

Third Wood Chew Magna: Bristol Volunteers Help Restore Woodland with 9Trees CIC

LONG VERSION (Broadcast & Online Feature)

Bristol, Chew Magna – 2026 — A new wave of community-led woodland restoration is taking root just south of Bristol, as local volunteers, businesses and environmental non profit **9Trees CIC** come together to restore *Third Wood* near Chew Magna.

The project is led by landowner **Gavin Spittlehouse**, who is working in partnership with 9Trees CIC to replace trees lost during last year's extreme drought and to continue building a resilient, biodiverse woodland overlooking Chew Valley Lake.

Volunteer planting days have taken place throughout winter 2025 and will carry on into 2026, bringing together people from across Bristol and Somerset to plant native broadleaf trees including oak, hazel, hornbeam, alder and sweet chestnut. The site is already supported, due to 9Trees CIC, by Bristol-based businesses such as **The Gallimaufry, Dryrobe, Warrens Office, Banner**, and others who fund and take part in hands-on planting days as partners of 9Trees UK.

From Local Connection to Long-Term Partnership

Gavin first contacted 9Trees in August after discovering the organisation through its website and local Bristol connections. Like many landowners, he was looking for support to scale up woodland creation while keeping biodiversity at the heart of the project.

9Trees CIC specialises in connecting landowners with volunteers, community groups and businesses to plant native trees at scale. Through its *Branching Out* programme, the CIC now works with partners, landowners, farmers and leaseholders across the UK, supplying free trees, labour and long-term woodland support where projects are focused on biodiversity.

“Every site is different,” explains **Michael Cunningham**, Director of 9Trees CIC. “Some landowners want a very hands-off approach, others want to be closely involved. Our role is to remove the barriers — whether that's funding, volunteers, planning, or simply getting trees in the ground properly.”

Navigating Carbon, Biodiversity and Collaboration

Third Wood is registered under the Woodland Carbon Code, which required careful planning to ensure that trees planted by volunteers were not double-counted or sold twice as carbon credits. After detailed discussions, 9Trees and Gavin agreed a solution that allows volunteer planting to go ahead while maintaining the integrity of the carbon scheme.

This collaborative approach reflects a growing shift in how woodland creation is delivered in the UK — balancing carbon, biodiversity, community engagement and long-term stewardship.

Why Volunteer Planting Matters

Over the winter, volunteers will help plant nearly **2,000 replacement trees** in areas where drought-related losses were highest. Tasks include planting, mulching with recycled cardboard and woodchip, and helping restore soil health.

There's a shed for lunch, a compost toilet on site, and panoramic views across the Chew Valley Lake — making it one of the closest and most accessible volunteer woodland sites for Bristol residents.

Get Involved

Volunteer days are free to attend and open to individuals, families, community groups Paid for by businesses. Corporate teams can also book *Team Green Away Days*, combining outdoor work with team-building and local hospitality.

More information and volunteer dates: www.9trees.org/our_events

MEDIUM VERSION (Local News / Online)

Volunteers from Bristol and Somerset are helping to restore *Third Wood* near Chew Magna, working alongside environmental CIC **9Trees CIC** and landowner **Gavin Spittlehouse**.

The winter 2025 volunteer programme focuses on replacing trees lost during last year's drought and strengthening the woodland's biodiversity. Native species including oak, hazel and hornbeam are being planted with support from local businesses such as The Gallimaufry, Dryrobe and Banner.

The project highlights a new collaborative model for woodland creation, bringing together landowners, charities, volunteers and businesses while carefully managing carbon and biodiversity commitments.

Volunteer planting days are free and open to the public.

Find out more: www.9trees.org/our-events

SHORT VERSION (Radio Read / What's On)

A community woodland project near Chew Magna is inviting Bristol volunteers to help plant thousands of native trees this winter. Led by landowner Gavin Spittlehouse and charity 9Trees CIC, the *Third Wood* project aims to restore woodland lost to drought and boost local biodiversity.

Volunteer days are free and open to all.

Details: www.9trees.org