



Almost two million trees planted in North in 2023

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More than 1.9 million trees were planted in 2023 as part of a major project to boost woodland cover across northern England, it has been revealed.

The Northern Forest project will see 50 million trees planted from coast to coast and around cities such as Liverpool, York, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield and Hull by 2043.

Since 2018, nearly eight million trees have been planted - with the highest number recorded last year, the Woodland Trust said.

Nick Sellwood, who leads the trust's Northern Forests team, said 2023 had been a "bumper year" for planting.

Mr Sellwood said the team's achievements to date were "nothing short of remarkable".

"There are now thousands more trees in cities, in the countryside – and in more inhospitable places high up in the Pennines," he added.

"More new woodlands bring huge benefits to people - not just in terms of well being, but in jobs and a boost to businesses and the economy through the likes of improving air quality, reducing flooding and creating green jobs."

The project started when the Woodland Trust joined forces with a number of Community Forests, including The Mersey Forest, City of Trees (Greater Manchester), Humber Forest, White Rose Forest and Community Forest Trust.

At the time, tree cover in that northern belt was just 7.6% compared with the national average of 13%.

Humber Forest, the Community Forest for Hull, East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire, saw 150,000 trees planted in the past two years, with more planned for this year.

Paul Nolan, director of The Mersey Forest and chair of England's Community Forests, said access to woodland and green space was "vital for our communities' wellbeing".

The work of the Northern Forest is just part of the wider effort in England over the past year, which saw tree-planting rates increase by 52% from the previous year with 5,529 hectares of new woodland planted.

The Woodland Trust said this was "significant progress" towards meeting the Environment Act target of achieving 16.5% tree and woodland cover in England by 2050.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4gdnd4je8ko>