

Essex Tree Palette

A guide to choosing the most appropriate tree species for Essex sites according to landscape character and soil type.

Date:
January 2018



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Essex County Council



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Introduction

This planting palette is designed to give guidance to ECC officers as to which species of tree are suitable to plant in non-urban parts of Essex.

The palette is deliberately a small list with the intention that the planting will be enriched by natural regeneration from the surrounding countryside which will better reflect the local variation in tree species. We advocate considering using natural regeneration on its own where viable.

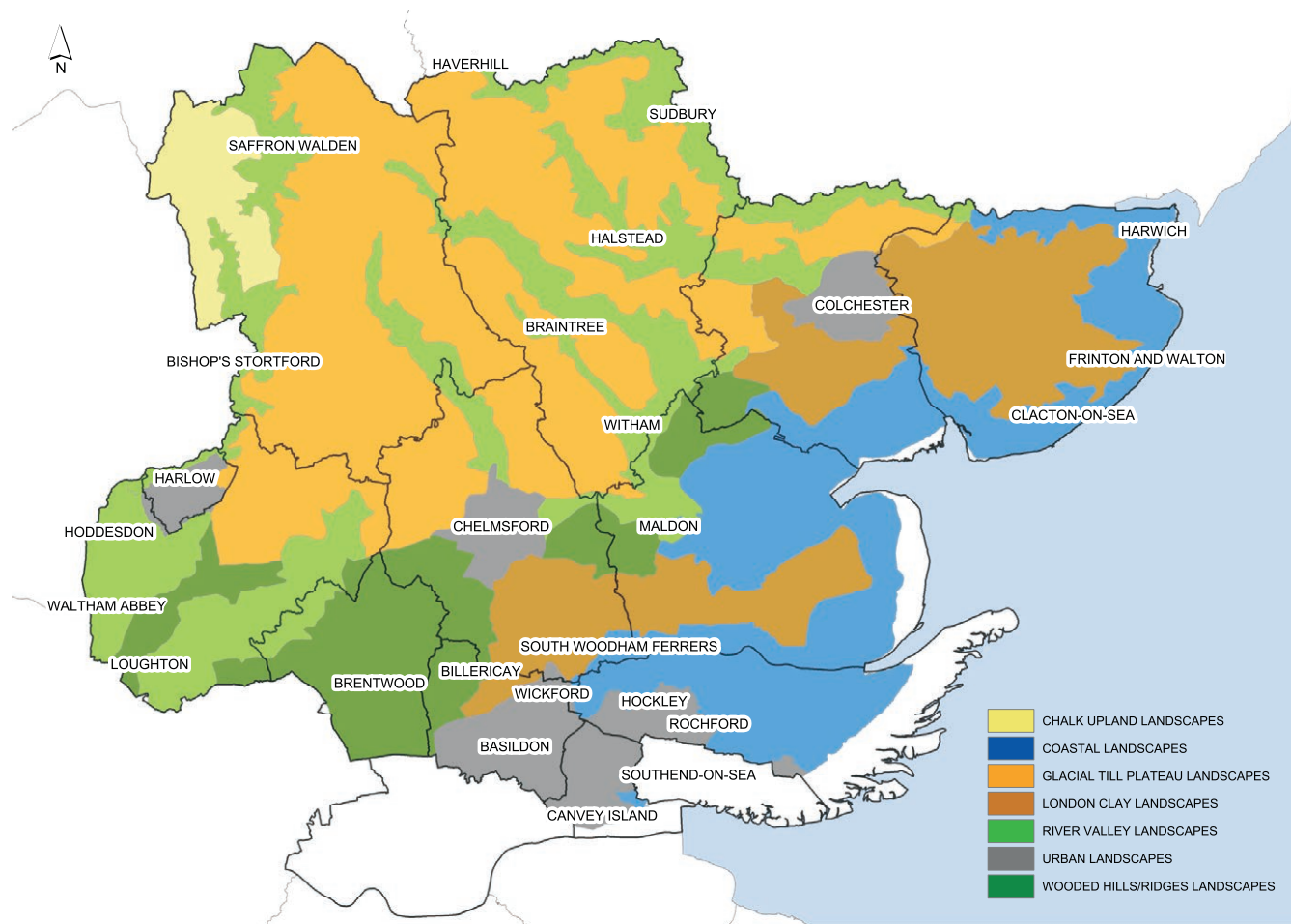
The palette includes trees suitable for hedgerows and woodlands and it is up to the judgement of the officer to decide the final mixture according to the objective of the planting.

Species not recommended for planting or not appropriate for planting are included on pages 5-6 with the reasoning behind this. While not forbidden it is expected that reasonable justification will be made if planting these species.

