



White  
Rose  
Forest

# White Rose Forest **Strategic Plan**

(2025-50)

Creating a Resilient Landscape for Growth

Proud to be part of

England's  
Community  
Forests

**The White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-50)** is the long-term strategic document governing development of the White Rose Forest, setting out the vision, aspirations and targets for tree and woodland establishment and management in North and West Yorkshire. As such, it provides the overarching tree and woodland strategy for North and West Yorkshire. It will be delivered through a series of five-year Action Plans, which will provide more detail on funding, delivery programmes, actions and interim targets for that period of the Strategic Plan.





## Contents

---

<b>The White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-2050)</b>	<b>4</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Context</b>	
The White Rose Forest	5
- Introduction	5
- Place	6
- Partnership	8
Policy Context	9
Why Trees and Woodland?	10
<hr/>	
<b>Ambition</b>	
Vision	11
Strategic Objectives and Targets	12
District Priorities and Targets	14
<hr/>	
<b>Delivery</b>	
Approach	17
Principles	18
Programmes	19
Collective Action	20
Funding and Financing	22
Monitoring and Evaluation	23
<hr/>	
<b>Final words</b>	<b>24</b>
<hr/>	

## The White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-2050)

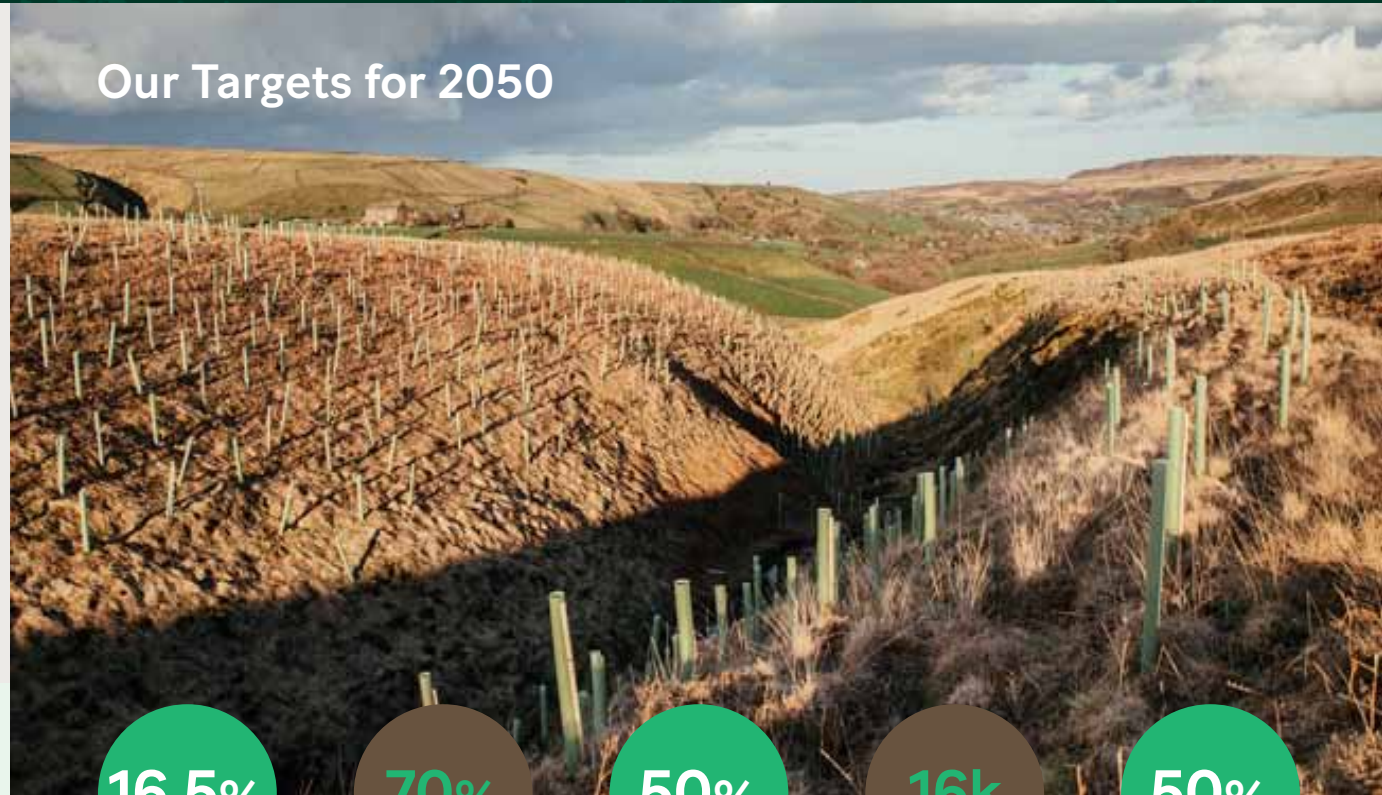
### Our Vision for 2050

The White Rose Forest partnership is leading landscape transformation in North and West Yorkshire, creating a vast and varied treescape that connects and permeates our towns/cities and countryside. Our work has made our region more prosperous and resilient to a changing climate, improved health & wellbeing and supported nature recovery.

### Our Partnership

The White Rose Forest is the Community Forest for North and West Yorkshire. A partnership of local and combined authorities, national park authorities and national landscape organisations, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) organisations, alongside national, regional and local charities, businesses and community enterprises.

