

# OVO Energy and The Conservation Volunteers I Dig Trees Report 2019



St. Thomas' C of E Junior School,

Featherstone. W.Yorks.

Thank you for our trees and shrubs!

Year 5



Left to right: Darren York/Sophie Muller/Tony Crook/Shirley Rodrigues/Rosslyn Stuart

2019 marked the fifth year of the I Dig Trees programme, our incredible partnership with OVO Energy. In the face of a growing climate emergency, this highly successful programme enabled us to plant and distribute 350,000 native trees in 2019 (our highest annual total yet!) which will soak up CO<sub>2</sub>, cool our towns and cities, provide shade and cleaner air for people, and create valuable habitat for our native wildlife.

By combining the commitment to the environment of OVO Energy's Green Energy Tariff customers with the expertise of The Conservation Volunteers and the efforts of people and communities across the UK we have now smashed the 1 million tree mark since our partnership began back in 2015.

I had a great day (pic above) in November planting I Dig Trees in Camden as part of Greener London, and in October our partnership won the Corporate Social Responsibility Project of the Year Award at the Charity Times Awards.

Tree planting today is as important as it has ever been and I'm incredibly proud of what we're achieving together thanks to OVO Energy's longstanding commitment to protecting the environment and making our communities greener.

Thank you!

**Darren York**

Chief Executive, The Conservation Volunteers

Trees are incredible for nature, supporting hundreds of insects and a haven for many species of wildlife, that's 1 Million more natural habitats for wildlife in the UK



© Charles S Sharp

# Planting by numbers, what we have achieved since 2015



1,078,000  
trees planted  
across the UK



2,642  
community groups  
joining in



2,895  
different sites were  
planted



9,163,000  
sq metres covered by  
newly planted trees



539,000  
tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved



42,371  
volunteers planting  
trees



259,316  
hours  
volunteered



21,560  
packs of mixed  
variety trees

**Collectively  
these trees  
would cover  
46,750 tennis  
courts**





2019 was a milestone year for the I Dig Trees programme. Not only did we plant a record number of trees in a single season (350,000) we also passed the 1 MILLIONTH TREE mark for the very first time!

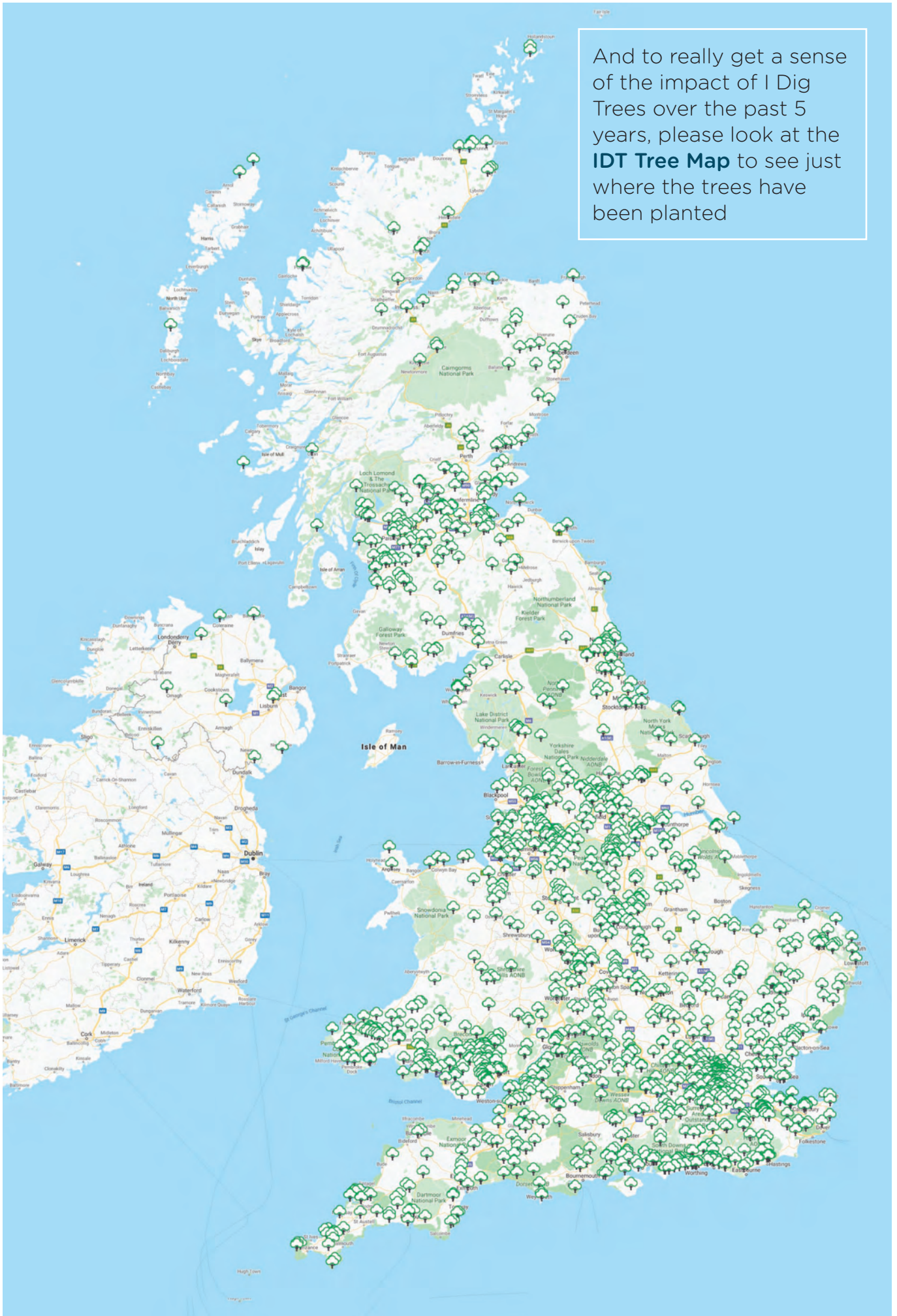
And if that wasn't enough, the I Dig Trees program won CSR Project of the Year at the 2019 Charity Times Awards.

