

**tinyforest**  
earthwatch  
EUROPE

**SUPER TINY, SUPER POWERFUL**

**KEY STAGE 1  
TEACHERS PACK**

**EDU.EARTHWATCH.ORG.UK**



## GETTING STARTED

A Tiny Forest is a dense, fast-growing, native woodland that is roughly the size of a tennis court. These miniature forests are not only an attractive location for wildlife, but for people as well, and can provide a range of benefits (ecosystem services) in the fight against climate change. The specific planting and management style used to create a Tiny Forest means that they grow rapidly and, as such, provide all the benefits of a traditional forest, faster. Across the world, 3,000 Tiny Forests have been planted and have since been adopted by schools, communities, companies and estate owners to support environmental education and awareness activities, and to reconnect people with nature.

A Tiny Forest not only benefits the planet, but is an amazing resource to learn about climate change and nature. We encourage schools and communities to take ownership of the forest, embracing the many social and environmental benefits it offers. Your Tiny Forest will be an amazing resource to immerse yourself and your students in nature and learn more about the environment. This booklet will provide ideas of activities you could use, links to the national curriculum and support for how to utilize your forest as much as possible!



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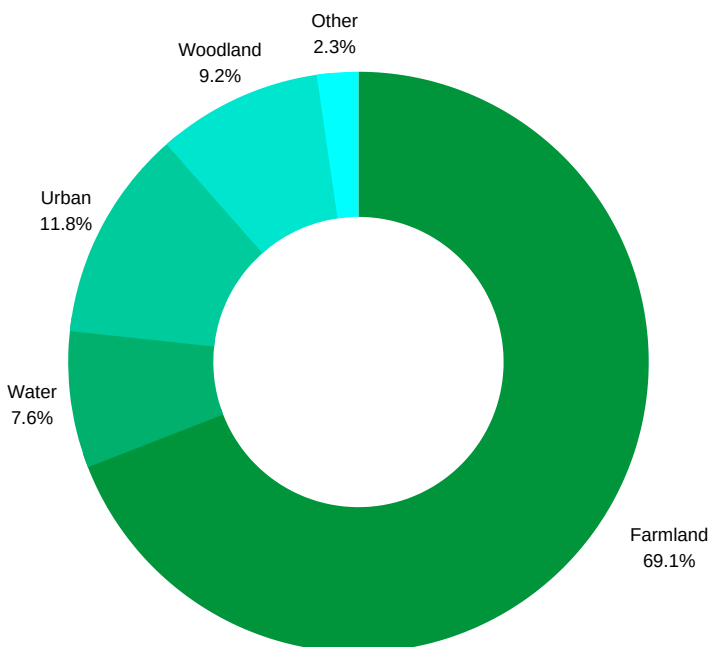
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# WHY DO WE NEED TINY FORESTS?

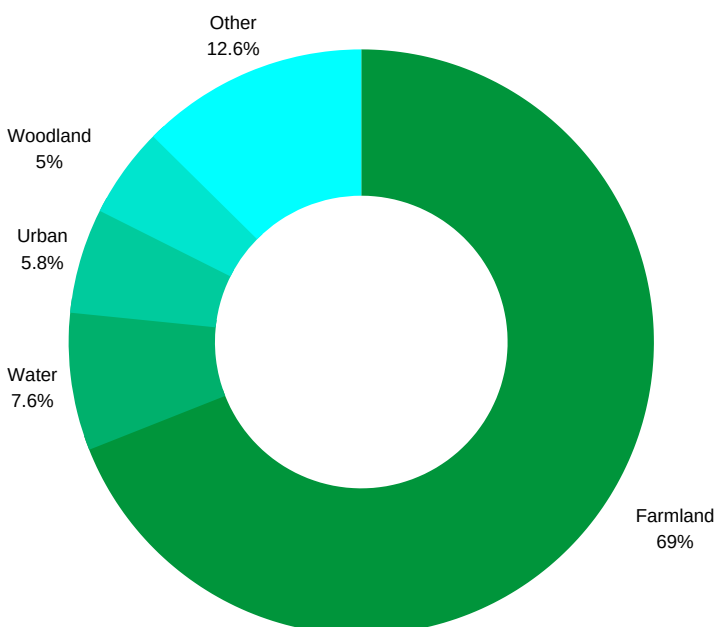


## THE PROBLEM

Environmental issues like flooding, pollution, heat stress and loss of biodiversity are increasingly affecting cities where an increasing number of people are choosing to live, and this is only expected to worsen in the face of climate change. Land use is rapidly changing and more and more of our space is being taken up by urban areas and farmland, removing woodland in the process. Tiny Forests help to reduce the impacts of climate change, support urban wildlife, and reconnect people with nature.



