidence in Annex A match funding and use of volunteer sector.

## Need to know

- The deadline for applications is 23:59 Wednesday 30 June 2021. This deadline may be amended at the FC's discretion. Applications received after the published deadline will not be assessed. Applications will only be considered for the FY 2021-22



- Applications for funding will only be assessed if submitted via the published LATF Application Form and Annex A. Any alternative submissions or changes to the format or wording of the Application Form and/or Annex A will result in your application being returned to you without assessment.
- If you wish to include any additional supporting Annexes not detailed in this guidance or the LATF Application Forms you MUST seek advance agreement by emailing [LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk). The FC will not assess unauthorised supporting documents.
- If you wish to amend your application before the published deadline or withdraw your application at any time, please email [LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk).
- If you wish to clarify any application requirements or the application process, please email [LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk). If we consider information requests relevant to any applicant, we will provide additional guidance to all applicants (via Point of Contact provided) by email to ensure fairness and openness. We may be unable to respond to other support requests due to the competitive bid process.
- The FC will consider the commercial sensitivity of all information requests received before providing additional guidance to all applicants. If relating information is relevant to all applicants and considered commercially sensitive, we will discuss with the enquiring applicant before releasing any information. In this case, we may be unable to support the request due to the competitive bidding process.
- The FC reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of the funding application process at any time during the process and will notify all applicants via the Point of Contact by email.
- All costs of applying to LATF are to be borne by applicant, regardless of outcome and irrespective of whether the FC chooses to make a grant award to the applicant.
- The name of the LA and details within your Application Form will be shared with Defra and could be shared with other government departments or contractors to ensure that duplicate payments are not being made, and as part of the Application Review process.
- LATF must not fund felling activities. Any tree felling may require a Felling Licence from the FC; trees within Conservation Areas or subject to Tree Preservation Orders may require permission from LAs.
- The LA must declare if you have received or have applied for the Urban Tree Challenge Fund. The FC will carry-out checks on each application using a variety of government tools including the Cabinet Office's automated grants due diligence tool.
- The LA shall provide the FC with full assistance in relation to obligations under Data Protection Legislation and any complaint, communication or request. The LA shall notify the Data Controller immediately if it receives any requests relating to personal data or any other request, complaint or communication relating to obligations under the Data Protection Legislation. The LA shall maintain complete and accurate records and information and allow the FC to audit records and information upon request. The LA will not release any information relating to the FC without prior notification, consent and written agreement from the FC. The LA will shall remain fully liable for all information released or mishandled by any third-party organisations. The LA agrees to



take account of any guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office. The LA agrees to all data protection requirements as outlined in the MoU.

- The FC will use any personal data provided by the LA to the FC for the purposes of reviewing application information and performance of the LA against the information provided in the MoU and Application Form. It is the responsibility of the LA to notify partners and private individuals their information will be shared with the FC for the purpose of administering and monitoring performance, including inspection.



## Completing your application

### Section one: Lead Applicant & contact details

In this section, you need to submit evidence to confirm the lead Local Authority (LA), The LA named will complete and submit the application and act as the responsible body who agrees to and signs the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). They will act as the lead applicant, will become the sole named agreement holder and payee for LATF Grant funds.

In addition, you must provide details of all lower tier authorities and any other organisations such as local wildlife trusts participating as an 'umbrella bid' or group bid where applicable. If making an 'umbrella bid' or group bid the LA must be the lead applicant detailed in section 1a.

The FC also require a nominated point of contact for day-to-day enquiries. This allows us to contact you throughout the full grant lifecycle to provide updates, request information, communicate reporting requirements and notify you of site visits.

*Include:*

1a)

- *full name of the Lead Applicant (Lead Local Authority)*
- *local authority full address*
- *names of all lower tier local authorities you anticipate participating in an umbrella or group bid and/or or those that will receive FY 2021/22 grant funds for tree planting or natural colonisation, where applicable.*

1b)

- *full name of the single point of contact*
- *job title*
- *phone number*
- *email address.*

### Section two: assessment of current baseline of trees outside woods

**The evidence provided in section two will be used to score and rank your application.**

In this section, you need to describe the current distribution and condition of the non-woodland trees in the application area. This will allow the FC to assess the severity of past, present and future loss of non-woodland trees across multiple settings in the LA application area. Including the impact of pests and disease, decline of significant treescapes and key community spaces that have been neglected.