### Our Targets for 2050



Tree and woodland cover	Of woodland sustainably managed	Of households living close to accessible woodland	People engaged in the work of the White Rose Forest per year	Of total funding from non-public sector sources
-------------------------	---------------------------------	---	--	---

## The White Rose Forest

The White Rose Forest is the Community Forest for North and West Yorkshire and is the largest of England's Community Forests.

The White Rose Forest is not a single 'forest', but the network of all trees, woods and forests across North and West Yorkshire, including trees in gardens and on residential streets, in town and city centres, along transport routes, in parks and green spaces, by rivers, canals and lakes, on farmland and in the countryside.

The White Rose Forest partnership was established on 1st August 2000. Over the first 25 years, the partnership has continued to innovate, adapting to help meet the challenges and concerns of the time. Interest and support for tree planting and woodland creation has gained significant momentum across the country since 2020. The White Rose Forest partnership has been at the forefront of this programme with over 2.5 million trees being planted across over 2,000 hectares of land (about 2,800 football pitches) from 2020/21 to 2024/25.

This Strategic Plan builds on that foundation and momentum and sets out the partnership's direction for the next 25 years.

## England's Community Forests

England's Community Forests is the leading woodland creation force in the country. A diverse and growing network of 15 unique Community Forests working to help nature recover and regenerate the landscapes in and around our largest towns and cities, we are ensuring that trees and woodlands are at the very heart of communities up and down the country, unlocking countless benefits for people and planet. We work together to support each other and amplify our voice nationally.



### Place

The network of all trees, woods and forests across North and West Yorkshire.



### Partnership

The collective of public, private and voluntary sector organisations working with local communities to deliver this Strategic Plan.



### Core team

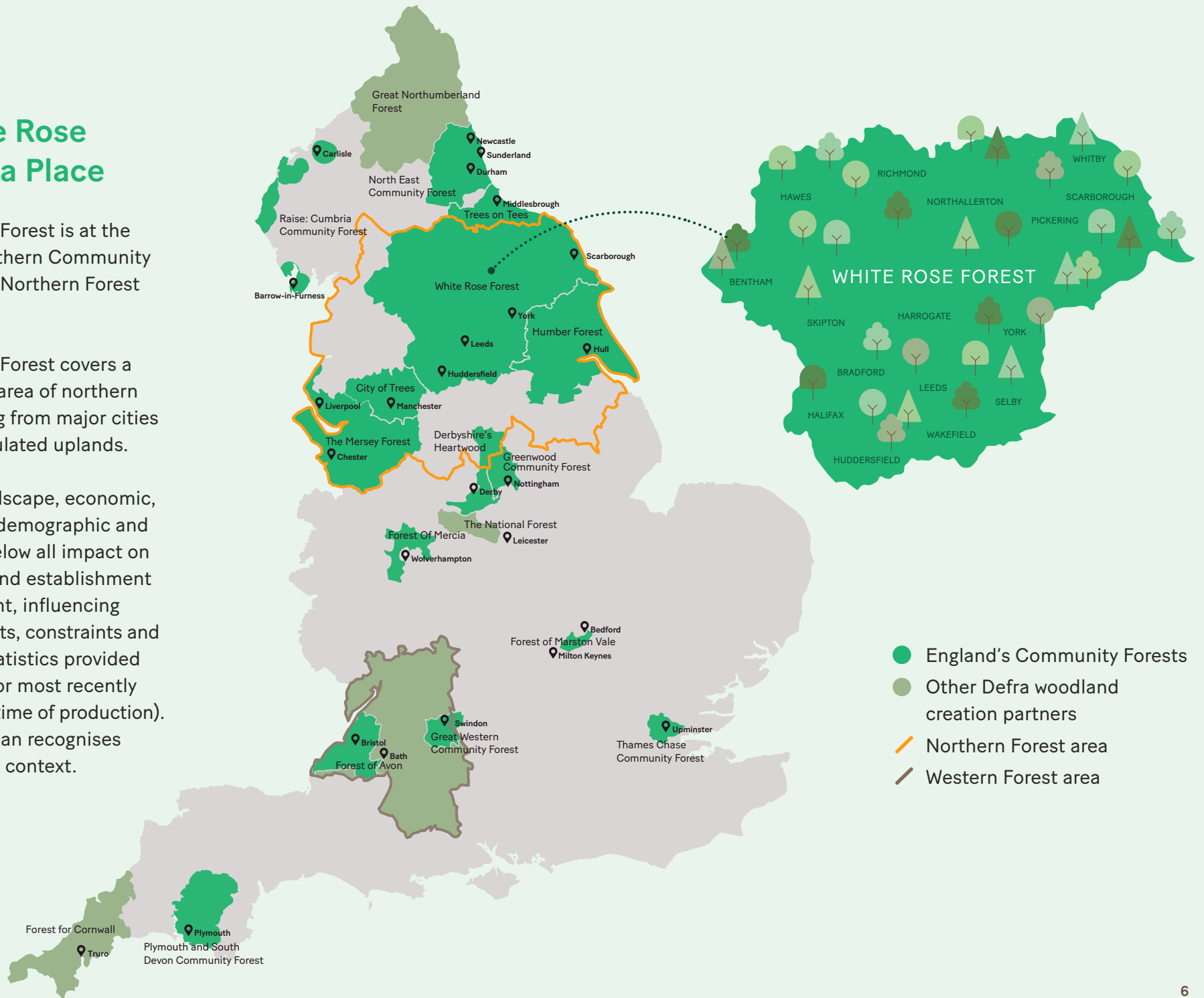
The central project delivery and specialist capacity and expertise.