Land Use in England in 2010



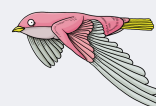
Land Use in England in 2018

## SOME FACTS

The 6 warmest years recorded globally have all fallen after 2014, with 2016 being the hottest year ever recorded.

Deforestation is a double threat, in that it releases the carbon that has been stored whilst also removing a forest's ability to take carbon in from the atmosphere. Trees take in carbon on an active basis, but also store it. The UK Government has committed to increasing tree planting to 30,000ha of trees a year by 2025.

Over half (56%) of UK species assessed have declined in population size since 1970.

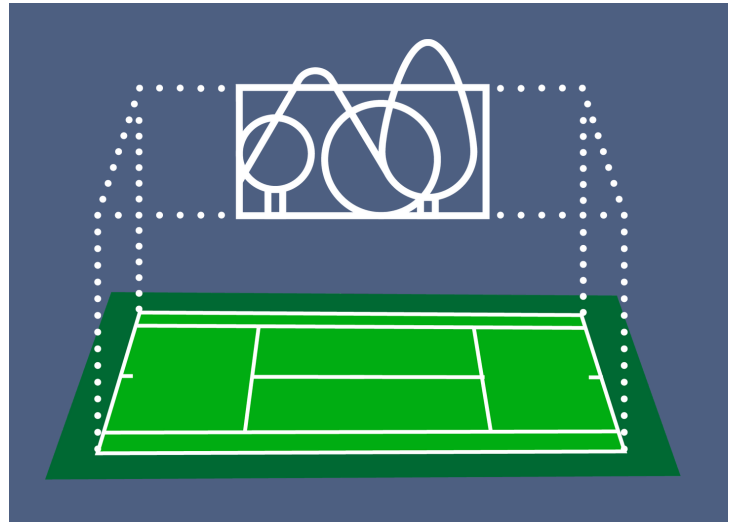


# WHY DO WE NEED TINY FORESTS?



## THE SOLUTION

A Tiny Forest will be planted in a space the size of a tennis court (200m<sup>2</sup>), using 20 or more different tree and shrub species that are native to the UK. Native tree species are used as they are adapted to the climate, attractive to native wildlife, and are more resilient to challenges associated with climate change. Each site is assessed prior to planting and tree species most suitable for the site characteristics are chosen.



Though the forests are small, they still bring all of the benefits of natural forests. 600 trees are planted densely in a small area, to maximise the potential of the space. This also encourages the forest to grow quickly. In addition, soil preparation, whereby compaction is reduced and additional biomass is added to improve the water retention and nutrient availability, further helps the trees to establish. A helping hand is needed occasionally to water and weed the Tiny Forest whilst it is still young. However, we want the forest to be as natural and self-sustaining as possible, resulting in a maintenance-free Tiny Forest after 3 years, providing a new area of green space, perfect for learning and immersion in nature.

It has been estimated that a Tiny Forest will absorb 450-600kg of CO<sub>2</sub> every year for the first 4 years of growth, compared to 130-140kg total uptake in a natural forest of the same size in 4 years. The forest will provide other benefits in this time too; in the Netherlands, 7 Tiny Forests attracted almost 600 species of animals. The forest also processes, filters and stores large quantities of rain water, and reduces air and noise pollution in urban areas. Similarly, the forest offers great social benefits, such as channels for businesses to be more sustainable and allowing communities access to nature to support wellbeing and learning.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand what a habitat is, and how habitats like forests can support life
- Connect students with nature and promote confidence with learning outdoors
- Develop an understanding of some natural processes through observation, experience and learning

# WORKING WITH THE CURRICULUM

## KS1

- Develop an understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them.
- Experience and observe nature and the world around them.
- Be curious and ask questions about what they notice.
- Develop their understanding of scientific ideas, using different types of scientific enquiry to answer their own questions, including observing changes over a period of time, noticing patterns, and classifying things.
- Learning about science through the use of first-hand practical experiences.
- Asking questions and recognising that they can be answered in different ways.
- Using their observations and ideas to suggest answers to questions.
- Identify and name a variety of common wild and garden plants.
- Identify and name a variety of common animals including fish, amphibians, birds and mammals.
- Pupils should use the local environment throughout the year to explore and answer questions about animals in their habitat.
- Identify that most living things live in habitats to which they are suited and describe how different habitats provide for the basic needs of different kinds of animals and plants.
- Inspire a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain for the rest of their lives.
- Devise a simple map and use and construct basic symbols in a key.



