

The Common Line

Help us establish Britain's first linear forest

Planting trees is a legacy project. Something that is done for future generations that we will not fully experience ourselves in our lifetimes. New developments in digital immersion through layered and virtual realities can help us to imagine what is not physically living and growing, or what something might be like or feel like in the future. The aim of the Common Line is to make a project that lasts at least 100 years. That's nothing for a tree planting project - but an extraordinary length of time to make digital interactions publicly available.

In planting the Common Line together we want to prompt thought and conversation around ideas of land ownership, stewardship and the value of trees and our responsibilities to them - including and beyond ecosystem services. Through the 'conjuring' of virtual trees in our landscapes and urban environments, we want to understand more about how digital systems

shape our perceptions of the 'natural' world and how we act in it. Most importantly, we want to plant more trees together.

We started making the project in 2018 with the help of staff at the University of Cumbria Institute for the Arts, the National Forestry School, and the Woodland Trust. In 2020 we are working with In-Situ Arts and Harwes Farm CIC to further develop the project with people and communities in Pendle, Lancashire. Please sign up to our mailing list or get in touch if you would like to know more about how to join us.

We are looking for more arts, cultural and community partners to be part of the journey with us. We are committed to open and participatory forms of working and conversing, and are actively seeking new dialogues and insights through this project. Please get in touch if you would like to be involved in developing art and research residencies, planting sites and audiences, as well as hosting artists and exhibiting, or otherwise disseminating, the resulting work.

The Common Line is being developed collaboratively by Blind Ditch, Controlled Frenzy and Geography at University of Exeter from an idea by Volkhardt Mueller. Team members are currently: Professor John Wylie and Dr Stephen Palmer from University of Exeter, Dr Paula Crutchlow, Professor John Levack Drever, and Volkhardt Mueller from Blind Ditch, Chris Hunt from Controlled Frenzy and Pete Qiang from Goldsmiths University, London.