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## **New Essex County Council project offers artists £10K commission**

A NEW project which will award artists with a £10,000 commission has been launched by Essex County Council's Culture, Heritage, Tourism and Green Spaces Service.

The *Tree Clock Commission* project is part of the *Essex Forest Initiative*, which aims to plant 375,000 trees, covering approximately 150 hectares, throughout the county's parks and green spaces over the next five years.

The *Essex Forest Initiative*, which launched in October 2019 and which will continue in November 2020, will see Essex County Council work with the Forestry Commission, to reduce carbon levels, improve air quality, encourage biodiversity and reduce flooding.

The *Tree Clock Commission* - which will begin in October 2020 and finish in February 2021 - is offering £10,000 to an artist, or artists, to celebrate the *Essex Forest Initiative* and the county's open spaces, which includes eight of its country parks as well as its green spaces, venues and attractions.

The *Tree Clock Commission* follows the *Virtual Essex Summer of Art* – hosted on Explore-Exsex.com – as another arts project that Essex County Council have supported in order to help the culture sector, which has been severely affected by the pandemic.

To be in with a chance of receiving the commission, the artwork should form part of the landscape, explore the themes of climate change, engage with the members of the public who use the county's parks and green spaces, as well as the local community, and provide a positive legacy.

Councillor Simon Walsh, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change Action, said: "Ideally, we are looking for artists who have a track record of producing artworks which have been positioned in the public realm.

"The *Tree Clock* will help promote the *Essex Forest Initiative* and the importance of creating green infrastructure to provide shade, animal habitats and help tackle climate change. The Commission is also just one way we can also help support the arts and cultural sector during this turbulent time."

Applications for the £10,000 commission close on Friday 4 September. To see all the terms and conditions interested artists should visit <https://www.explore-essex.com/tree-clock>. For more information about the *Essex Forest Initiative* please visit the [Essex County Council](#) website.

**-Ends-**

**For more information please contact:**

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**Explore Essex:** Explore Essex brings together a unique group of parks and heritage venues which are owned by Essex County Council. Its mission is to deliver a broad range of exciting facilities and events for the people of Essex. [www.explore-essex.com](http://www.explore-essex.com)

**Virtual Summer of Art:** The Virtual Summer of Art featured over 50 artists who showcased their unique and inspiring artworks, ranging from visual art to sculptures and jewellery as well as much more. For more information please visit: <https://www.explore-essex.com/virtual-summer-of-art>

**Essex Forest Initiative:** The first tree planting took place in October 2019 at Great Notley Country Park and will continue in the Autumn of 2020 in the new tree planting season. Essex County Council are committed to plant £1million worth of trees over the next five years. This will include planting 375,000 trees, over 150 hectares, equivalent to the size of 210 football pitches. This commitment is part of Essex County Council's Climate Change Action Plan and the initiative is part of wider efforts ECC is under-taking to tackle climate change, reduce carbon, promote environmentally friendly infrastructure and protect green spaces. For more information please visit the [ECC website](#) and dedicated [Facebook page](#).