Evidence of learning can come in many forms; Tiny Forests are unique in their ability to provide a vast array of learning opportunities, in or out of the site. You could record stories of the lessons conducted in the forest, provide worksheets that link to the impacts of climate change or select student work that demonstrates their learning process of climate change and climate action. You could begin a school blog that records the students' experiences and observations as the forest matures, or conduct surveys with students or the community to research the impact the forest has had on learning.

# OUTDOOR LEARNING

In 2008, OFSTED identified that, when planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development. It has been demonstrated that academic fieldwork outside the classroom enhances the teaching of science and geography, and that practical work encourages young people in the academic pursuit of science.

Despite this, there has been a marked decline in the quantity of fieldwork provided within the UK, often due to lack of teacher confidence, perceived risk, cost, curriculum pressures and assessment. A 2016 report from Natural England found that only 8% of school-aged children (aged 6-15) in England visited the natural environment with their schools in an average month during 2013-15.

Children are the citizens, scientists and leaders of the future. Instilling in our children a love of the outdoors, along with an understanding of scientific processes, environmental concerns and the need for sustainable solutions, will lay the foundations for environmentally sound behaviour in the decades to come.

To help reverse the trend, Earthwatch aims to:

- Encourage outdoor learning, instilling wonder of, an interest in and a passion for wildlife and the environment;
- Engage pupils in real science, making it approachable and fun and showing first-hand how evidence is collected and how facts differ from opinions;
- Connect pupils with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), demonstrating how environmental and social issues are connected, and how everyday decisions impact our planet's future locally and globally.

Tiny Forests offers opportunities for learning outdoors, providing hands on experience that will help children to establish a connection to nature and immerse them in environmental education.



# RISK MANAGEMENT

It is important that teachers and group leaders should consider the following safety guidelines when conducting activities outside the classroom with their students:

- Ensure you have visited and have a good understanding of the site before taking students. It is important to risk assess for potential hazards, taking a note of slippery slopes/banks, uneven ground, harmful/stinging plants, ticks, exposure to sun or inclement weather, etc.
- If you discover glass or other sharp objects at the site then it is important that these are disposed of safely and the activity is abandoned for another time or site. The site ideally needs to be regularly maintained and risk assessed by a member of staff to ensure regular visitation can take place.
- Make sure that all participants are appropriately briefed on potential hazards and how to mitigate these prior to engaging in the activities.
- In order to provide adequate supervision, a ratio of teachers/adults to students of 1:10 is recommended.
- Ensure you and your students cover any open wounds on your hands and wash hands after doing activities outdoors and before eating.
- Ensure students are monitored at all times when outdoors and that they are considerate when observing and recording UK wildlife.
- Be careful not to disturb lots of wildlife by observing too closely. Wildlife such as nesting birds are protected by law, so please respect them and give them space. You can observe birds near nest sites using binoculars or with your own eyes from a safe distance of 5-10 metres.
- When working outside, use this helpful code to help your students remember how to stay SAFE:  
Spot – spot the dangers  
Advice – follow safety signs and advice  
Friend – stay close to a friend, teacher or family member  
Emergency – shout for help and know the correct emergency number to call



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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### Woodland Trust

- The Woodland Trust has great tools, resources and programmes for learning more about trees in schools.

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### Forestry England

- Forestry England has teachers packs and lesson plans that are linked to the national curriculum and provide useful information about trees.

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### Royal Forestry Society

- The Royal Forestry Society has great plans and action booklets to help young people to learn more about trees.

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### BBC Teach

- BBC Teach has lesson resources and videos to complement learning about trees. The resources come with lesson plans and resources for further learning.

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### Trees for Cities

- Trees for Cities provides ideas for assemblies and curriculum guides to help learn about the importance of trees in urban environments.

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### My Forest School

- My Forest School provides a platform for teachers to manage resources and helpful tools for students to create their own action plans and tools.