# The White Rose Forest as a Place

The White Rose Forest is at the heart of the northern Community Forests and the Northern Forest programme.

The White Rose Forest covers a vast and varied area of northern England, ranging from major cities to sparsely populated uplands.

The diverse landscape, economic, environmental, demographic and social factors below all impact on tree and woodland establishment and management, influencing priorities, benefits, constraints and engagement (statistics provided are the current or most recently available at the time of production). This Strategic Plan recognises and reflects this context.



## Land

**10,300 Sq km**

**White Rose Forest area.**  
(Approx **8%** of England)

**88%** of this land area is classified as Rural and **12%** as Urban.

**72%** of this land area is agricultural land.

**37%** of this land area is covered by Protected Landscapes (All or part of 3 National Parks and 4 National Landscapes).

## Nature

**24%**

**Yorkshire Species of Concern favour woodland habitats.**

The State of Yorkshire's Nature (2024) report confirmed that Yorkshire's wildlife is under threat, with species continuing to decline and biodiversity diminishing.

## Trees and Woodland

**12%**

**Current tree and woodland cover.**  
(England = **14.9%**)

This is made up of 8.6% Woodland and 3.4% Trees Outside Woodland.

The Forestry Commission Sensitivity Maps for Woodland Creation indicate that approximately 14% of the White Rose Forest area (England = 22%) has low sensitivity to new woodland creation (i.e. does not have any clear constraints to address on the basis of national datasets, and it should be easier to agree creating new woodland here than in other areas).

The Forestry Commission has assessed that almost 62% of all woodland in the White Rose Forest area (England = 57%) is sustainably managed.

Natural Capital analysis undertaken by Liverpool John Moores University for England's Community Forests has assessed that 25% of households in the White Rose Forest area have an area of accessible woodland over 0.1ha in size within 500m.

## Population

**3.2 Million residents**

**The White Rose Forest area population.**

This is a population density of 310 per square kilometre (England = 434 residents per square kilometre).

However, population density varies considerably across the local authority areas in the White Rose Forest, from 77 residents per square kilometre in North Yorkshire to 1,500 residents per square kilometre in Bradford.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation measures relative levels of deprivation in small areas (with an average population of 1,500), called Lower-layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), in England.

314 (17%) LSOAs in the White Rose Forest area fall into the 10% most deprived areas of England.

However, levels of deprivation vary considerably across the Local Authority areas in the White Rose Forest, from 1 (1%) LSOA in York to 104 (34%) LSOAs in Bradford falling into the 10% most deprived areas of England.

## Economy

**124,000**

**Number of active businesses in the White Rose Forest Area.**

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the White Rose Forest area was worth an estimated £103 billion, approximately £32,000 per head.

## Partnership

At the heart of delivery of this Strategic Plan is the collaborative commitment and power of the White Rose Forest partnership, made up of Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) organisations, local and combined authorities, national park authorities and national landscape organisations, alongside national, regional and local charities, businesses and community enterprises.

### Strategic Board

The White Rose Forest Strategic Board provides strategic ownership and direction to the ongoing establishment of the White Rose Forest across North and West Yorkshire through the development and delivery of this Strategic Plan and associated 5 yearly Action Plans.

The White Rose Forest Strategic Board will work closely with the regulatory authorities and be advised by organisations, including the Forestry Commission, Natural England, Environment Agency and the Woodland Trust.



### Strategic Board members



North York Moors  
National Park



YORKSHIRE DALES  
National Park Authority

## Policy Context

United by a shared vision and common aims at the strategic level, while encouraging and enabling bespoke plans at the local level, the partnership combines influencing at scale with delivery flexibility locally and works alongside other environmental and conservation programmes and partnerships.

As the overarching tree and woodland strategy for North and West Yorkshire, the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-50) seeks to inform and influence how partners work with their respective local landowners, communities and environments.

To be effective the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-50) needs to be informed by and integrated into regional and local place, planning, economic, environmental, climate resilience and nature recovery policies, strategies and plans, particularly those of White Rose Forest partners.

The White Rose Forest is one of a number of northern community forests working together with the Community Forest Trust and the Woodland Trust to deliver the **Northern Forest** programme between Liverpool and the Yorkshire coast.

The White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-50) will be the framework for the development of the White Rose Forest and its contribution to the network of England's Community Forests. The White Rose Forest partnership recognises the founding Community Forest principle of a long-term aspirational goal of 30% tree cover and will strive to achieve this in core forest areas within the White Rose Forest, where these are identified and supported by partners.

National, regional and local policy influences the direction and ambition of this Strategic Plan, which has been developed within the context of the existing policy framework at the time of production. For example:

**The Environmental Improvement Plan (2023)** was the first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan. It sets out the target to "Increase tree canopy and woodland cover from 14.5% to 16.5% of total land area in England by 2050".

The **Net Zero Strategy (2021)** sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet the net zero target by 2050. A key commitment is to treble woodland creation rates in England, contributing to the UK's overall target of increasing planting rates to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025.

The **National Planning Policy Framework** sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It states that "an approved Community Forest Plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications". This Strategic Plan is the approved Community Forest Plan for the White Rose Forest.

