



**Charter**  
for Trees, Woods  
and People



# Charter Champions Handbook





Black Environment Network

The charter will be rooted in stories and memories that show us how trees have shaped our society, landscape and lives.



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Brian Aldrich/W.T.M.L.

# What is the Charter for Trees, Woods and People?

**We believe that people and trees are stronger together – but our nation’s woods and trees are facing unprecedented pressures from development, disease and climate change. They risk being neglected, undervalued and forgotten. We need to act now before trees disappear from our story.**

**It’s time for us to stick up for trees.**

We need to recognise the importance of trees in our society, celebrate their enormous contribution to our lives, and act now so that future generations can benefit too. The Woodland Trust is leading more than 40 organisations from across all sectors of society in a call to create a Charter for Trees, Woods and People and we need your help to make it possible.

**A charter to help shape the future of our trees and woods.**

Our ambition is to put trees back at the heart of our lives, communities and decision making - where they belong. The charter will provide guidance and inspiration to allow us all to appreciate, preserve and celebrate our trees and woods.

It will be launched in November 2017, the 800th anniversary of the Charter of the Forest, and its contents will inspire physical monuments that will serve to keep trees in the forefront of public consciousness.





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## What are Charter Champions?

Every person that steps forward to engage their community in the Charter for Trees, Woods and People will be a Charter Champion, including all the members of your Charter Branch. The network of Charter Champions will be vital in ensuring that the charter truly speaks for all trees and people in the UK. Working at the community level, Champions like you will ensure that no tree or wood is overlooked, and no person is unaware of the call for a charter and of the importance of trees and woods.



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## Why become a Charter Champion?

We would like every person in the UK to have the opportunity to feed their thoughts and ideas into the charter. We see Charter Champions as connectors, people who will bring the campaign to communities across the UK and ensure they are represented in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to define the future for woods and trees.

In return, you'll be provided with guidance and resources that we hope will inspire and support you to put on local activities and to help you create a lasting legacy in your community. Some funding will also be available to support delivery of local events, activities and projects that reconnect people and trees now and in the future.



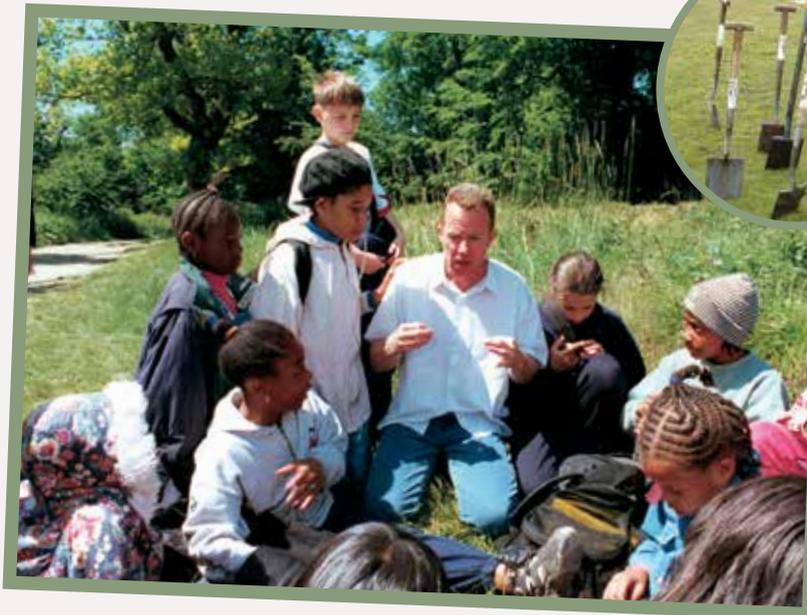
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# Forming your local Charter Branch

- Check the **TreeCharter.uk** website in case any groups near you have already registered as a Charter Branch.
- If there is already a Branch near you, get in touch and bring your ideas together to form one large group.
- If there is not a Charter Branch near you, look around to see if there are any existing community groups that might be willing to become your local Charter Branch. Existing groups may already have some structures in place that will make organising meetings and activities

easier – e.g. a contact list, places to meet, bank account etc. A village or Parish Committee, a community woodland, PTA of local schools, or another community based club or society may all be interested in getting involved.

- If neither of these apply, don't despair! It is not hard to start a Charter Branch and it doesn't need to be a registered club, society or charity. A Charter Branch is simply a group of people working together for a common aim. Follow these steps to set up your own Branch.