How to use the tree palette:

- Look up the landscape character type of your site from the map on page 3 or the soil type by other means. More detailed desktop or field investigation is advisable local variation may occur within a landscape character area.
- Identify which tree species are suitable and their relative abundance from the column matching the landscape character area on page 4.
- Choose the preferred species, according to the objective of the planting, from this list.
- Calculate the number of trees required to the rough relative abundance given. When ordering, use as local a seed source as is possible. See the Forestry Commission website for regulations controlling [Forest Reproductive Material](#) and [Using Local Stock for Planting Native Trees and Shrubs](#).

Landscape Character Types map Essex County



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Tree species and soil types

Preferred planting species		Soil Type						Notes
Latin Name	Common Name	Freely draining, lime-rich loamy soils	Freely draining, slightly acid loamy soils	Lime-rich, loams & clays, impeded drainage	Slow permeable, seasonally wet, basic loams & clays	Slow permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils	Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage	
		Landscape Character Type						
		Chalk Uplands	Wooded Hills / Ridges	Glacial Till Plateau	River Valley	London Clay	Coastal Landscapes	
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field maple	3	2	3	2	2	1	
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	1	1	1	3	2	1	Common. Watercourses and wet areas
<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	Hornbeam	0	2	2	1	3	0	
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	2	1	3	1	3	1	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Quickthorn / Hawthorn	2	1	2	2	2	2	Very common. Most abundant hedgerow shrub.
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	1	2	1	1	2	0	
<i>Populus nigra betulifolia</i>	Black poplar / Water poplar	0	0	0	1	0	0	Uncommon. Floodplains. Not suitable for most hedgerows. True native trees are available free; contact ECC for more details
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Wild cherry	2	1	2	0	1	0	
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	2	1	2	2	2	2	Common. Abundant hedgerow shrub.
<i>Quercus petraea</i>	Sessile oak	0	3	0	0	1	0	
<i>Quercus robur</i>	Common oak	1	2	2	1	3	1	
<i>Salix alba</i>	White willow	1	0	1	2	1	1	Common. Several introduced varieties including the 'cricket-bat willow'
<i>Salix fragilis</i>	Crack willow	1	0	1	3	1	1	
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	2	0	1	0	0	0	Frequent. Doubtful native. much planted.
<i>Viburnum lantana</i>	Way-faring tree	2	0	0	0	0	0	

Key	Relative abundance
0	Not Found / Not suitable
1	Rare / Occasional
2	Frequent
3	Abundant

Native species not recommended for planting		Reason
Latin Name	Common Name	
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Common Silver birch	Common. Regenerates freely from seed. Can be invasive upon high-value open habitats such as heathland and acid grassland.
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Downy birch	Frequent. Wetter situations. Regenerates freely from seed. Can be invasive upon high-value open habitats such as heathland and acid grassland.
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen	Frequent. Wet areas in woods. Regenerates freely from suckers.
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	Very common. Regenerates freely from seed.

Non-native species not recommended for planting		Reason
Latin Name	Common Name	
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway maple	
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore	
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	Horse chestnut	
<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet chestnut	Long established and characteristic coppice species in many woods.
<i>Juglans spp.</i>	Walnuts	
<i>Populus X spp</i>	Poplar hybrids	
<i>Quercus cerris</i>	Turkey oak	Invasive and hybridises with native oaks.
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm oak	Invasive on some soil types.
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	False-acacia	May become invasive with climate change as it currently is in France and Italy.
<i>Tilia x europaea</i>	Common lime	

Species not appropriate for planting		Reason
Latin Name	Common Name	
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	European barberry	Very rare as a native
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood	Uncommon as native. Commonly planted. Numerous varieties
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle	Ancient woodland indicator
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech	Native distribution very limited
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Wild privet	Uncommon as native. Commonly planted. Numerous varieties
<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Crab apple	Ancient woodland indicator
<i>Prunus padus</i>	Bird cherry	Not native in Essex
<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Wild pear	Ancient woodland indicator
<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>	Common buckthorn	Ancient woodland indicator
<i>Frangula alnus</i>	Alder buckthorn	Ancient woodland indicator
<i>Ribes nigrum</i>	Blackcurrant	Ancient woodland indicator - uncommon as native; frequent as garden escape
<i>Rosa canina</i> & <i>R. arvensis</i>	Dog & field rose	Common. Regenerates freely from seed.
<i>Salix aurita</i>		Very rare.
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat willow	
<i>Salix pentandra</i>	Bay willow	Doubtful native.
<i>Salix purpurea</i>	Purple osier	Rare as a native.
<i>Salix repens</i>	Creeping willow	Uncommon shrub of healthy woods, heathland and acid grassland.
<i>Sorbus aria</i>	Whitebeam	Uncommon as native. Commonly planted. Numerous varieties.
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	Doubtful native. Frequent.
<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>	Wild service	Ancient woodland indicator.
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	Small-leaved lime	Ancient woodland indicator.
<i>Tilia platyphyllos</i>	Large-leaved lime	Rare. Ancient woodland indicator.
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder rose	Ancient woodland indicator

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Published January 2018



Essex County Council