

Growing Living Greenspaces - Supporting Information

Season '22-23

The application form is for anyone who is interested in planning and / or participating in a greenspace project in their local environment, on land maintained by Aberdeenshire Council. Please send completed forms by Monday 8th August to greenspace@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or post to *Greenspace Project, Environment and Sustainability, Woodhill House, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB.*

Next Steps After Application

Greenspace Officers will acknowledge all applications via email and then request a virtual meeting to go through the stages of project planning and agree how to work together. If application has been delivered by post and applicant does not use an email address, it will be followed up with a phone call.

Greenspace Officers will work with groups on the activities that they have expressed interest in. If groups only want to participate in a planting event, Greenspace Officers will carry out all prior stages to implementation and work with groups to organise a planting event.

Applicants can suggest a location or Greenspace Officers will share sites that have already been identified as potentially suitable. Whether the location is suitable will be determined after site visitation and wider consultation as outlined on page 2.

What, Where and When to Plant

Between September 2022 and April 2023, the project is supporting new small woodland areas, wildflower and bulb areas, and small community orchards, on Aberdeenshire Council land.

Site Suitability, Maintenance Responsibility and Planting Events

- Greenspace Officers can support organising planting events with tools, guidance, and promotion.
- Choosing a suitable area means ensuring that adjacent houses are not negatively impacted by the planting, it does not take away valued recreation space, and ensures accessibility is maintained where needed. All sites require consultation, underground services check, and landowners' permission.
- Choosing site suitable plants means making sure local conditions are considered with species selection.
- Landscape Services must agree to the change in maintenance required by the planting, such as a reduction in the mowing frequency.
- Applicants are asked about interest in aftercare, particularly for trees, such as additional watering if heatwave/drought, clear smothering grass, weeding, and pruning fruit trees.



Project Planning Stages



Creating a Planting Project

For all of Aberdeenshire, we have allocated 24000 bulbs, 200 fruit trees, 2000 native tree whips and 310 trays of wildflower plugs as part of biodiversity enhancements in settlements across Aberdeenshire between September 2022 and April 2023.

It is anticipated on average 30 trees, 480 bulbs, 3 fruit trees and 5 trays of 12 wildflower plugs will be available per application. Applicants are encouraged to choose a mixture of plant types to support a successful community planting event and small-scale ecosystem creation.

There may be more or less available depending on the number of applications received. If applicants already have a project in mind, the option is there to give preferred quantities.

Native trees

Native trees can provide year-round interest to people, insects and wildlife alike, provide temperature control, reduce flood impacts, erosion control, and valuable timber. Would suit sites where there is infrequent use of open space, sites in need of shade for warmer summers, outdoor play and learning space, linking up mature trees likely to die in next decade or two. Trees provided would be saplings. For example silver birch, oak, rowan, hawthorn, guelder rose, blackthorn, wild cherry, alder, goat willow, osier willow, Scot's pine, hazel.

Bulb area

Bulbs provide early source of nectar for pollinators as well as a much-loved sign that spring is here. Bulbs reduce the need for grass-cutting as must be left 6-8 weeks at least after flowering. Bulbs can be incorporated into biodiversity areas with either no maintenance or where mowing takes place once per year in July/August and arisings are removed. Selection includes: native daffodils, snowdrops, scillas, bluebells, crocuses, alliums, fritillary and muscari.

Fruit trees

Three trees count as a small orchard and provide a starting point for expanding. Fruit trees are a great addition to open space to offer free food, to inspire and educate, and to improve visual amenity of a space. For example apples, plums, pears, damsons, cherries.

Wildflower plugs

Wildflower plugs can be planted into grassland to increase plant diversity and attract insects and improve the look of a grassland with a reduced mowing regime. Wildflower plugs can be chosen to match the location and proposed planting regime.