



## Host an Urban Tree Festival in your town or city

### A simple 'how to' guide to organising an event or programme

#### The Fifth Urban Tree Festival runs from 13th – 21st May 2023

The Urban Tree Festival is an annual celebration of trees closest to where most people live: highlighting their benefits and beauty, majesty and magic, value and variety within cities, towns and all urban environments. We started in London in 2018 by hosting a weekend of events exploring London's Urban Forest. In 2020 lockdown saw us take the festival online, with huge success and engagement from city dwellers across the world. In 2023 - and beyond - we are keen to see the Urban Tree Festival celebrated with in-person and online events across the UK.

Our experience shows that Urban Tree Festivals work best with freedom and creativity, using personal passion, enthusiasm and imagination to bring people and communities closer to their local trees and to each other.

If you'd like to consider hosting an Urban Tree Festival in your area - or just one or two events - we suggest activities that have worked in the past, and provide some cautionary advice for organisers. Above all, we encourage freedom of imagination to run your event how you think best!

#### Organising an event this year? - what we need from you

Ideally we'd like local Urban Tree Festivals or events this year to be between the main festival dates: the 13<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023. This could be over one day or weekend, during the week or through the whole nine days. You could form a voluntary steering group, do it yourself - although we don't recommend this! - or as part of your local tree warden network, tree charter group, park friends or other local group!

Please get [in touch](#) with the Festival team once you have decided on what you are going to do, with relevant details and promotional copy, so that our team of volunteers can help promote your local Urban Tree Festival event. We will be pleased to promote local events on our website and through our network, but for this year we must have full event details **NO LATER THAN Monday 10 April**. We will also provide a copy of the festival logo so that your event can be promoted as an 'Urban Tree Festival' event. Wherever possible, we try to make events free or by donation to allow them to be as accessible as possible.



Under certain circumstances, with prior agreement, we may allow use of our logo and brand for paid events held during the Festival and at other times – please [contact us](#) to discuss this option.

Following the success of our recent Festival's online formats, we're blending real life events with online features, including possibly live streaming. You could do as much of either as you like and relevant online events can easily be put into the main programme on our Festival website..

### **What kind of events or activities?**

Ultimately, through our events we want to promote urban trees and connect people and communities with them and to each other. Some of the regular Urban Tree Festival events include guided tree walks of urban parks, street trees, urban woodlands, gardens, university campuses or nature reserves. The walks don't have to be led by a tree professional or expert, but someone with knowledge and passion is ideal.

Events that promote biodiversity, nature, ecology, ancient trees, art, culture, heritage, writing, health, wellbeing & folklore are all key parts of the festival and part of the benefits that trees bring.

For inspiration our festival programmes from previous years' can be [found here](#). We aim for an accessible level of content which appeals to the broad public rather than a professional or academic audience.

Our online events have been through Zoom which has given us a platform to reach a far wider audience through a variety of events including online meditation sessions, art workshops, debates & discussions, guided 'virtual walks', tree presentations and [more](#).

### **Activities**

We have a range of activities and resources through [our website](#) that would work for individuals, groups, schools or communities. The #LeafMotif project, art work, social media projects, local tree mapping and creation of tree trails ([with TiCL Media Ltd and the Tree Council](#)), tree identification, podcasts, meditation are all popular Urban Tree Festival activities. We also have a range of children's and family [events](#).

### **News**

We will be publishing regular news articles, or blog posts, in the run up to and throughout the Festival this year. If you'd like to offer us a post on a relevant topic, we'll do our best to



publish it. This is an opportunity for you to tell us what you're doing with trees in your town or city. Have a look at our [News pages](#) for inspiration.

### Some cautionary advice:

1. Keep it simple - a led walk for adults among trees, may only require an accessible route (remember not all disabilities are visible), permissions from the landowner (that includes your local authority), a risk assessment and public liability insurance (that may require a first aider to be available, or the police to be informed).
2. You might also find it useful to have a written agreement with the event/walk leader - who should be insured. You may need to recruit a volunteer to act as a marshall to keep participants together and a contingency plan should the weather turn foul, or the event/walk leader is indisposed on the day. Plus you will need to think about promoting the event locally, and maybe setting up event ticketing too.
3. If you are planning an activity that involves children or vulnerable adults, you will need a safeguarding policy, debarring clearance for any facilitators, clear instructions for carers and parents.
4. If you are considering using a venue, then you may need to consider paying a hire charge. If you offer food you may need a hygiene certificate, and if offering alcohol, a temporary licence from your local authority and possibly security..
5. If you are considering a workshop that includes the use of sharp implements or tree cutting tools, you should only do this if you work with a qualified and appropriately insured organisation.
6. If you are planning to take photographs or video, you may need to have clearance from a land owner and from participants (and especially from the carers and parents of any child or your person).
7. Before we can promote your event or Festival in our programme this year, we need evidence that all permissions have been granted, and that insurances are in place, plus a description of the event, along with ticketing information if relevant - **NO LATER THAN Monday 10 April.**

### Over to you!

We hope you find this simple guide useful and look forward to hearing about your ideas for Urban Tree Festival events in 2023 and beyond!