Provide a statement describing the approximate current distribution of non-woodland in your application area. Detailed maps and exact locations are not required. You can estimate areas in hectares (ha.), if available or numbers of existing non-woodland trees



or size. We recommend using local surveys or publicly available datasets, for example those available via the [Countryside Survey](#).

Describe the overall condition of trees outside woods, including tree disease such as ash dieback. You may detail losses caused by any factors as well as losses that are expected to occur in the near future. You will need to detail key environmental features that have been or are predicted to be impacted and any other known significant impacts experienced from loss of trees in non-woodland locations. This includes the specific impact on people, including loss of ecosystem services and amenity value within your authority area.

*Include:*

2a)

- *approximate current distribution of trees outside woodlands across different settings (hedgerow trees, parkland trees, copses, roadside or riparian trees etc.) within the LA application area*
- *if available, provide an approximate indication of the populations of the most common species of trees outside woods in the LA application area.*

2b)

- *approximate loss of non-woodland trees to date across different settings (hedgerow trees, parkland trees, copses, roadside or riparian trees etc.) within the LA application area*
- *prevalence of tree pests and diseases e.g. ash dieback in the LA application area*
- *any known and/or predicted decline of significant treescapes outside woodland (below 0.5ha.)*
- *other key areas and/or environmental features likely to be impacted by*
- *degradation of trees outside woods.*

2c)

- *the known and/or predicted impact on people, due to loss of ecosystem services in the LA area*
- *the known and/or predicted impact on people, due to loss of other key environmental features in the LA area.*

## Section three: Restoration plan

**The evidence provided in section three will be used to score and rank your application.**

In this section, you need to submit your plans for restoration of non-woodland treescapes across your LA area.

**When designing your restoration plans you must ensure it meets the following funding objectives: contribute to resilient future treescapes; support local biodiversity considerations; benefit local people; and enhance landscape connectivity.**





Explain how the proposed planting and natural colonisation (where appropriate) will help recovery from the local impacts outlined in Section 2a, 2b & 2c and any additional funding objectives detailed above.

The following sources of information relating to species choice, resilience and optimal tree planting sites will assist you with your plans. Although some of the below guidance references woodland, the guidance can also apply to trees outside woodland. One of the objectives of LATF is to improve outcomes for biodiversity, so the use of native trees is preferred in rural settings and encouraged.

[Forest Research guidance on species and provenance choice](#)

[Ecological Site Classification](#)

[Climate matching tool](#)

[FC guidance on managing woodlands in a climate emergency](#)

[FC guidance on managing ash trees outside woodland](#)

[Restocking following the loss of ash](#)

Sources of information for more urban areas are [Right Trees for a Changing Climate database](#) and the [TDAG database](#).

Describe the approximate locations where you intend to plant or support natural colonisation. If exact sites are not known at this stage, explain how you intend to select specific planting sites.

Include the rationale for the approximate locations. For instance, if loss of hedgerow ash is having a major impact in one area, you may explain that you intend to plant more hedgerow trees in this area to ensure these trees and their associated benefits are replaced. Where exact planting sites are known, please include this information. Consideration should be made to the overall landscape-scale benefits, rather than a spatial like-for-like replacement of individual lost/felled trees. Shadow planting close to trees that are expected to be lost within years is also encouraged.

Where recovery plans involve planting, describe your species/provenance and size choices for these locations and how this will contribute to increased ecological resilience. It is a requirement of LATF to replant with a mixture of tree species, to enhance resilience to future diseases and climate change. It is particularly important to plant or encourage native tree species in rural areas as this provides effective support for biodiversity and landscape connectivity, although in urban areas the use of non-natives within species mixes may be appropriate.

Outline the current baseline of planting trees outside woodland in the LA area and describe the intended procurement plan for trees and any other capital items. You should explain how you will ensure sourcing of trees that will ensure high biosecurity. It is important the plants and trees you use are free from pests and pathogens. We



would encourage applicants to source their planting stock from nurseries with robust biosecurity measures, including by way of example, those with Plant Healthy certification (or similar), where possible. You can use [Plant Healthy](#) to check if the nurseries you buy your plants and trees from are certified.

Explain the rationale for any enhanced natural colonisation that you intend to undertake. Natural colonisation is the process by which trees colonise new ground from existing local tree development, typically over several decades. You must demonstrate the suitability of sites for natural colonisation, that you understand and have considered key requirements for natural colonisation in your plan, and have the skills required to see the colonisation through the establishment phase and beyond. To be eligible for funding for natural colonisation sites must be within 50m of existing tree seed sources.