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# DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

## SEPTEMBER

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World Recycling Day

## DECEMBER

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World Soil Day

## MARCH

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World Wildlife Day  
British Science Week  
International Day of Forests and Trees  
WWF Earth Hour

## MAY

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Hedgehog Awareness Week  
Outdoor Classroom Day  
Mental Health Awareness Week

## JULY

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National Moth Week  
World Nature Conservation Day

## OCTOBER

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World Animal Day  
World Teacher Day  
World Habitat Day  
World Mental Health Day

## FEBRUARY

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Go Green Week  
International Day of Women in Science  
Fairtrade Fortnite

## APRIL

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Earth Day  
City Nature Challenge  
National Gardening Week

## JUNE

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World Environment Day

# THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

On 25 September 2015, the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Development Agenda titled Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Sustainable Development Goals are a set of seventeen aspirational 'Global Goals' with 169 targets between them. The goals and targets will stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet.

To achieve the Global Goals by 2030 we need ALL young people to know and care about them. The UN Global Goals form a plan to shape OUR future, and we need to act to make sure they are achieved.

Lots of great resources, lesson plans and videos helping to introduce the SDGs can be found at:  
[www.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/](http://www.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/)  
[www.practicalaction.org/global-goals](http://www.practicalaction.org/global-goals)  
[www.project-everyone.org/films/](http://www.project-everyone.org/films/)



SDG 3: Ensuring good health and wellbeing to ensure everyone leads a healthy life. This includes mitigating the impacts of air, water and soil pollution and contamination, all of which are exacerbated by climate change, in addition to efforts to reduce death and poor wellbeing due to mental health related illnesses.



SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity.



SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.



SDG 13: Urgent action must be taken to win the fight against climate change. This includes climate resistant infrastructure, global legislation and action to prevent further damage and reverse the impacts that are already placing increasing pressure on our planet. Included within this is better and more accessible climate education to raise awareness of the causes and impacts of climate change and better equipping communities to act.



SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss. Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

## OTHER PROJECTS

### FRESHWATER WATCH

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FreshWater Watch is a global project in which individuals and communities monitor, protect and restore their local water resources. We train people around the world to measure the health of their local bodies of fresh water. The resulting data provides the evidence needed to support efforts to improve water quality. As water experts, we know that we will only improve freshwater habitats by working together. By monitoring their local waterbodies, our citizen scientists around the world contribute data and knowledge to a unified global effort to improve the health of fresh water for everyone.

### NATUREHOOD

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Naturehood is a community wildlife project that will connect you, your school and your neighbours with nature on your doorstep. Naturehood aims to enhance awareness and understanding of local wildlife and its needs by conducting research about the effectiveness of actions in helping wildlife to thrive. The project aims to build communities that value nature, and empower individuals to monitor and act for local wildlife in gardens, school grounds and community spaces, providing a thriving network of wildlife-rich green spaces that benefit people and nature.

### PLASTIC RIVERS

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Plastic Rivers offers practical, evidence-based steps to tackle the plastic pollution on our doorsteps, so that everyone can be part of the solution. The issue of plastic in the oceans has attracted a lot of attention in recent years. But did you know that the vast majority of the plastic in our oceans comes from the rubbish in rivers? We urgently need to confront this problem, and stop plastics from getting into our rivers. We've developed a plastics 'top offenders' report and a plastic footprint calculator to help you tackle the plastic problem.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

There are more courses, resources and videos available on our online learning portal, [earthwatch-ed.org.uk](http://earthwatch-ed.org.uk). You'll find information about all of our citizen science projects, as well as helpful and informative guides that will teach you more about climate, sustainability and the environment. We also have tonnes of great resources for kids to get outdoors and explore the world around them.

## STAY SOCIAL



[edu.earthwatch.org.uk](http://edu.earthwatch.org.uk)



Earthwatch Europe



@Earthwatch\_Eur

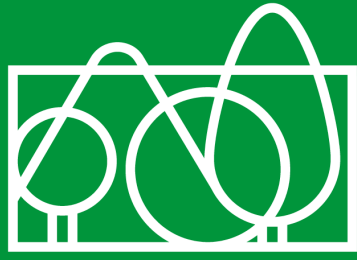


<https://www.facebook.com/earthwatcheurope>

## SPEAK TO THE TEAM

If you have any questions or need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact our team via email -

[education@earthwatch.org.uk](mailto:education@earthwatch.org.uk)



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