

2023 Planting Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

We are pleased to report that Trees for Guelph had another amazing year. It is evident Guelphites are keen to plant, support planting events and learn through doing. We made many new connections within and beyond Guelph. The launch of the two-year pilot program, Take Root Guelph, a collaboration between the City of Guelph and Forests Ontario exceeded all expectations with 1757 trees planted at 1002 households. Wet weather didn't dampen any spirits for the Guelph Rotary Earth Day plant in the spring nor the Trees for Life and TD Planting Day in the fall.



This report provides a brief overview of the activities in 2023:

Jim Taylor handed the Trees for Guelph President's shovel to Lisa Mactaggart on January 1, 2023. We share heartfelt thanks to Jim Taylor for his many years of leadership at the helm of Trees for Guelph. Trees for Guelph is a robust, effective and beloved organization because of the strong foundation that began in 1990 with an idea to ask volunteers to plant trees in Guelph.

MISSION: *To enhance Guelph's environment through tree planting and related projects, education and community leadership.* **TREES FOR GUELPH** is a not-for-profit organization with charitable status. Founded in 1990, TFG has facilitated the planting of over 175,000 trees in the City of Guelph.

The spring planting season included a school planting program with students during class hours, three community planting days on Saturdays, a corporate planting day during office hours and the Take Root launch. The fall season ran the second edition of the Take Root program and three Saturday community plantings.

VOLUNTEERS: Our volunteer planters include members of the community, industry and students. We had participants come with Cadets, Beavers, Embers, Guides, Canadian Wildlife Federation Conservation Corps, Fraternity, Sorority, and work colleagues. We thank those who joined us from beyond the city limits. Undeterred by wet weather, **400** participated in the Earth Day event and **200** joined forces with TD and Trees for Life for the final plant in Kortright Hills.

This year we engaged 26 Guelph schools and several community groups to plant more than 7,500 trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Over 9030 volunteers participated including students from both the elementary and the high school levels. Each student was provided instruction on the benefits of trees and how to plant them. Many continue to be connected to their plantings through supplemental watering and other stewardship activities.

We participated in community events such as the West Village Fair, Green Drinks and Arb Expo to broaden the awareness of Trees for Guelph and our events.

SITES: In 2023 we conducted planting programmes over **30 different sites**. Planting sites included school grounds and public green spaces in coordination with City of Guelph staff, and commercial properties. We joined forces with the City and the Rotary Club of Guelph on a very wet Earth Day. This is a multi-year undertaking to connect patches of existing canopied areas together into a wildlife corridor within the Hanlon Creek Business Park.

PLANTS: We plant hardy, native species of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plugs. Each site is evaluated to select 10-15 different species best suited to the conditions. Coniferous species are always included to provide cover for overwintering bird species. Most sites will include some species with edible fruit. We also develop naturalized landscapes that provide environmental benefits and have low maintenance requirements. For a more immediate impact, native wildflower plugs are planted at most sites. Flowering trees and shrubs are an important food source for pollinator species in the early spring. Asters, sunflowers, golden rods and milkweeds are pollinator superfood species.

PARTNERS: Without our partners and financial supporters all this exciting work would not happen. The City of Guelph's support is fundamental to the success of TREES FOR GUELPH and we are a participant in the City's Urban Forest Management initiative. The Modern Bride, Johnson & Johnson, Copernicus Education Products, TD Friends of the Environment, Royal City Brewing, Royal City Tree Service, Rotary Clubs of Guelph and Guelph South, Pollination Guelph, RWDI, Rona, Guelph Building Supply, Stantec, Grand River Conservation Authority, Upper Grand District School Board and Wellington Catholic District School Board have all played major roles in the continuing support of our programs.

If you wish further information, please contact treesforquelp@gmail.com.

