



Press Release
For immediate use

40th Anniversary National Tree Week
Saturday 28th November – Sunday 6th December

ROOTED IN THE COMMUNITY

The strength and wellbeing of urban and rural communities alike is rooted in its trees. Strong healthy trees are a mark of a strong healthy community, and to continue to grow strong together, it's essential for communities to keep on planting trees.

This is why, each winter, The Tree Council inspires thousands of people across Britain to join forces and plant upwards of a million trees during National Tree Week – the UK's largest tree festival.

Launched in 1975, National Tree Week is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

The campaign has its roots in the national response to the Dutch Elm Disease crisis of the 1960s, which destroyed millions of trees. Communities across the UK answered the call to help replenish their depleted treescapes by taking part in the groundbreaking Plant a Tree in '73 initiative. Following the campaign's success, The Tree Council was founded and the first ever National Tree Week took place two years later.

40 years on, and we are once again facing a major threat to our trees in the form of ash dieback. To stem the damage to our landscapes and neighbourhoods, it is more essential than ever that we grow more trees in our parks, streets, woods and green spaces.

Tree planting activities and workshops are taking place around the country organised by schools, community groups, The Tree Council's member organisations and its volunteer Tree Wardens. Details can be found on The Tree Council's interactive 'Near You' map, while tips for hosting an event and a downloadable poster to promote it are also available via the website: <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk>

'With forty years of successful growth behind it, National Tree Week has become firmly rooted in the calendar of hundreds of community groups around the UK,' said Pauline Buchanan Black, Director-General of The Tree Council. 'To mark the 40th anniversary of this important campaign, we want to celebrate Britain's rich heritage of tree-planting and applaud the commitment of communities that really value their trees.'

ENDS

For **further information**, please contact (press enquiries only)

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. National Tree Week

The **40th anniversary National Tree Week will run from 28th November to 6th December 2015** and marks the launch of the bare root tree planting season. *Plant a Tree in '73* carried a message of landscape repopulation in the wake of Dutch Elm Disease, which had already wiped out more than 20 million of our most significant landscape trees. The year-long operation was run collaboratively by organisations under the banner of the *Green Survival Campaign* which, the following January, generated *The Tree Council* to carry on the work (*Plant Some More in '74*). **National Tree Week** became the annual celebration to raise awareness and appreciation as well as encourage planting every year since. Now, with Ash dieback sweeping across the country, the campaign is even more relevant.

Visit **The Tree Council's website**, <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/> for details of **local National Tree Week events** and tips on tree planting and aftercare. Event information is also available from the Tree Council infoline, 020 7940 8180 (office hours)

2. The Tree Council

Environmental charity **The Tree Council** is the UK's lead charity for trees in all settings, urban and rural, promoting their importance in a changing environment and it works in partnership with communities, organisations and government to make trees matter to everyone. As the coalition body for over 180 organisations working together for trees, it focuses on getting more trees, of the right kind, in the right places; better care for all trees of all ages and inspiring effective action for trees.

It works with its national volunteer **Tree Warden Scheme** and member organisations to engage people in biodiversity and environmental issues and to promote planting and conservation of trees and woods in town and country. A major part of this is achieved through its annual **Community Action Programme** that includes Walk in the Woods month, Seed Gathering Season and **National Tree Week** (first run in March 1975), and through supporting groups organising local events.

It operates a tree-planting grants programme for UK schools and communities to plant trees and create woodland habitats, as well as working on an agenda for change that includes its annual Tree Care Campaign, the Green Monuments Campaign and Hedge Tree Campaign.