Regional and local Climate, Environment and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Management Plans and Local Plans include targets and priorities for tree planting and woodland creation and other habitats, and support protection and enhancement of existing trees and woodland in their areas.

The White Rose Forest partnership will seek to further the statutory purposes of the Protected Landscapes in its area by ensuring that its activities contribute to the conservation and enhancement of their natural beauty and special qualities, and to the achievement of the objectives in their Management Plans.



## Why trees and woodland?

Trees and woodland are one of the most effective nature-based solutions for adapting to climate change and providing habitat to protect and enhance biodiversity. Due to this and the societal benefits, there is also strong public support for more trees and woodland. Trees and woodland provide a wide range of direct and indirect (and often multiple) benefits for: business; the environment; nature; and communities.

### Business

- Attracting and retaining investment
- Decarbonising supply chains
- Improving farm productivity
- Producing and selling timber and wood products

### Environment

- Reducing the risk of flooding (water storage and slowing the flow)
- Reducing soil erosion, nutrient losses and pollution
- Improving air quality, providing urban cooling/shading and absorbing sound
- Capturing and storing carbon

### Nature

- Providing unique and diverse habitats for wildlife
- Creating wildlife corridors and connecting habitats
- Shading and cooling watercourses for fish and other aquatic life
- Supporting pollinators with refuge and sources of food

### Community

- Creating attractive places to live
- Providing accessible spaces for leisure and recreation
- Improving physical wellbeing and mental health
- Strengthening a sense of place and cultural heritage

## Our Vision for 2050

**The White Rose Forest partnership is leading landscape transformation in North and West Yorkshire, creating a vast and varied treescape that connects and permeates our towns/cities and countryside. Our work has made our region more prosperous and resilient to a changing climate, improved health & wellbeing and supported nature recovery.**

Tree and woodland cover is significantly greater, interconnecting with other habitats and land uses. Urban trees, trees in hedgerows, verges and along riverbanks, fruit trees and orchards, agroforestry, and conventional woodland, connect as an extensive network of wooded habitats.

Ancient woodlands and long-established woodland and ancient and veteran trees are recognised, valued, protected and restored as irreplaceable assets. These precious resources and the soils from which they grow form the foundations of this network of wooded habitats, facilitating nature recovery and supporting the wider ecosystem which depends on trees and woodland. Tree planting, woodland creation and natural regeneration has buffered, extended and connected fragmented habitats to grow this extensive network.

Communities have widespread and equitable access to high quality trees and woodland, as part of wider blue and green infrastructure, improving public health and reducing health inequalities. There is increased public involvement with the planning, designing, planting and management of trees and woodland, increasing connection to nature.

Tree-lined streets, leafy active travel routes and green transport corridors link our rural and urban communities to places of education, work and leisure, providing more attractive and healthier places to visit, live and invest in. Trees are recognised and cared for as a vital part of urban infrastructure.

Trees are an integral part of catchment management, helping to restore the condition of rivers and aquatic habitats and 'slow the flow', protecting the communities and businesses downstream.

Existing wooded habitats are increasingly sustainably managed, improving ecological condition and becoming more diverse in age, structure and species, and more resilient to pests, disease and the impacts of climate change.

The White Rose Forest is a place of innovation and learning, with a strong and financially sustainable partnership at its heart, driving its development and delivery. The forestry sector in the region has grown and strengthened, creating and securing green jobs.



# Strategic Objectives and Targets for 2050

To bring about the vision, the White Rose Forest partnership will focus on five broad strategic objectives over the period of this 25 year Strategic Plan.

## 1. Expand the area of trees and woodland and improve connectivity

Encourage and support the appropriate establishment (right tree, right place, right reason) of a range of new trees and woodland types in priority areas (e.g. more deprived areas, priority catchments and ancient woodland buffers) to extend the network of wooded habitats, recognising where sensitivities exist and integrating with other land uses (e.g. farming).

A base target, to increase tree and woodland cover from 12% to 16.5% by 2050, to match the statutory national target. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by about 46,000 hectares, or about 92,000,000 trees.

With a stretch target, to increase tree and woodland cover from 12% to 18.5% by 2050, if the ambition in all local authority areas is met.

This will increase the area of trees and woodland by about 67,000 hectares, or about 134,000,000 trees.



## 2. Protect and restore more trees and woodland

Safeguard the future of ancient and long-established woodland and ancient and veteran trees. Encourage and support the sensitive and sustainable management of under-managed woodlands, improving ecological condition and resilience to the threats of pests and disease and a changing climate; extending and maximising the multiple benefits provided by existing trees and woodland.

Increase the percentage of sustainably managed woodland from 62% to 70% by 2050.

Increase the percentage of sustainably managed ancient woodland from 72% to 90% by 2050.

This will bring a total of 7,250 hectares of additional woodland into sustainable management.



### 3. Engage more people, communities and businesses in the planning, designing, planting, management and use of trees and woodland

Create opportunities for people to get involved in the work of the White Rose Forest partnership and improve equitable access to high quality trees and woodland increasing their use (for play, learning, recreation and leisure), deepening people's relationship with the natural environment and improving health and wellbeing.

Increase the number of people directly engaged in the core work of the White Rose Forest partnership in a substantive way (tree planting, woodland management and other activities) from 8,000 to 16,000 per year by 2050.