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1. Create an email address for your Charter Branch. This will give your Branch one point of contact and allow you to keep all your charter communications in one place. It also means you will not have to publicise your own contact details and you will be able to share management of the Charter Branch email account with other Branch members. Gmail and some other free email providers also allow you to store documents and photos on your account, which can be useful too.

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**It's a good idea to try to hold regular meetings to share ideas and start putting plans together.**

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2. Place an advert in your local newspaper or community newsletter explaining that you are starting a Charter Branch for the area, and inviting people to get in touch with you.
3. Create a simple poster (perhaps with a picture of a local tree or wood) announcing your plans and inviting people to get in touch. Place this in shops, libraries and popular meeting places.
4. Arrange a meeting and advertise this with posters, adverts and via your social media accounts. Ensure that the time and place suits those who have already expressed an interest. The meeting could take place in a local pub or café, or in a community space.



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5. Use the first meeting to explain what the Charter for Trees, Woods and People is all about and why you think it's relevant to your community. If you can give examples of your thoughts and ideas for the branch this will help people understand how it could work, however try to keep the floor open and encourage input.
6. Once you know how many people would like to be involved in the branch and what you'd like to do, you'll be able to consider how best to structure it. For example whether or not you need titled roles e.g. if the branch will be handling money you should make one person Treasurer and give them responsibility for all finance matters. If you're planning on promoting the branch email address, someone should be asked to monitor it regularly and respond to enquiries.
7. Even if you do not plan to start activities in your community for a while, it's a good idea to try to hold regular meetings to share ideas and start putting plans together. This will help to build the commitment of your branch members and ensure that your activities are fully planned.



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## Defining your patch

It's entirely up to your Charter Branch what area will be your patch. Defining this early on will help you to identify the issues and opportunities that are most relevant to your community and help us to understand which areas are covered by Charter Branches.

Before you start, remember to check for other Charter Branches near to you on [treecharter.uk](http://treecharter.uk). Not only will this help to make sure patches do not overlap, but there may be opportunities to join forces with your neighbours on certain activities.

Your Charter Branch could represent a whole county, a parish, a village or simply a particular local wood or park. It may even be an area that does not conform to existing boundaries, but which contains the woods and trees that are special to the people in your community. Your area could change or grow during the next two years, but starting with a clearly defined patch will help you gather statistics, and it will help the people that live locally understand why your work is relevant to them.

Once you have defined your patch, you can start to research and record the natural assets within it e.g. woodland, any ancient woodland, significant trees, wildlife. To record woods you can check ordnance survey maps or use online mapping. Be aware that these maps will not give you information about the age of those woods, or the trees and other

wildlife within them. They will also not show you trees outside woods. There could be wooded areas which are not shaded green on the map. It will be useful to do a physical recce of your area to record trees and patches of woodland that do not appear on the maps. Organise walks or rambles between you to cover your area.

- Use the ancient tree hunt website to check for ancient, veteran and notable trees: [www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/discoveries/interactivemap](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk/discoveries/interactivemap)
- Use the MAGIC website to check your area for ancient woods: [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)
- Note that the Magic Map system does not record smaller woods that may be remnants of ancient woodland. Information about the ages of woods or historical woods that have disappeared in recent years can be requested from the charter team at the Woodland Trust: email [champions@treecharter.uk](mailto:champions@treecharter.uk)

## Community Mapping Ideas

We cannot be sure that all data sources suggested are complete. The most important source of data will be the people in your community. You can capture lots of the local knowledge about the tree heritage of your area by undertaking community mapping exercises. Use these exercises to engage and inform people in your community about your work and the call for a Charter for Trees, Woods and People.

### 1. Choose how you want to run your community mapping

- Invite people to a specially organised event and ask community members to feed in what they know.
- Set up a map in a local community space and ask people to add their knowledge at their leisure.

- Contact local schools and encourage them to run a mapping exercise as part of a geography, PSE, science or art lesson.
- Contact other local interest groups such as faith groups, history societies, photography clubs, art groups, book clubs, youth groups or rambblers. Ask them to join you at an event or to run their own mapping exercise within their communities.
- You could choose to run multiple versions of the exercise and combine all the maps at the end.

### 2. Choose your map

- A map can be any format – but bigger is better as you will be able to capture more information and detail.
- Order a custom ordnance survey map that contains your area at as large a scale as possible here: [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop/custom-made-maps.html](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop/custom-made-maps.html)

- Draw a rough map on a flipchart or wallpaper showing the area marked with key buildings and roads to help people get their bearings. Provide pens and post-its so people can annotate and add drawings.
- Make a table top map and ask people to add tree cut-outs or even plasticine tree models – this is a fun and engaging way of gathering your data and could be ideal for schools.
- Capture everything on a digital map by creating a custom Google Map (you will need a Gmail account): [support.google.com/maps/answer/3045850](https://support.google.com/maps/answer/3045850). Ask people to add digital photos or interview them with a voice recorder and upload these digital files to capture what they want to share.