Further technical guidance on natural colonisation can be provided by the FC upon request by emailing [LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk).

When explaining your rationale for natural colonisation you should include specific details of:

- How you will manage competing vegetation
- How you will manage grazing pressures
- What the seed sources for each site are, and whether there is sufficient diversity of seed sources to result in a resilient and diverse tree population
- Whether supplementary planting is required, if seed sources are inadequate
- What cultivation or ground preparation plans you have (if appropriate)

If your Local Authority area is participating in a [Local Nature Recovery Strategies](#) (LNRS) pilot, please consider any environmental outcomes that align for the LNRS pilot and your LATF restoration plan and detail them in 3e. This information will not be used to score your application but will provide the FC with a better understanding of how LATF might better interact with the LNRS scheme.

*Include:*

*3a)*

- *describe the approximate locations where you intend to focus planting detailing those planting locations that align with the Fund's objectives such planting in neglected community spaces, beside rivers or in urban areas that fall outside Urban Tree Challenge Fund eligibility.*
- *include rationale for your planting locations e.g. how it will contribute to increased ecological resilience, provide benefits to local biodiversity, ecological connectivity and/or people*
- *include descriptions of species/provenance and size choices if known. You must include your proposed broadleaf and conifer split, as an approximate percentage.*
- *include explanations for any planting in areas not detailed in section 2, e.g. neglected green space or other areas where trees outside woods would be expected to produce significant benefits*
- *if any sites are proposed that do not have public access, explain your rationale for planting in these sites.*

*3b)*

- *approximately how many non-woodland trees are being planted each year*
- *estimate the average annual spend on non-woodland tree planting*



3c)

- *explain how and where you intend to procure trees and any key planting materials cover by the Fund*
- *demonstrate sourcing of trees that will ensure high biosecurity*

3d)

- *describe the approximate locations and explain the rationale for site locations*
- *describe your plans for enhancing natural colonisation in these sites*
- *explain how natural colonisation will provide benefits to local biodiversity, ecological connectivity and/or people in areas described in section 2, above*
- *include explanations for natural colonisation in any areas not detailed in section 2, e.g. neglected green space or other areas where trees outside woods would be expected to produce significant benefits*
- *if any sites are proposed that do not have public access, explain your rationale for choosing these sites*
- *describe the predicted outcomes and timescales, should your plans for natural colonisation be successful*
- *explain how competing vegetation will be managed*
- *explain how grazing pressures will be managed*
- *describe the available seed sources, including their species diversity (note that to meet eligibility requirements proposed natural colonisation sites must be within 50m of an existing tree seed source)*
- *describe any additional activities planned to assist natural colonisation (e.g. surveying, cultivation, ground preparation, supplementary planting)*
- *describe plans for medium/long term monitoring of natural colonisation projects, to ensure that intended outcomes are met.*

3e)

- *complete if you LA is part of the LNRS pilot*

## Section four: Project delivery

**The evidence provided in section four will be used to score and rank your application.**

**Funded activities relating to planting or establishing trees (see Guidance to Applicants Table 1) must be delivered within FY 2021-22. the FC must have received your post planting report and supporting evidence by 7<sup>th</sup> March, and claim form for second payment by the 31 March 2022.**

In this section, you need to provide a brief overview of your capability to deliver the restoration project/s. **Applications that provide a clear strategy for managing project delivery, support a collaborative approach and demonstrate strong communication links with key contacts will be scored more highly.**

Explain how the project will be managed and who will be involved and responsible for which activities. You must provide details of activities to be delivered by sub-contractors, private land managers or lower tier LAs. The LA is encouraged to work in partnership with delivery partners (e.g. community organisations, local Wildlife Trusts, NGOs, private land managers or private companies) to implement the proposed project. If you intend to work

with other organisations to deliver the project, detail the delivery partners you expect to be involved and in what way. If applicable, confirm they have agreed to their involvement and land access requirements and attach written confirmation from key partners. Also use this section to detail any volunteer groups you intend to use.

Describe how you will deliver ongoing maintenance and replacement of any newly planted trees which have failed within three years after planting. Also use this section to detail any staff or volunteer groups you are planning to use. LAs are encouraged to use innovative approaches, such as involving local communities in tree planting to maximise value for money and societal benefits.

If you are planning to use natural colonisation and have detailed this in your plan (section three), you must provide details of the resources and time available to see the colonisation through the establishment phase and beyond, including medium-long term monitoring to ensure the objectives are met.

You must provide a basic timeline of delivery milestones for FY 2021-22 to demonstrate that you have considered a project plan to deliver planting within year 1. See below example.

