

Letter from Clive Stevens, Chair, Bristol TreeForum

Your Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) is requested to consider whether tree planting should become a priority in your Neighbourhood. You may decide tonight or request further information before deciding later in the year. Please communicate any decision or request to Richard Ennion (Bristol City Council).

Dear Neighbourhood Partnership,

In case you are not aware of Bristol's TreeForum; we are made up of hundreds of volunteers, councillors, officers and representatives from other bodies like the Universities. Our aim is to increase the tree cover of Bristol because recent studies show how important trees are to the health of residents in a city. Trees reduce air pollution, flood risk and the dangerous effects of summer heat-waves. Trees do have some downsides but nowadays these can be managed. Studies show the benefits of trees often outweigh the costs by five to one or more.

The TreeForum has been working on your behalf, behind the scenes, for some years now; securing developer contributions (S106 money) and working with the Council to come up with some simple and relatively inexpensive tree planting approaches. These are now ready and we can submit these new approaches to you if you wish.

You should note that there is no longer any available funding in the council specifically for new and replacement trees (including dead street trees and stumps). In light of this we are asking your NP to consider using devolved funding in the future to invest in trees in your neighbourhood. You may already have s106 contributions allocated for tree planting, and the Mayor's PiPS scheme may be planting trees in your area, you may also wish to allocate funds from your well-being fund. But some other sources will be easier to access if your NP decides that tree planting is to become one of your NP's Priorities. These other sources include BGC2015's initial tranche of £10,000, centrally sourced sponsorship, plus help in setting up local initiatives which NP3 (Henleaze Stoke Bishop and Westbury on Trym) and NP6 (Bishopston Cotham and Redland) are running pilots this year.

So I am writing to you to ask your NP to formally consider making trees a priority for your Neighbourhood. There is no urgency as we couldn't cope with all the remaining NPs signing up at once but if you do it will make it easier for you to improve the look of local streets, shops and parks.