Increase the percentage of households with an area of accessible woodland over 0.1ha in size within 500m from 25% to 50% by 2050.

This will increase the number of households living close to accessible woodland by about 300,000.



### 4. Promote the transformative role of trees and woodland

Champion trees and woodland (and the White Rose Forest) locally, regionally and nationally, for the role they can play in achieving a prosperous economy, sustainable environment and thriving communities, to ensure they are supported and resourced at the required level.

Each Local Authority area has a current, resourced and effective trees and woodland strategy (in line with the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan) by 2050.

Local Planning policies support the White Rose Forest and are securing meaningful developer investment into the delivery of the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan by 2050.



### 5. Grow the impact and sustainability of the White Rose Forest partnership

Lead research, innovation, knowledge sharing, skills and capacity development and delivery across the forestry sector in North and West Yorkshire through a strong and effective White Rose Forest partnership. Increase private sector engagement and investment in the White Rose Forest.

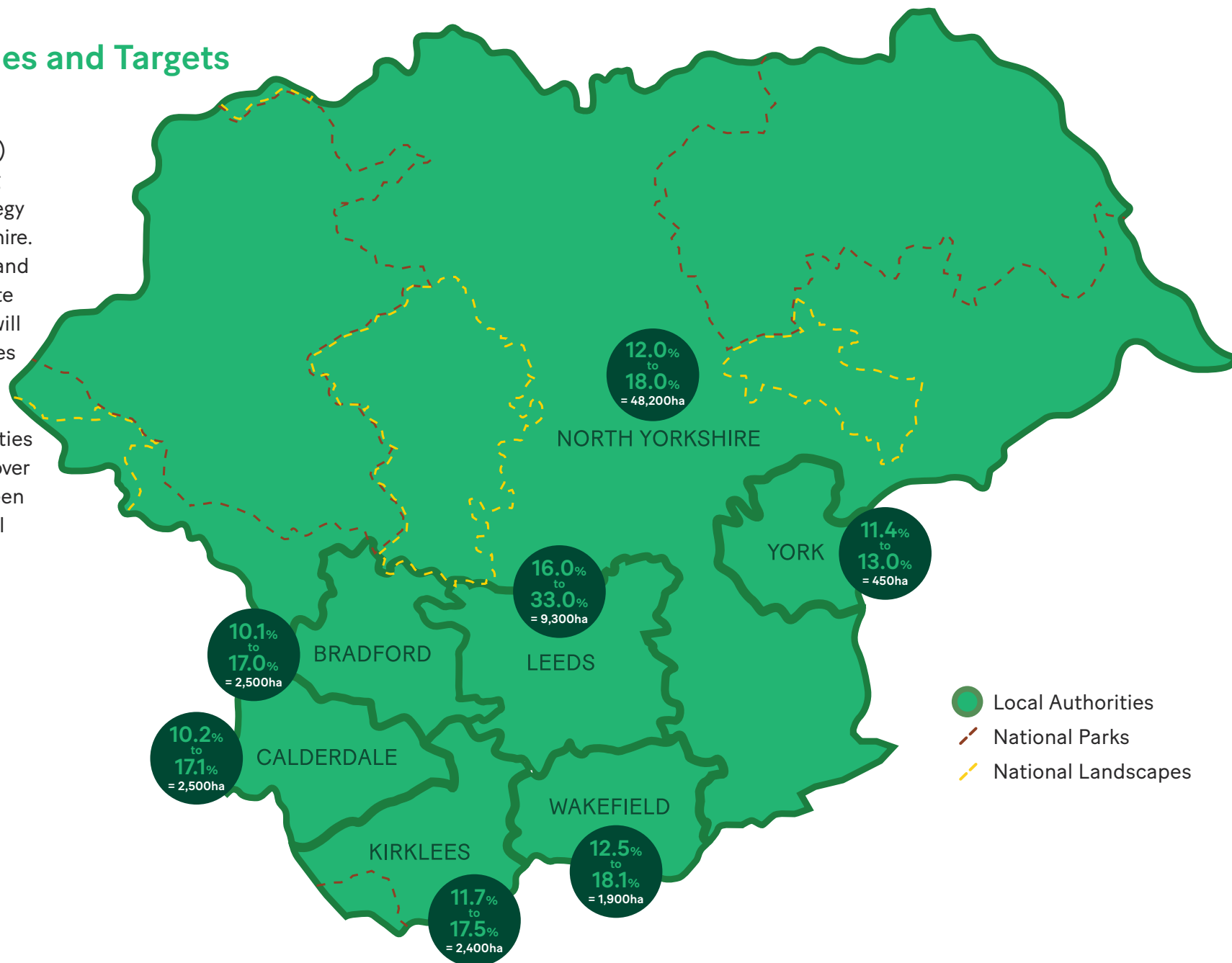
Increase the percentage of the total funding for the White Rose Forest each year coming from non-public sector sources to 50% by 2050.



## District Priorities and Targets

The White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025–50) provides the overarching tree and woodland strategy for North and West Yorkshire. However, given the vast and varied nature of the White Rose Forest area, there will be differences in priorities across the area.

The following local priorities and tree and woodland cover targets for 2050 have been developed for each Local Authority area.





**Increase tree and woodland cover from 10.1% to 17% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 2,500 hectares.**

Urban forest planting such as street trees and pocket parks will connect people and nature providing long term benefits to communities and the natural environment.

