



Bishops of the Church of England have each been provided a tree by Forestry England which will form part of The Queen's Green Canopy.

The royal initiative invites people from across the United Kingdom to plant a tree to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee next year.

The more than 100 trees - a mix of native hazel and hornbeam trees - will be an outward symbol of the bishops' commitment to "pray, speak out and take action" on climate change.

The saplings were presented by the Bishop Norwich, Graham Usher, lead Bishop for the Environment, at a green-themed breakfast during the College of Bishops which is taking place in Oxford this week.

It coincides with the Great Big Green Week – a nationwide celebration of action on climate change.

Bishop Graham said: "I am extremely grateful to Forestry England for enabling me to provide a gift of native hazel and hornbeam trees to every bishop in the Church of England.

"These will be planted across our 42 dioceses to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee as part of the Queen's Green Canopy.

"They will also be symbols of our joint commitment to pray, speak out and take action to ensure that we work together in our communities for climate justice in Jesus's name."

The meeting of bishops to discuss matters including environmental concerns comes just months before COP26.

Earlier this week, Bishop Graham joined with other faith leaders on September 20 to demand action on climate change ahead of the meeting in Glasgow.

The Archbishop of Canterbury the Pope, and the Ecumenical Patriarch, issued a joint statement for the first time in an urgent appeal for the planet.

Mike Seddon, Forestry England Chief Executive, said: "I'm delighted Forestry England is gifting these broadleaf trees to every bishop to plant and care for in their diocese, as part of the Queen's Green Canopy tree planting initiative.

"As they mature, these beautiful native hornbeam and hazel trees will absorb and store carbon and be enjoyed by people for years to come. And as we collectively face the twin crises of climate emergency and biodiversity loss, it is heartening to work closely with the Church of England and see the leadership and ministry they are providing in responding to these enormous challenges within their communities and across the land they manage.

"As England's largest land manager, we are focusing on expanding the nation's forests by planting resilient new woodlands, well-adapted to the changing climate conditions we now expect, and ensuring they are places for wildlife to flourish and people to connect with the natural world."

More information:

- The Church of England has committed to becoming carbon net-zero by 2030, and has already clarified the scope and definition of the target.
- The Church Commissioners have planted over five million trees in the last two years – three million in the US and two million in the UK. Independently certified as being a sustainable producer of timberland, the Commissioners were recently recognised for their sustainable management of Welsh Forestry.
- Forestry England manages and cares for the nation's 1,500 woods and forests, with over 296 million visits per year and is England's largest land manager.
- The trees being given by Forestry England to the Church of England bishops have been grown by Cheviot Trees, one of Europe's largest producers of cell grown plants and trees.

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