**Table 3. Example project timeline**

<p><b>August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicate successful funding outcome to relevant parties</li> <li>- Identify resourcing requirements</li> <li>- Identify suppliers, procure trees &amp; equipment</li> <li>- Obtain relevant consents, licences or permissions for tree planting</li> </ul> <p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Train volunteers if required</li> <li>- Complete any assessments of special features</li> <li>- Begin tree planting in XX sites</li> </ul>
---

You must explain how you will achieve LATF data reporting requirements i.e. recording planting sites, co-ordinating partner returns submission of post planting reports and maintenance requirements, co-ordinating site visits and acting on advice and recommendations.

The second year-one payment will be paid end of financial year 2021/22 and will cover the remaining 50% funding. This will be paid on receipt of a suitable post planting report, submitted by the LA and reviewed by the FC, and may be downward adjusted if the final planting within the post planting report differs from the activity outlined in the MoU You must be able to map out how many trees of what sizes and species have been planted where to meet this requirement. Not all activities for the year have to be completed by the time the post planting report is submitted, but you must be able to demonstrate that they will be completed by the end of the financial year before you submit a claim. All detailed requirements will be provided in the post planting report, provided by the FC to all successful LAs.



Maintenance payments will follow for 3 years to cover annual maintenance for watering and weeding, following annual submission of maintenance reports by the LA and review by the FC. The LA is encouraged to use innovative approaches, such as involving local communities in maintenance to maximise value for money and societal benefits. You should attempt to replant failing trees wherever practicable and proportionate to do so, you must ensure a minimum survival rate of 75% of planted trees by the end of the grant period. Losses beyond this will be subject to the FC's Performance Improvement Plan. Losses will be expected to be funded by the LA in order to meet the stated award-level Key Performance Indicators (KPI)s and received maintenance payments. The LA may choose to plant a higher number of trees at the outset, to offset expected natural losses, or else undertake compensation planting in the second or third planting season (i.e. during the maintenance period). More information on the scheme level Key Performance Indicators are included in the MoU.

For more information on payments see pg. 12 of this guidance. The payment schedule and further details of the activity schedule are detailed in the MoU, this will be provided to all LAs funding.

*Include:*

4a)

- *Briefly detail the key individuals and their roles & responsibilities that will help deliver your project e.g. oversight & co-ordination with delivery partners, other LAs and key organisations. Resource management, community engagement, planting management and administrative responsibilities including key communications.*
- *Detail delivery partners involved in the project where applicable and confirm that you have made contact and have agreed to their involvement in the project (attach written confirmation from delivery partners to your application).*
- *If applicable, detail any volunteer groups you are planning to involve and their role in delivery*
- *Explain how you will secure all the necessary permissions/due diligence for potential planting or natural colonisation locations described in section 2*
- *Describe how you will deliver funded activities, including maintenance and replacement of newly planted trees which have died*
- *If applicable, explain how you will resource plans for enhanced natural colonisation, including monitoring, through the establishment phase during the grant period.*

4b)

- *Detail your approximate month-by-month milestones in a timeline.*

4c)

- *how you will collate data for reporting before your Post Planting Report submission and annual maintenance submission.*
- *how you will record the number of trees planted in your LA area*
- *how you will record the sizes and species that have been planted and location*
- *how you will report on natural colonisation sites (e.g. activities carried out, progress towards establishment)*

## Section five: Project finances

**The evidence provided in section five will be used to score and rank your application. This section will also be used to inform us on your funding allocation.**



You must detail your total bid by completing the LATF cost calculator (Annex A). You are not required to submit a detailed breakdown of expenditure for the FY 2021/22 project but **MUST** submit the forecasted capital expenditure for all tree and planting costs for FY 2021/22 only and maintenance costs for years 2-4 using Annex A only.

**When completing Annex A, you must detail capital expenditure using £ sterling. You must not include any forecasted costs for trees and planting costs beyond end of FY 2021/22 financial year.**

Annex A requires an estimate for the number and type of trees to be planted, your estimate of price per unit for both planting costs and any capital costs not listed. Capital costs for LATF include costs associated with initial planting, including trees, stakes, shelters, deer fencing, herbivore management costs, labour for tree planting and capital costs for colonisation. Please discuss with your finance department how they define capital costs. The Annex requires you to provide estimates for maintenance costs and will calculate maintenance payments based on your estimates in Annex A. Funding for maintenance of planted trees, covers weeding and watering to aid survival and establishment. Estimated costs will be assessed against FC standard costs, these are detailed in Annex A. FC would expect costs to be close to this.