Wood pasture planting will benefit our rural areas and connect landscapes. With a focus on grazing land, targeted low density planting will enhance and preserve productive land.

Aire catchment planting will provide additional woodland creation benefits such as natural flood management. Catchment tree planting assists with slowing the flow of water to reduce flooding in affected communities.



**Increase tree and woodland cover from 10.2% to 17.1% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 2,500 hectares.**

Significantly increase street and urban tree planting, particularly in deprived areas and areas of low tree cover where appropriate and the need is greatest.

Greatly improve the connectivity of trees and woodland in the landscape and townscape to help promote biodiversity, address the ecological emergency and help to reduce flooding through promoting a joined-up mosaic of habitats.

Commit to build links between people and organisations to improve the quantity and quality of tree and woodland planting and management in the borough through increased partnership and sense of ownership.



**Increase tree and woodland cover from 11.7% to 17.5% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 2,400 hectares.**

Mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. By contributing to long-term carbon storage and flood alleviation and increasing resilience to climate impacts. Through targeted planting schemes and woodland restoration.

Contribute to nature recovery, through habitat creation and restoration, to reverse biodiversity decline.

Provide communities access to quality green spaces and contribute to all people in Kirklees having access to high quality green space within 5-10 mins / 500m walk.



**Increase tree and woodland cover from 16% to 33% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 9,300 hectares.**

Strengthen our emphasis on habitat creation and improvement to support and boost biodiversity gain.

Build in stronger emphasis on Natural Flood Management and 'Naturalised' Flood Management.

Strengthen our commitment to Green Streets<sup>®</sup> and ways of bringing nature into our hard built landscapes.

Using the above in a strategic way to fully connect our Green Blue Infrastructure.



**Increase tree and woodland cover from 12% to 18% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 48,200 hectares.**

North Yorkshire Council will harmonise and promote good practice through the development and adoption of a Tree and Woodland Policy – thereby protecting biodiversity, landscape character and heritage tree stock.

A Tree and Woodland Strategy will be developed to co-ordinate, support and influence significantly increased woodland and tree planting across North Yorkshire, aligning directly with partners including White Rose Forest to increase tree canopy cover, contributing to both climate change mitigation and adaption.

Through policy, strategy and service planning the Council will ensure a consistent and co-ordinated approach is taken within North Yorkshire Council plans e.g. land use planning, Local Nature Recovery Strategy and water management.



**Increase tree and woodland cover from 12.5% to 18.1% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 1,900 hectares.**

Increase efforts to support and sustain biodiversity across the district through the development and maintenance of new and existing habitats across our portfolio of green spaces – supported by Biodiversity Net Gain.

We will work with communities, groups and residents to ensure good quality, well maintained leisure, recreation and open space facilities which are safe and welcoming places to visit for all local people, with a wide leisure offer. We will support biodiversity in our greenspaces, parkland and wider countryside and protect wildlife and their natural habitats.

We will continue to seek out and develop opportunities to bring nature into our urban and village centres – in terms of soft landscaping, flood alleviation and other means.



**Increase tree and woodland cover from 11.4% to 13% by 2050. This will increase the area of trees and woodland by approximately 450 hectares.**

Expansion of York's woodland, urban forest and hedgerows with a focus on nature recovery, climate resilience and access to green space.

Protect and restore York's hedgerows, trees and woodland through active management and community engagement with a focus on key risks including ageing stock, climate resilience and disease.

Enhance York's flood resilience through nature-based solutions and natural flood management, particularly in the Swale, Ure, Nidd and Ouse (SUNO) catchments to 'slow the flow'.

## Approach

The White Rose Forest partnership will work collectively to deliver against the strategic objectives in this Strategic Plan. We will support a multi-disciplinary design-led approach to tree and woodland establishment and management through the adoption of the White Rose Forest Delivery Pathway, to produce a range of benefits for the landscape, wildlife and communities.

Landowners and managers across North and West Yorkshire will be offered guidance, support and professional expertise to help them navigate the planning, design, approval, funding, planting and management of trees and woodland. The start point for any engagement will be understanding landowner or manager objectives, with the approach aiming to empower informed decision making.

To support landowner engagement the White Rose Forest partnership will identify broad thematic priority areas (initially Green Streets®, Landscapes for Water and Nature Recovery) across North and West Yorkshire where trees and woodland could provide the most benefit and maximise the overall return on investment, but will remain open to proposals from all areas. We will also recognise more detailed local opportunity mapping undertaken by partners. This approach will target landowner engagement and design tree and woodland establishment to protect important species and habitats and support continued agricultural productivity.



## Principles

The White Rose Forest partnership will employ these principles to underpin its approach to delivering this Strategic Plan.

They are intended to provide high-level guidance to the individuals and organisations working across the partnership.

### Prioritisation

Act with urgency, but considering a long-term horizon, maximising the benefits of trees and woodland for future generations.

Focus tree and woodland establishment and management in areas of greatest need and benefit, making best use of resources.

### Collaboration

Share data and research to build knowledge across the partnership, enabling an evidence-based approach to shape and develop future priorities and plans.

Focus on the collective aims and utilise the skills, experience and resources of the partnership optimally, ensuring the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

### Engagement

Involve the public, communities, businesses etc in the work of the partnership, building the network of stakeholders and increasing their connection with trees and woodland.

Seek input from stakeholders on design and delivery of schemes and development of the partnership, integrating concerns and aspirations into decision making.

