



****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

NEW PARTNERSHIP BRINGS TREE PLANTING TO GOLD DOFE AWARDS

As a legacy of The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC), an exciting new tree planting partnership has formed between two of the UK's most inspiring youth and environmental charities – The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) and The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).

This partnership, which will initially be piloted, will offer young people the opportunity to take part in community-based tree planting activities as part of the Volunteering section of their Gold DofE Awards.

In a unique tribute to Queen Elizabeth II and The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, founder and former Patron of both the DofE and TCV, this new partnership reflects Queen Elizabeth's love of nature throughout Her 70-year reign, and the former Duke of Edinburgh, who championed youth and environmental initiatives throughout his lifetime.

Bringing together grassroots-led tree planting with the passion for volunteering and social action of DofE participants, the partnership will be an effective way for young people to engage with their local communities and make a practical contribution to the environment.

Now an Approved Activity Provider for the DofE, TCV will provide support and advice to Gold DofE participants as they undertake a green skills or tree planting project for at least 12 months. This will include mentoring and guidance on fundraising, planning, planting, and aftercare to enable young people to flourish and grow in confidence, and develop skills including people management, communication, and planning.

The partnership embodies the spirit of The Queen's Green Canopy, which saw volunteers from across the nation come together to plant trees in honour of Queen Elizabeth to benefit future generations.

Rebecca Kennelly, Executive Director of UK Operations for the DofE, said:

“We know young people doing their DofE are passionate about taking action to protect our environment and contributing to a greener world – so it's brilliant that they can now take part in accessible, meaningful and high-quality volunteering projects with The Conservation Volunteers while working towards their Gold Awards.

"It's also a fitting legacy for The Queen's Green Canopy, giving young people an opportunity to make a positive, sustainable change in their communities for many years to come."

Darren York, CEO, TCV said:

It's increasingly recognised that climate change cannot be tackled without restoring nature, and The Conservation Volunteers believes that nature cannot be restored without engaging people to understand, care for and protect it. We're delighted to be working with The Queen's Green Canopy and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award on this new programme that will equip young people with means to take practical action and inspire others to join them."

Dan Rex, CEO, The Queen's Green Canopy said:

"The participation and enthusiasm of youth groups to plant trees across the nation as part of the QGC has been truly inspiring. We are delighted to see the launch of this exciting pilot programme to further encourage and support our young people to develop knowledge and skills in tree planting. With The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, as former Patron of both The DofE and TCV, it is a particularly fitting and special addition to the legacy of The Queen's Green Canopy, in the name of Queen Elizabeth."

Background - DofE

The DofE is a non-competitive, personal challenge, which gives all young people aged 14-24 the chance to follow their passions, discover new talents and build resilience and self-belief. It is run in schools, colleges, clubs and community organisations, hospitals and prisons, all over the UK. Through their Volunteering, young people doing their DofE are a huge force for good – in 2021/22, they gave more than two million hours of their time volunteering for causes they care about across the UK, with an equivalent estimated total value of nearly £10m.

Background - TCV

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) bring people together to create, improve and care for green spaces. From local parks and community gardens to Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest; from school grounds and hospital grounds to waterways, wetlands and woodlands; TCV connects people to the green spaces that form a vital part of any healthy, happy community. TCV's team of dedicated, passionate staff and volunteers work with communities across England, Northern Ireland and Scotland and, through our Community Network, we support local community groups across the UK.

Background - The Queen's Green Canopy

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. Following the wishes of His Majesty The King, who became Patron as The Prince of Wales, the QGC initiative was extended to the end

of March 2023 to give people the opportunity to plant trees in memoriam to honour Her Majesty.

As a nationwide initiative created to mark the Platinum Jubilee, the QGC was due to conclude in December – the end of the Jubilee year. However, as the official tree planting season in the UK is from October to March, the initiative was extended to include the full tree planting season, beginning in October 2022 and concluding in March 2023.

An interactive QGC map was created to showcase the planting projects across the United Kingdom and inspire people to get involved. <https://queensgreencanopy.org/map-education-hub/qgc-map/#/>

As well as inviting the planting of new trees, the QGC dedicated a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands and 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service. <https://queensgreencanopy.org/ancient-trees-and-ancient-woodland/70-ancient-trees-and-70-ancient-woodlands/>

By inviting everyone to plant considerable numbers of new trees throughout the country, the QGC seeks to highlight the significant value of trees and woodlands as nature's simple but highly effective way to clean the air we breathe, slow the impact of climate change, create important wildlife habitats and improve our general health and wellbeing.

- Throughout Her reign, The Queen planted more than 1,500 trees all over the world and spoke alongside Sir David Attenborough of the importance of trees in the Earth's future.
- The QGC is a voluntary and inclusive initiative which is open to participation by everyone in the UK.
- The QGC is a symbolic gift which involves the voluntary dedication of forests and woodland – there is no land/title transfer.
- The QGC is a not-for-profit initiative, which has not received Government funding.

Further information about the QGC is available: www.queensgreencanopy.org

The Queen's Green Canopy Partners

Collaboration is central to the QGC. We are proud to work with **Cool Earth, The Royal Horticultural Society, The Woodland Trust, Trees for Cities, The Forest Canopy Foundation, DEFRA, The Tree Council, The Conservation Volunteers & Community Forest Trust.**

The Queen's Green Canopy – Platinum Supporters

The QGC is grateful to the **Royal Mail Group** as our first Founding Partner. We are also working with Platinum Supporters **Bloomberg Philanthropies, Coutts, John**

Lewis & Partners, Waitrose & Partners, Rentokil Initial, Coupa, Regatta and Craghoppers, Bridgepoint, Howdens, Johnnie Walker, McDonald's UK & Ireland. Bags of Ethics by Supreme Creations and Bollinger are Official Supporters.

The Queen's Green Canopy – QGC Friends Network

A diverse collection of groups located across the UK, our Friends Network is supporting the QGC, from planting trees to helping inspire the nation to get involved. <https://queensgreencanopy.org/about-us/qgc-friends-network/>