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### 1. Trees

- Where are there woods?
- Where are there old trees – and are they ancient or veteran?
- How many trees are there in gardens, on streets and in parks?
- What species of tree can be found in different parts of your community?
- Where did there used to be woods or trees that are now gone?
- What animals, birds, plants and fungi can be found living in the trees?

### 2. People

- What do people do in the woods?
- What do people feel about the woods and trees? Why?
- Which woods are accessible to people and which are private or difficult to enter?

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## The stories and information that you capture will show you what is important to the people in your community.

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When you have chosen how you will format your map, invite community members to feed in what they know. The more people that contribute, the easier it will be to build up a picture of everything in your area.

There are two levels to gathering data from community mapping. You can ask people to complete these levels at the same time, or focus on them separately depending on your audience.





Matt Larsen-Daw/WTML

- What significance have the woods and trees had to the community's development or the lives of people in it?
- What would people like to be different about the woods and trees in their community?

The stories and information that you capture will show you what is important to the people in your community, what priorities people have in common, and what interests them. Keep a consistent record by labelling things on the map with a key which connects to longer and more detailed notes.

Photographing your map, its detail and who has contributed is a great way to record your map and share it with the wider community.

Your final map will help to inspire ideas about activities you can run in your community. It will also highlight the issues they are concerned about. For example, if it becomes apparent that people are avoiding a park because it is not being maintained, that might become a priority for community action or an appeal to the council. Likewise, it could emerge that there are a large number of ash trees in your area, and your focus becomes checking them for signs of Chalara or planting a range of trees in hedgerows and gardens.

**Contact the charter team at the Woodland Trust with your mapping data for ideas on how to focus community action.**

## Quick tips to mapping

- Choose a format that will encourage as many people in the community as possible to contribute
- Identify your tree heritage (woods, street trees, ancient trees)
- Capture personal and historical stories of your local woods and trees
- Use the map going forward (display in local library / community centre / school, convert into online map, photograph and share in local newspaper or magazine)



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# Roots in the past, branches in the future: stories of people and trees

The woods and trees of the UK face many complicated issues, and we can only build the Charter for Trees, Woods and People if everyone feels that trees and woods matter to them. That's why we are calling for people to reflect on their own lives and to consider which of their most important stories and memories would not have been possible without trees. Everyone has a tree story, and hearing stories from others helps us to realise the part that trees have played in our own lives.

Collecting and sharing stories can make up a big part of the work you do in your community and will help people to view trees and familiar views in your local area with new eyes. Remember, the stories that people share give insights into the ways that trees have touched their lives and continue to do so.

A great way to start this process is to use the internet or your local library to find a few stories from history or folklore that are associated with your area. Feature these stories in a local newsletter, include them in leaflets or pamphlets about your Charter Branch, or use them in conversation to gather interest. You can also draw on your own experiences and give examples of tree stories to encourage others to reflect and share their own.

Story sharing is a great way to get the community talking about woods and trees. Create storytelling events as an activity for local youth groups or schools. Put a call out for stories in leaflets, posters and online and then share the results at a storytelling event, or as a small publication. Event packs can be requested from the charter team at the Woodland Trust, with materials that encourage people to write down their stories, whether they're one line or a short novel!

We want the charter to be rooted in these stories, and would like you to collect as many as possible. You can submit these easily by emailing [champions@treecharter.uk](mailto:champions@treecharter.uk) (with the names and emails of the storytellers). If you collected them on the campaign submission cards, simply send these back to us in the post: Tree Charter, The Woodland Trust, Kempton Way, Grantham NG31 6LL.



Phil Lockwood/WTML



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Story sharing is a great way to get the community talking about woods and trees.

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## Local events and activities – ideas

- Stall at village fete or local school fair – informing people about the call for the charter and your activities and events, collecting stories, craft activities with paper and wood, mapping.
- Guided walk around local area with a nature expert and/or historian.
- Treasure hunt in local wood or park e.g. Easter Egg hunt.
- Open gardens event.
- Evening or weekend workshops – Tree ID, wood carving, paper making.
- Visiting speakers from organisations (Woodland Trust, RSPB).
- Pub quiz based on tree facts.
- Short story / photography / artwork competition via local paper / newsletter (tree theme).