### Innovation

Be landowner led, engaging early and tailoring schemes and support to their circumstances, needs and land, retaining flexibility within an overall approach.

Embrace new approaches and seek opportunities for continued improvement, providing leadership within the sector and across the community forest network.

### Professionalism

Respect the historical significance of trees and woodland and their place in the local landscape, recognising where sensitivities exist with other habitats and where opportunities exist to integrate with other land uses.

Ensure tree and woodland establishment and management is undertaken in line with best practice principles (UK Forestry Standard), adopting sustainable forest management.

## Programmes

The work of the White Rose Forest partnership will be structured around a number of strategic programmes. The partnership will work with stakeholders to design and deliver these programmes in the context of the long-term vision and strategic objectives.



### Current Programme - Landscapes for Water

The Landscapes for Water programme provides a strategic approach to natural flood management in North and West Yorkshire and focuses on the creation of new woodland in river valleys or catchments to help reduce flood risk for communities and businesses further downstream.

Planting trees along our river corridors also enhances biodiversity, improves water quality and helps to protect riverbanks. The programme focusses on larger scale woodland creation within priority river valleys or catchments in North and West Yorkshire, as part of landscape scale change.

### Current Programme - Green Streets®

The Green Streets® programme focusses on urban tree planting and management and aims to improve air quality, make our urban spaces more attractive for businesses and investment, and encourage the uptake of active travel, linking areas of deprivation to education/employment sites.

The programme looks to integrate more natural and semi-natural areas, such as water bodies and green wooded spaces (blue and green infrastructure), into transportation and urban design in North and West Yorkshire, with a focus on areas of development, more deprived areas and creating more equitable access, for communities to enjoy.

### Developing Programme - Restore

The Restore programme will build on the recent successful delivery of tree planting and woodland creation in the White Rose Forest, by taking a similar approach to woodland management. The programme will, encourage and support sustainable management of under-managed trees and woodlands, with a focus on Ancient Woodland (including Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites), Ancient and Veteran trees and trees and woodlands near to where people live.

This will provide direct benefits through increased biodiversity, increased resilience and providing better access to woodland. It will also demonstrate to landowners the value of their woodland estates and the benefits of management, and enhance and expand skills, strengthening the forestry sector.

## Collective Action

To achieve the ambition of this Strategic Plan, collective action will be required by the full range of stakeholders, as each have different and complementary roles to play.

### National Park Authorities and National Landscape Organisations

- Champion the White Rose Forest locally
- Produce, maintain and resource a tree and woodland strategy, aligned with this Strategic Plan
- Embed this Strategic Plan into all relevant policies/strategies/plans
- Work with the White Rose Forest partnership to identify opportunities for additional funding
- Enforce National Planning Policy Framework and Local Planning statements
- Work with the White Rose Forest core team on engagement with other landowners and managers
- Support collaborative working through the White Rose Forest partnership by sharing best practice and developing common guidance and policies

### Local Authorities

- Champion the White Rose Forest, establishing local priorities
- Produce, maintain and resource a tree and woodland strategy, aligned with this Strategic Plan
- Embed this Strategic Plan into all relevant policies/strategies/plans
- Work with the White Rose Forest partnership to identify opportunities for additional funding
- Integrate trees and woodland into transport / infrastructure / regeneration projects
- Ensure plans are in place for the sustainable management of your existing woodland
- Enforce National Planning Policy Framework and Local Planning statements
- Work with the White Rose Forest core team on engagement with other landowners and managers
- Support collaborative working through the White Rose Forest partnership by sharing best practice and developing common guidance and policies

### Combined Authorities

- Champion the White Rose Forest
- Embed this Strategic Plan into all relevant policies/strategies/plans
- Integrate trees and woodland into transport / infrastructure / regeneration projects
- Work with the White Rose Forest partnership to identify opportunities for additional funding
- Influence central government policy and funding to support the White Rose Forest

### Central Government

- Provide a consistent long-term funding programme(s)
- Champion the benefits and contribution of trees and woodland across government
- Recognise and support Community Forests as national delivery partners
- Support the delivery of this Strategic Plan through the work of arms-length bodies (e.g. Environment Agency, Forestry Commission, Natural England)

### Landowners and Managers

- Consider opportunities to introduce more trees and woodland on your land
- Ensure plans are in place for the sustainable management of your existing woodland
- Contact the White Rose Forest partnership for guidance, support and professional expertise to help you navigate the design, planning, planting and management of trees and woodland

### Environmental Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)

- Champion the White Rose Forest
- Consider opportunities to introduce more trees and woodland on your land and work with the White Rose Forest core team on engagement with other landowners and managers
- Ensure plans are in place for the sustainable management of your existing woodland and promote this to other landowners and managers
- Support collaborative working through the White Rose Forest partnership by sharing best practice and developing common guidance and policies

## Developers

- Integrate existing trees into new developments, wherever possible, and protect these during works on site
- Contribute to the expansion of the White Rose Forest by incorporating additional tree planting / woodland creation and associated landscaping within scheme designs



## Contractors and Suppliers

- Develop capacity, skills etc to grow the forestry sector in North and West Yorkshire and support the delivery of this Strategic Plan
- Support collaborative working through the White Rose Forest partnership by sharing experiences and best practice

