

Where did it all start?

The Tree Warden Scheme had its origin in the early 1980s in East Sussex and Leicestershire. The object of the Scheme was to create a network of informed people who could co-ordinate local tree based environmental improvements on behalf of the County Council. In 1989 there were 173 Tree Wardens in East Sussex and Leicestershire. In that same year in the wake of the Great Storm the Tree Council initiated a National Tree Warden Scheme, based on the East Sussex model. It grew and spread with enormous speed and 18 years later has 8,000 Tree Wardens volunteering in 140 local networks within Leicestershire we currently have 85 wardens in 61 parishes and tree wardens in the Borough of Oadby and Wigston and in the urban areas of Loughborough, Hinckley and Melton.

Why are trees so important?

- ❑ **Improve the environment**
Pollution – climate - wildlife
- ❑ **Trees and the Landscape**
Enhance - historic landscape
- ❑ **Trees and the economy**
Jobs and business – tourism – property prices
- ❑ **Strengthen communities**
Working together – education – pride - health

Who are tree wardens?

- ❑ A Tree Warden is a Parish Council Volunteer – they are appointed by their local parish council
- ❑ A tree warden is a person who genuinely cares for trees and the environment
- ❑ A tree warden is willing to Help with local tree matters
- ❑ A tree warden is usually knowledgeable or at the very least willing to explore their parish or area
- ❑ A tree warden has their ears to the ground and eyes on the trees
- ❑ A tree warden is usually an opportunist - looking for potential tree planting sites

What do tree wardens do?

Propagating trees:

- ❑ Growing trees for community sites in their Parish
- ❑ Setting up tree nurseries
- ❑ Try and involve the Community
- ❑ Think about local Provenance

Planting and caring for trees and woodlands:

- ❑ Schools and communities – organising events
- ❑ Advice to landowners – Woodlands, hedge trees
- ❑ Importance of aftercare

Surveying:

- ❑ Ancient tree hunt

www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk

- ❑ Local records of trees of local interest

Ancient trees are living relics of incredible age that inspire in us feelings of awe and mystery. They have helped shape our history, and will help shape our future if we let them.

The Ancient Tree Hunt (ATH) is a living database of ancient trees. The ATH began in 2004, as a joint venture with the [Tree Register of the British Isles](#) and the [Ancient Tree Forum](#). By October 2011, over 100,000 hand-picked trees had been recorded across the UK.

There are still lots of amazing ancient trees still to be discovered and recorded as they can be found anywhere and everywhere. If you find a tree that is not on the map then please add it and upload an image as well. The growing database will give us a much better understanding of the number of ancient trees across the UK. Recording them is the first step towards cherishing and caring for them.

The tree information can be used locally or nationally to highlight the importance of trees, promote their value and encourage their conservation. You can also [find details of ancient trees](#) near where you live or places that you visit frequently.

Raising awareness and campaigns:

- ❑ Events
- ❑ Campaigns – Green Monuments, Hedge Trees
- ❑ Parish Councils
- ❑ Trees and the law

Being the eyes and the ears in the Parish

- ❑ Tree wardens are not expected to be experts in tree matters but keeping an eye out for trees that show signs of possible disease or damage. Alerting the parish council or other landowners about possible damage or disease to their trees could help save money, time and even lives.

Tree wardens can also do their own thing

- ❑ Community Woodland acquisition – tree wardens in Burton on the Wolds pulled the community together to purchase woodland in the parish as well as organising volunteers to then manage the woodland for the future.
- ❑ Junior Tree Wardens – a tree warden in one parish took tree wardening into their local village school and encouraged the kids to become junior tree wardens looking after the trees in their school grounds

- ❑ Photographing trees – mix 2 hobbies into one!
- ❑ Travelling the world – those fortunate enough to travel the world have shared their knowledge/experience with other tree wardens on their return

Report to the Parish Council

As Parish Council Volunteers Tree wardens may be required to report to their parish council as needed.

Attend meetings

Tree wardens may be required to attend other community meetings if they are required to do so.

Write articles for parish magazines

Many tree wardens enjoy writing articles for their local community/parish newsletter to promote the work they are doing in the parish and to promote the importance of trees in general.

What a tree warden cannot do?

- ❑ Enter land without permission
- ❑ Tree works they aren't trained/qualified to carry out
- ❑ Advise whether or not a tree is safe
- ❑ Handle disputes themselves
- ❑ Call themselves 'tree officers' One of the strengths of Tree Wardening is that it enables volunteers to work closely with local authority staff, particularly Tree Officers, and provide extra eyes and ears for their community's trees. They are really well placed to help others in the community to appreciate trees and work together to improve their local area by planting and caring for trees. However Tree Wardens should never refer to themselves as "Tree Officers" as this implies they have the authority and responsibilities of local council staff.

What do we do as the coordinators for the scheme?

Training and events:

- ❑ Practical training
- ❑ Introductory day
- ❑ Annual Social Event

Source of information, advice and support:

- ❑ Trees and the law
- ❑ Planting and aftercare
- ❑ County-wide promotion
- ❑ Grants advice and support

The Tree Council: www.treecouncil.org.uk

- ❑ Information – publish the Tree Warden Handbook and other books available on their web site
- ❑ Regional Conference – 2012 this will take place at Warwick Castle
- ❑ Events

- ❑ National Campaigns – seed gathering Sunday, trees need care, walk in the woods to name a few

So what is in the pipeline for 2012-13 for Leicestershire Tree Wardens:

- ❑ **Upcoming events being planned**

- Winter 2012/2013 - **tree maintenance and management plans** – in the planning stage so more details will follow as soon as we have them
- February 2013 – **arboretum visit** to be arranged with a chance to enjoy the snowdrops
- Spring 2013 - a tree wardens **guide to communicating the importance of tree planting** to parish councils, community groups and residents
- Summer 2013 – **tree id course**, outdoors session at country park
- Autumn 2013 – **Arboretum visit** to enjoy the autumn colour
-

- ❑ **More Tree Wardens Across More Parishes** – we would like to see more than 61 parishes across the county with one or more tree warden.