Since our very first year, I Dig Trees has been inclusive, encouraging community groups from right across the UK to apply for tree packs.

The table opposite outlines the regional split for 2019.

Region	Trees
South West	44950
South East	51350
London Region	35350
East Anglia	26400
West Midlands	15900
East Midlands	9300
Yorkshire	25450
North East	13300
North West	52200
Scotland	51450
Wales	23400
Northern Ireland	950
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>350000</b>

And to really get a sense of the impact of I Dig Trees over the past 5 years, please look at the **IDT Tree Map** to see just where the trees have been planted



## East Anglia



The aim of the activity is to regenerate the woodland, increase habitat and provide materials for the children to enjoy working with in a few years. I wanted to inspire the children to invest themselves in the site and watch how the environment developed as the trees grew.

I set up a free event open to all of the parents and children who attend my forest school sessions, or who have been interested in attending a session, but have not been able to make it so far.

I was thrilled with the overwhelming response, and at least 10 families attended the session on Sunday 22nd December.

The children and parents took so much pleasure having their hands in the soil, selecting the trees to be planted and taking time out of life to connect to nature.

### **Dawn Waterhouse - Roman River Forest School**

## East Midlands



I am pleased to say that we got our trees planted in Rothersthorpe Community Space on Saturday. We were very lucky with the weather as it had been raining all week but this meant the ground was perfect. A few of us arrived early to dig the majority of the holes and then we were amazed that we had 28 volunteers turn up and we got the trees planted in less than 2 hours. We even had to put a sign up to say we did not need to plant the next day and apparently a couple of families turned up the next day too! Thank you so much for the trees, we would definitely look to have some more if you are running I Dig Tree in the future.

**Jodie Johnson – Dickens Field Trust**

## London



This is the third year we have planted trees through this initiative and it's great to see the trees growing successfully. We are restoring a PAWs coppice woodland – planting a variety of native species to diversify wood back to natural state to ensure its long term survival.

Thanks for your work on this initiative!

**Stephen Sangster – Billet Community Woodland**

## North West



To give you a scope of what we are aiming to achieve over the next 2 years , we will be developing a community mental wellness eco -hub on the guild park site next to the main project area , this will comprise of a covered facility for the local community and a mental health route starting from the facility and encompassing Goosnargh and Longridge, a mental wellness virtual reality experience of Goosnargh and Longridge would be accessible at the centre to anyone who is unable to access the route physically including a willow farm and orchard.

The trees you have donated will form a major part of this ambitious plan with strong aims and a reachable vision over the next two years. we also aim to plant in excess of 4000 trees, with a commitment to plant a tree for every member of staff and patient at Lancashire Care NHS Foundation trust

A big thankyou again and as we progress, I will email you updates!

**Elizabeth Harrison – Grow Your Own**

# North East

The trees arrived in very good condition and we planted them the day after they arrived. We had planned to have a family dig the weekend before the trees were due to arrive, but we had to cancel that due to gale force winds and torrential rain!

So, the day the trees arrived a group of us prepared the ground and marked out where the trees were to be planted. The day after it was all go planting the trees. The local primary schoolchildren came out 12 at a time to plant a tree/shrub each. We were even joined by the local community police who lent a hand. Refreshments were provided by the church and hot soup was welcome at lunch time.

Can I thank you and your organisation for providing the trees. Rabbits permitting, we hope they will grow well and provide the community with everything it needs to be a healthy community.

Thank you again.