## Investors and Investment Advisers

- Create new green finance mechanisms, tailored to tree and woodland establishment and management, to meet different investor objectives
- Engage with the White Rose Forest partnership to design and pilot innovative approaches
- Scale up successful pilots into significant schemes / programmes

## Businesses

- Promote opportunities for your staff to get involved in volunteering
- Donate to the White Rose Forest to support local tree and woodland projects
- Investigate opportunities to incorporate tree planting where you operate

## Academics and Researchers

- Engage with the White Rose Forest partnership on research projects, dissertations and placements
- Support collaborative working through the White Rose Forest partnership by undertaking research into issues or opportunities in the White Rose Forest and sharing research findings

## Public and Third Sector Organisations

- Promote opportunities for your staff to get involved in volunteering
- Investigate opportunities to incorporate tree planting where you operate
- Explore opportunities to connect trees and woodland with your aims and objectives (e.g. health & wellbeing, conservation, climate, place, engagement etc)



## Local People

- Express support for the White Rose Forest to local business and political leaders
- Seek opportunities to volunteer and promote a tree and woodland culture
- Engage in plans for local tree planting, woodland creation and management
- Consider planting a tree, if you have an appropriate space
- Explore and enjoy your local woods more often

## Funding and Financing

The delivery of this Strategic Plan will require significant funding, to deliver the benefits for business, the environment, nature and communities. The availability of different sources of funding and financing will also influence landowner and manager decisions regarding the establishment and management of trees and woodland.

Defra's Trees for Climate programme has provided significant funding for all Community Forests since its launch in 2020 and has been the predominant source of capital and revenue funding for the White Rose Forest over the last five years.

This has enabled the establishment of significant amounts of new trees and woodland and the development of a core team, at the heart of the partnership, providing significant project delivery and specialist capacity and expertise.

In recognition of the continued pressures on central government funding and the expansion of new funding schemes and financing opportunities, funding the delivery of this Strategic Plan will necessarily become more blended and complex over time, drawing on public, private and charitable sources, with a growing proportion from non-public sector sources.

Some of the main options are:

- Dedicated trees and woodland planning, establishment or management grants
- Broader land management schemes, making payments for environmental goods and services
- Other grant funding, such as the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Private investment through green finance mechanisms
- Funding through the planning system, as part of development
- Natural capital / Ecosystem services payments
- Devolved government investment funding to Combined Authorities
- Productive forestry
- Corporate sponsorship, donations etc
- Personal and charitable donations

Looking forward, the partnership will take a proactive approach to securing funding, exploring and developing a broad range of options and will do so in a co-ordinated manner to optimise outcomes.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-50) will be delivered through a series of five-year Action Plans, which will provide more detail on funding, delivery programmes, actions and interim targets for that period of the Strategic Plan. These Action Plans will be developed by the White Rose Forest partnership and approved by the White Rose Forest Strategic Board.

It is envisaged that these Action Plans will be subject to light-touch review annually (with the potential addition, removal and refinement of individual actions) and re-approval by the White Rose Forest Strategic Board if needed, and more significant review after year 3 or 4 leading to the production of a new Action Plan.

Monitoring and evaluation will be essential to understand delivery against the aims, objectives and targets in the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-50) and five-year Action Plans and demonstrate the difference that the White Rose Forest makes. It also supports future planning, development and directing of resources and provides evidence for advocacy and funding bids.

The White Rose Forest core team will maintain a Geographical Information System (GIS) platform to map all White Rose Forest related tree and woodland establishment and management activity across North and West Yorkshire and systems to monitor and report on progress in delivering the current Action Plan. Partners will need to be open with the sharing of data and progress to enable a holistic collective picture across the White Rose Forest to be established.

The White Rose Forest partnership will report on progress in delivering the current Action Plan to its Programme Management Group and Strategic Board, and report through the England's Community Forests network to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. An annual progress and impact report, highlighting what has been achieved, will be published.

## Final words

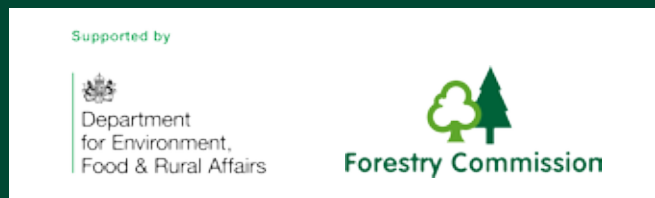
Over the last 25 years the White Rose Forest has successfully delivered a range of significant, and in some case groundbreaking, projects and programmes across North and West Yorkshire. With each year that passes the trees that have been planted grow and increase their positive impact on the local landscape, communities and wildlife. With a strong record of achievement and growing confidence in our approach, the White Rose Forest Strategic Plan (2025-2050) lays out the path for further transformation to 2050, creating a resilient landscape for growth.

**Iwan Downey**

White Rose Forest Programme Director



## With thanks to our Defra partners



The White Rose Forest partnership would like to thank the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and its arms-length bodies for their support over the last 25 years and looks forward to working together to deliver this Strategic Plan over the next 25 years.

[www.whiteroseforest.org](http://www.whiteroseforest.org)

[whiteroseforest@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:whiteroseforest@kirklees.gov.uk)

Approved by the White Rose Forest Strategic Board  
(26 March 2025)

### Photo Credits:

Berglind Karsdottir, Carl Milner Photography, City of York Council, National Trust, The Grammar School at Leeds, Woodland Trust.