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Philip Formby/WTML

# Virtual forest – the Charter online

- Twitter hashtag - **#TreeCharter**
- Connecting to the charter on Facebook
  - Like the page
  - Post updates
  - Use the hashtags
  - Join the Charter Champions group
  - Start a closed group for your Charter Branch
  - Make your cover photo a woodland scene or tree photo
  - Share a tree story through your Facebook status and encourage friends to do the same
- Submit an article about your local activities or the stories you uncover to the Tree Charter blog using the form on **treecharter.uk/blog**
- Create a website for your Charter Branch – free template driven sites such as **wix.com / weebly.com**
- Create an Instagram account for your Charter Branch and encourage people in your community and network to share photos of trees, woodland activities and art/craft projects using wood



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# Money grows on trees

**You probably have a whole host of exciting ideas for activities and projects to contribute to the creation of the charter. Most often these projects will cost money. The following funding tips will help you turn great ideas into action.**

## Budgeting

The first step should be to create a budget for your activities which will be vital when applying for funding. It

will help you identify how much it will cost to make your idea a reality and what tasks you will need to perform to get there. You might find it useful to include timescales in your budget, or to capture this in a separate document at the same time.

Always record two different amounts: the cost of doing exactly what you plan to, and the smallest amount you could spend to make it worthwhile. For example, you might

Item	Detail	Cost	Contingency
The item or service you need to purchase in order to make your idea a reality.	What exactly will you be pay for? Why is it needed?	Cost (based on quote or research)	Cheap or free backup plan.
Leaflet printing	Printing.com - Design support and printing of 500 x A4 tri-folded colour leaflets for village shop, local pub and events, informing community members of charter campaign and Charter Branch activities.	£100	£15 Print cartridge and paper for home printing A5 leaflets as needed.
Stationery for community consultation	Rymans – pens, post-its, blue-tack etc.	£20	£5 For post-its & paper. Borrow pens etc from school.
Expenses for guest speaker	Fee for visiting expert to give guided nature walk in local wood.	£150	£50 Personal contact. Expenses only.
<b>Total</b>		<b>£270</b>	<b>£70</b>

want colour leaflets, but have the option of photocopying in black and white, therefore producing 500 leaflets for £30 instead of £100. This contingency column will allow you to adapt depending on your funding.

Share the budget with everyone in your Charter Branch and make sure they understand the breakdown. They may be able to suggest cheaper options or have contacts and resources you can use.

## Raising funds

When you have a clear budget showing all the costs of your proposal you can look at options for raising the money you need. If your Charter Branch is hosted by an existing organisation or society, there might be a small budget available. If not, here are some ideas to explore as a group.

### 1. Charter Branch micro-grants scheme

In March 2016 it will be possible for any registered Charter Branch to apply to the Woodland Trust for a grant of up to £1,000 to cover costs associated with community engagement in the charter campaign. Details of the application process will be circulated to all Charter Branches at the end of February 2016, and will be available on the Charter Champion section of the **treecharter.uk** website. Further funding may be available in 2017.

### 2. Crowdfunding

Crowdfunding is a way to raise money, awareness and support for a project from the people around you. Crowdfunding money from your local community or online network will make people aware of your plans and could lead them to get involved with your activities after they have contributed financially. You can appeal through community newsletters, on noticeboards or in person at meetings, and set up collection points for donations at local pubs, shops or community centres. Alternatively, if enough people in your community are online set up an account on a website like **www.crowdfunder.co.uk** where everyone can see the progress of the fund and donate easily. It is good to offer something in return – for example a special thank you event for donors, a badge or certificate, or via a printed list in a community book or magazine.





Richard Becker/WTML



Jill Jennings/WTML

### 3. Fundraising through sponsorship

Consider undertaking a challenge and asking family and friends to show their support with a donation. Try to relate the sponsored challenge to the project for which you are fundraising, so for example you could do a sponsored walk or run in a wood.

### 4. Ticketing your events

Organise interesting and engaging events for which you can sell tickets. A visiting speaker, a guided walk, a screening of a relevant film or an exhibition can be ticketed so that the costs are covered by those who attend. You can even use crowdfunding to raise some money in advance so that you know you will not make a loss.

### 5. Researching local funding opportunities

There may be funding available in your area for community activities and projects. Check your local authority website, or Parish Council, and search for small community grants online. Be aware that some grants are only available to registered charities, but smaller community grants could still be applicable.

Contact:  
[treecharter.uk](http://treecharter.uk)  
[champions@treecharter.uk](mailto:champions@treecharter.uk)





treecharter.uk



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champions@treecharter.uk



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