You will need to provide a supporting statement in 5a demonstrating how you reach your bid and achieved value for money. Explain how you have estimated the funding requirements. If capital cost estimates in Annex A are 10% greater or 30% less than FC standard costs, ensure you explain why your capital cost estimates are different. Include details of any match funding secured and any other ways you have saved costs such as any volunteer groups you plan to use for delivering your planting plan. This information will be used to assess value for money so it is important you demonstrate where you are able to source products for less.

If your estimates for this proposal are more than 10% higher or 30% lower than the FC standard costs for the proposal, the FC may seek further clarification from you after you have submitted your application. As above, if your costs for maintenance are significantly more or less than FC standard costs, the FC may seek further clarification from you after you have submitted your application.

*Include:*

5a)

- *Include any additional information that shows how you will deliver value for money (e.g. use of match funding, sourcing trees from own stock, use of volunteer groups for planting, use of existing equipment)*
- *Where match funding or in-kind contributions are included, please estimate the approximate value of these.*
- *If your estimated delivery costs differ from the standard FC cost by more than 10% above or 30% below, make sure you explain clearly why you think costs will exceed or fall below this figure*

5b)

- *confirm if you have been awarded funding from the UTCF*



## Section six: Declarations

You must agree to all statements in this section for your application to be considered. Failure to comply with any of the mandatory requirements will result in your bid being rejected. Details of the consequences of making any serious misrepresentations in relation to any declarations made are recorded in the MoU. LATF funding may be rescinded and the LA excluded from further LATF funding if having agreed to statement 10 of the Declarations and receiving funding, the LA is found to have made serious misrepresentation in relation to those offences listed in the [‘List of Mandatory and Discretionary Exclusions’](#)

## Mandatory document checklist

We have provided you with a list of all the documents you need to submit as part of your application. We will only assess fully completed applications so please ensure you attach and annotate all required documents.

## Authorisation

Your application form must be signed by someone with the authority to represent your organisation in making the application.

## How we decide

The evaluation of applications will be based on the following criteria and weightings:

**Table 4. Evaluation criteria**

<b>EVALUATION CRITERION</b>	<b>RELATIVE WEIGHTING (%)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Severity of estimated impacts on trees outside woods in the LA area (historical, current, predicted).</li> </ul> <p><b>More severe impacts demonstrating a need for intervention will be scored more highly.</b></p>	20%
<p>Benefits the plan will deliver, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rationale for the approximate planting locations</li> <li>- Species/provenance and size choices for locations and how this will contribute to increased ecological resilience.</li> <li>- Anticipated benefits to local biodiversity.</li> <li>- Anticipated increases to ecological connectivity in authority area.</li> <li>- Anticipated benefits to local people</li> <li>- Rationale for any enhanced natural colonisation to be undertaken.</li> </ul> <p><b>Plans that demonstrate the greatest benefits across these categories will be scored more highly.</b></p>	50%



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Value for money, including evidence in Annex A and supporting statements, match funding and use of volunteer sector.</li> </ul> <p><b>Plans that will deliver more trees per unit cost will be scored more highly.</b></p>	20%
<p>Quality of supporting evidence and robustness of plans, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of evidence provided under sections 2 and 3</li> <li>- Effective and considered project outline</li> <li>- Evidence of necessary consents, permissions/due diligence for planting locations.</li> <li>- Plans for maintenance and replacement of newly planted trees which have died.</li> <li>- Ability to deliver planting plans i.e. partnerships, resource and co-ordination of resource to reflect planting plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Plans that provide comprehensive and credible evidence, including a robust delivery plan, will be scored more highly.</b></p>	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Your application will be appraised by the FC, with each criterion scored on a scale of 1-5. Each question must score a minimum of 3 points (see Table 5) to pass the minimum evaluation criteria. If any question scores less than 3 in an application, that application will not be considered for funding.

THE FC reserves the right not to award grant funding to applications that do not meet this threshold. The FC reserves the right not to award grant funding for some or all of the available funding for which applications are invited.

Bids that are recommended for funding by the FC will be verified by an Oversight Panel. For applications that are confirmed as successful by the Oversight Panel, the Panel secretariat will inform the highest scoring applications, until the capital allocation for the LATF has been committed.

