



Saving Devon's Treescapes



Devon
Wildlife Trust

Micro-nursery Information

Thank you for your interest in setting up a micro-nursery! We are looking for communities to get involved and help save Devon's precious treescapes. Over five years, the Saving Devon's Treescapes project aims to plant and nurture 250,000 trees outside of woodlands across Devon. But to do this we need to increase the supply of native broadleaf, locally grown trees. You can be part of this!

What is a micro-nursery?

The micro-nursery kit gives you all the equipment you need to set up a small-scale community tree nursery growing trees from seed. We also provide written guidance and offer in-person advice if needed. There are 2 options for kits as described below which you can choose from depending on your setting. You will then need to add peat-free compost and locally gathered seeds and you can start your tree growing journey!

Why are we setting up micro-nurseries?

The Saving Devon's Treescapes project aims to increase the resilience of Devon's Treescapes by planting a wide variety of native UK tree species. We need to make sure that the right tree is planted in the right place, using the right method, for the right reasons, and with the right aftercare – the 4 Rs! Community Tree Nurseries and micro-nurseries grow trees with local provenance – the seeds are collected locally which means the trees will be well suited to the local soil and climate and they do not risk bringing in new tree diseases as with imported stock. There is a growing shortage of native trees for planting and community tree nurseries can help increase the supply. Growing trees brings people together, provides a space to learn and share skills and provides free trees to local communities!

Who can apply?

Community groups, education groups including primary and secondary schools and voluntary organisations can apply. Parish and town councils can also apply. Commercial organisations cannot apply. The project covers all of Devon and Neroche in Somerset, we cannot provide micro-nursery kits to those outside the project area.



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What is in the kit?

Each kit includes the following:

For growing the saplings:

A frame for a raised bed 90 x 180cm (if you have a piece of land suitable to plant trees into. If not, we can provide just root trainers)

Root trainers

Biochar fertiliser

To protect the seeds:

Shade netting if needed

Wire mesh

For seed germination:

Propagators

Sharp sand

Stratification pots

Vermiculite

We will provide guidance for each stage of growing trees from seed including information on each species. You can also request a visit from one of the Saving Devon's Treescapes team where we can provide guidance, or an online talk and Q&A session, or a visit to our main Community Tree Nursery at Meeth Quarry near Hatherleigh.

How many trees will I be able to grow in the micro-nursery?

If you have space for a raised bed, you can grow around 100 trees in this space. In addition to this you will receive root trainers (these are particularly good for growing oaks and hazels) which gives you space to grow a further 160 trees

If you do not have the land for a raised bed, you will receive root trainers which will allow you to grow 320 trees.

The trees need to be grown for 2 years in the nursery before being planted out. Seeds collected in Autumn 2022 will be planted out in Autumn/ winter 2024. You may wish to work on a rotation and grow trees in half the available space one year and add to this the next.



Please note that the micro-nurseries are meant for groups who want to provide trees for free to their local communities, they are not meant for growing trees commercially.

How much space do we need?

The raised bed frame is 90cm wide x 180cm long and will need space around it for volunteers to be able to weed and water etc. You will also need some extra space for root trainers, but these will not take too much room.

Root trainers with 320 cells (for those without space for a raised bed) will require a space of 1m x 1.5m to lay them out in their trays so you can reach each one. Please note: root trainers cannot be put directly onto the ground as the roots will grow into the soil. It is best to place them on pallets or a table for example.

Do we need to provide any other equipment?

You will need to provide peat-free compost for the root trainers – this can be bought or home-made compost. You will also need a trowel for planting trees into raised beds and a watering can or hose pipe and access to a water supply.

Things to consider

Before applying, please consider how your new trees will be cared for and by whom. Who will be involved – this could be volunteers or school children for example. Over the summer, the trees might need to be watered every day – something to consider especially in schools over the holidays.

Where will the trees be planted? Once you have grown the trees for 2 years they will need to be planted out. Do you have a plan for where the trees will be planted – this needs to be a suitable location with landowner permission. Alternatively, you may want to set up a tree hub for community members to collect trees for their gardens. When thinking about planting locations it is worth having a look at the Devon LNP guidance:

<https://www.devonlnp.org.uk/knowledge-hub/trees-and-hedges/right-place-right-tree/>



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I already have a community tree nursery – can I apply?

If you are looking for funding to improve your current community tree nursery you can apply for funding up to £500. Please request a separate application form.



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