**Jane Everett - Our Lady Queen of Peace Church**



# Scotland



Just passing on some feedback from our day of planting today, this is part of the wider Primary School planting effort with the Wildlife and Shrub pack to create new wildlife habitat, as part of our hedgehog conservation project. We have named it Hedges for Hogs, today 20 pupils and 8 parent volunteers planted another 20m and around 100 trees. Despite cold and windy weather everyone was enthusiastic about our tree planting day!

Comments from parents:

*I was a little apprehensive as we've never done anything like this before but when I realised how easy it was to plant a tree, and the difference it can make, I decided that there is more that we can do in our own garden.*

*Thanks to TCV and OVO Energy for the opportunity. It's a great way to encourage teamwork in school and the kids absolutely love getting stuck in and getting their hands (and faces and knees and elbows!) muddy.*

**Kirsty Crawford – The Conservation Volunteers**

## South East



We requested the delivery of 250 saplings, consisting of a mix of hawthorn, goat willow, dogwood, blackthorn and guelder rose, so that we could fill in a Bush Valley native hedgerow, which had many “holes” in it. On a rainy day in December, our hardy Thursday group of volunteers ventured out, with their trusty spades, to successfully plant all of these trees. Our December planting will also help small mammals to move around, under enough cover to prevent predation. It will also provide some welcome protection from the howling winter winds, when we go out for a walk!

**Ian Gray - West Kent Downs Countryside Trust**

## South West



A wise old owl once said, the next best thing to planting a tree 10 years ago is to plant a tree today! In association with the Parish Council Estate Management Group, Clatford School and The Conservation Volunteers, this is exactly what 30 plus volunteers did on a chilly Saturday morning at the end of November. To mark National Tree Week they planted 80 trees in the conservation field behind the Cottage Green allotments. Oak, Silver Birch, Beech and Hornbeam will grow tall for future generations to enjoy. 'Liv's Soup Kitchen' was a welcome addition and provided much needed warmth and refreshment during and at the end of planting. Thank you to Mrs O-H from Clatford School and all the Mums, Dads and children for creating something special for our environment. It was a great community effort and we look forward to more initiatives soon.

**Stu Riley - Goodworth Clatford Primary School**

## Wales



The Friends of Roath Park, Cardiff received the requested four tree packs in January and the delivery went according to plan. And so did the planting! Roath Park in Cardiff is made up of three distinct areas – the Recreation Ground, the Pleasure Gardens and the Botanic Gardens. The Roath Brook runs through all three sections. There is no formal planting in the Recreation Ground so the tree whips were planted along Roath Brook there to supplement some previous planting by Natural Resources Wales. The planting was done during one of the regular volunteer gardening sessions organised by the Friends of Roath Park on Saturday 25 January and will increase bio-diversity in this part of the park.

**Ruth Evans – Friends of Roath Park**

## West Midlands



The Friends Group would like to thank TCV 'I Dig Trees' and OVO Energy for providing us with a wonderful variety of plants that will help us further improve Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve.

We all know how important trees and plants are for the environment by producing oxygen and removing carbon dioxide but the plants TCV 'I Dig Trees' and OVO Energy have provided will do so much more.

The trees are very important to the wildlife we have living on the Nature Reserve and will provide habitats that change as the trees mature. The younger trees will provide a safe environment for birds and insects and in time they may provide homes by bats, owls, beetles and many more creatures.

The hedgerows will provide shelter and nesting for both the Reserve and Woodland birds. They will also provide food for all sorts of invertebrates, mammals and birds. We are trying to improve all of the hedgerow as all sorts of animals and birds use them as a safe roadway around the Reserve.

We have a number of schools and group that come to the reserve to learn about nature, plants and animal life that can be found here. We will be working with these group in the coming days to help complete the planting and in this way we hope to encourage the children to take ownership of everything on the Reserve and hopefully see it as 'their' Reserve now and in the future.

**John Humpherson - Friends of Pendeford Mill Nature Reserve**

# Yorkshire



The trees were planted earlier today 08/12/19. We had a fantastic turnout of around 100 volunteers from our community despite the rainy weather.

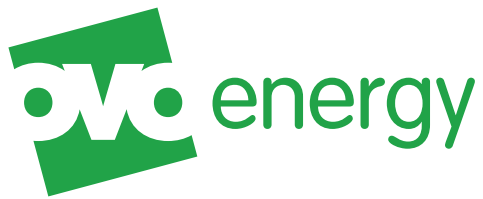
All 1000 trees were planted forming a small corpse, in just under two hours, a fantastic team effort, attached are a few pictures from the day.

Thank you again for donating the trees, I'm sure they will prosper and create a peaceful place where people can go to reflect.

On behalf of the Halton Community.

**Andrew Manson - We are Halton**





TCV looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with OVO Energy and your customers. Together we can leave a lasting, positive legacy for the UK's woodlands.

**Douglas Palarm - Head of Partnerships and Fundraising**

**Join in, feel good**