When multiple bids score equally we will prioritise the bid/s that demonstrate the greatest a) Severity of estimated impacts on trees outside woods, and b) deliver the most benefits as detailed in table 4. The Oversight Panel will seek FC supporting advice, to make a decision on which application(s) should receive funding based on this criteria.

Applicants will be notified of the final funding decision early August 2021.

The evaluation criteria in Table 4 that your plan will deliver will be given scores in the following categories:



**Table 5: Scoring categories**

Score	Description
1	Unacceptable - Nil or inadequate evidence. Fails to demonstrate an ability to deliver the requirements.
2	Poor - Evidence is partially relevant and/or poor. The response contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.
3	Acceptable - Evidence is relevant and acceptable. The response provides sufficient evidence of that the proposal will fulfil basic requirements.
4	Good - Evidence is relevant and good. The response provides full details of how the requirements will be fulfilled.
5	Excellent - Evidence is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response clearly exceeds expectations, is comprehensive and provides details of how the requirements will be met in full.

## If you are offered a grant

You will be notified of the outcome of the bid via email and if successful you will receive a Grant Determination Letter, formalising the offer of funding and outlining the LA responsibilities. You will then be required to submit a LATF claim form to [LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk).

In order to support the Government's commitment to transparency and accountability, all Section 31 Grant Determinations will be made public and all grant recipients notified.

## Memorandum of Understanding

You will need to sign a (MoU before receiving any funds. This document will underpin the relationship between the FC and the LA as permitted under section 31 (Local Government Act 2003). The MoU will formalise the LAs responsibilities to plant and maintain trees and obligations such as reporting fraud. MoUs for funding over £100,000 will have received final approval from the relevant FC Director. The MoU will detail inspection and reporting requirements. It will also detail the processes to be followed if a LA does not meet expectations for the work carried out. The signed MoU must be returned to the FC. Details of the approximate date you will need to submit the signed MoU have been provided in Table 2, exact dates will be confirmed to those awarded funding. Please visit [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) to view a standard version of the MoU.

**If you do not sign an MoU, you will not receive funding. The FC may terminate a section 31 agreement where it determines that its MoU with a LA has been breached.**

## Payments

The FC will review the funding bid received in Annex A and judge this against standard FC costs (this process is detailed above in section five: Project Finances). The FC may consider your project finance estimates to be beyond the expected costs FC would tolerate and



amend the value of your Grant. The value of your Grant will be communicated to you in the MoU which you will sign and return to the FC.

The grant awards will be made in two initial instalments; the first instalment will be based on your bid, having been assessed against standard costs and will cover 50% of the capital costs of tree planting and natural colonisation, where appropriate. This will be followed by a second year-one payment, made before end of FY 2021/22 financial year, which will cover the second 50% of capital costs, assuming work has been carried out according to plans formalised in the MoU.

The second instalment will follow the submission of a post planting report and supporting evidence from the LA to show adequate progress. It will include maps, grid references and photographs, to show the numbers of trees planted and their locations, you can find an example [here](#). Further details of what will be expected in the Post Planting Report will be provided to all Applicants awarded the LATF.

Further maintenance payments will follow for 3 years to cover annual maintenance for watering and weeding. Maintenance payments will be made upon proof of maintenance works being adequately completed. Evidence of maintenance will be provided through photos and/or on-site inspections by the FC.

## Reporting requirements and maintenance awards

In addition to the post planting report submission at the end of the FY 2021-22. There will be a request to submit an in-year interim report at the end of the calendar year 2021.

The importance of maintenance for planted trees is reflected in the annual reporting requirements Year 2 - 4. Maintenance will be made in annual tranches for 3 years, following maintenance activities, relevant reporting and claims to FC. A review of evidence and an assessment of a random sample of photographic evidence from each LA will take place during the maintenance claims approval process.

## Inspections

In each year, planting undertaken on both public and private land, will be subject to random or at risk on-site inspection by FC, during the 4 year grant period. The LA will be notified of any inspection prior to a visit (no more than 48 hours) and are required to provide access to FC staff.

A representative of the LA need not be present at the time of inspection, but the named agreement holder on behalf of the LA (or their confirmed agent) must sign the FC's subsequent inspection report to confirm that they understand the inspection outcome.

Inspections may look for evidence of defrayal, necessary consents, licences, and permissions (in particular, that they were in place prior to planting), and evidence that the grant-funded works have been undertaken in accordance with the MoU and published prescriptions, and to an acceptable standard.

## Enquiries

You can get further help from the FC by emailing your enquiry to [LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:LATF@forestrycommission.gov.uk). Find out how to [make a complaint or appeal](#).