



The countryside charity
Sussex



Engaging your neighbours

It is important to get the support of your neighbours when you are trying to plant new trees on your street. The council will want to be sure there is widespread support for the changes needed to plant new trees, especially when the cost is high.

But what's the best way to involve your neighbours in planting street trees and when should you start?

The Plant Your Postcode Team will guide you on when to start wider community engagement. We've also put together some ideas below to help you reach as many people as possible.

Local online messaging platforms

Local groups on platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp can be great for connecting with your neighbours. If you're a regular user, ping your neighbours your idea about tree planting and see who's interested. Agree to form a specific online group to avoid overload to wider groups.

Local newsletters and websites

Things like Tenants' and Residents' Association newsletters are a great way to reach new people. You could also check if there are local community newsletters or websites in your area. Tapping into existing networks is a smart way to reach lots of people at once.

Door knocking

Door knocking is one of the simplest and most direct ways to find out how much support for tree planting there is in your local area. This is must for anyone living near, or overlooking, a site which is a possible planting location. You might want to ask your neighbours to sign a pledge form to show their support.

Download [pledge form](#)

If you are organising a door knocking campaign, you should think about how to keep yourself and other volunteers safe. For example, always door knock in groups and have a fully charged mobile phone.

Leave a flyer

No one home? Pop a note through the door with some basic information and contact details. You can do this to let people know about the project and to share requests for help with things like planting or fundraising.

Download:

[Letting people know](#)

[Proposed Planting Plans – template letter](#)

Posters

Both digital and printed posters can be a great way to raise awareness of your project. Get in touch with community hubs, shops, pubs and wider organisations which operate near you. You can ask them to put posters up in physical locations or share on their social media pages.

Meetings

It can help to meet with a small number of 'core' supporters initially to plan your project. Once you have a clearer idea, hold an open meeting where residents can come together and look at the possibilities for tree planting.

You can also ask to speak at existing network meetings. For example, a tenants' or residents' association or other community group.

Draw up a list of support

Once you have reached out to your neighbours, create a list which shows how much support you have. This could be evidence copied from online or social media posts, emails, or pledge forms.

Download: [pledge form](#)

Be prepared for pushback

Not everyone likes trees. Your neighbours might have a wide range of concerns about planting trees. Be prepared to listen to feedback. This may mean hearing from people who are against the idea. All opinions count but be clear that majority support is the rule.

Keep in touch

Remember to keep everyone you've contacted informed of progress. The easiest way is to share online. Don't forget to ask permission to use people's emails or phone numbers. You can get [further guidance on GDPR here](#).