

Update August 2023

Recommendations and Working Response

Recommendations	Officer Working Response	Update August 2023
<b>Tree Canopy Target and Measuring Progress</b>		
<p>Measuring and monitoring progress regarding targets and strategies should be developed and kept under review.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> review Forest of Avon Trust report recommending options for monitoring tree canopy</p> <p>Report received from Forest of Avon Trust, summarising methods and recommendations for tree canopy monitoring.</p> <p><u>Options in consideration:</u> i-Tree Canopy for monitoring change in Bristol' s tree canopy (enhanced method adopted by Bristol Tree Forum) – current c. 18%</p> <p>BlueSky tree canopy data for spatial mapping work and estimating tree canopy per land use / type. [Currently c. 1% difference between i-Tree Canopy v Bluesky data – no difference when accounting for standard error]</p> <p>Recommendation – adopt Bluesky method across the West of England.</p>	<p><b>Bluesky data baseline agreed and for monitoring</b></p> <p><b>Action: commit to re-calculate Bristol tree ecosystem service value via i-Tree Eco every 5 years (from 2024).</b></p>
<p>The choice of measures needs to be explained and a system be introduced to show how the city is progressing and the roles of different partners.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> consider combination of lagging and leading indicators and community action/pledges</p> <p><u>Options in consideration:</u></p> <p><u>Lagging indicator:</u> e.g., 3 yearly re-measurement of tree canopy [sufficient interval to measure real difference]</p> <p><u>Leading indicator:</u> to be decided. e.g., BCC annual tree planting report with number of trees planted and projected tree canopy contribution. see BCC's <a href="#">2021/22 tree planting report</a>.</p> <p>Options for 22/23 report – model canopy projections to 2046. Quantify contribution BCC planting to city target.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Create dedicated Info hub – FoAT</b></li> <li>- <b>Add explanatory tree canopy monitoring method – to include principle of leading and lagging indicators</b></li> <li>- <b>Lagging = Bluesky data, commit to remeasure every 3-years (as per data release)</b></li> <li>- <b>Leading. Action: create means for residents and land owners to record tree planting. BCC to continue to publish annual report with canopy projections and net contribution accounting for losses (specimen trees felled, normal</b></li> </ul>

		forestry thinning assumed no impact)  Explained leading and lagging indicators
As well as having a baseline (explained and understood), there is a need for clearer information regarding what is happening with tree cover across the city. Ways to enable clear information sharing should be investigated, i.e., via the council website and the Environment Board	<b>Action:</b> review options through Partners for communication and hosting of data and info relating to Bristol’s tree canopy.  <b>Action:</b> review with partners options to manage information about changing Bristol tree canopy  Note: a communication resource is now confirmed following a successful bid to the Woodland Trust’s ‘Emergency Tree Fund’ (Forest of Avon Trust recipient – on behalf of West of England partners). This Fund also provides resource to develop tree planting plans within each Local Authority area – which is being explored for Bristol.	As above – Bristol Tree Partnership Group to review info needs, create and publish.
<b>Type of Trees, Location, and their Benefits</b>		
Tree equity should be prioritised in the tree strategy, with the cost of remedying unequal distribution of trees fully considered; this should also be included in Liveable Neighbourhoods plans and in highways and parking schemes and through planning agreements.	Criteria (in development) to identify need = evidence to prioritise increasing tree canopy where there is greatest need [see work to map tree planting opportunity]. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current tree canopy (available via Bluesky)</li> <li>- Indices of multiple deprivation</li> <li>- <a href="#">Urban heat stress</a> (Keep Bristol cool mapping)</li> <li>- <a href="#">Nature Recovery Network</a> and Bristol Ecological Network map, when adopted</li> </ul>	Tree prioritisation criteria included.
Appropriate communication and messaging should be considered to demonstrate the benefits of planting trees within local neighbourhoods; and there is a need to have the right budgets in place for the high costs of new street tree sites.	<b>Action:</b> Strategy will make case for increasing tree canopy and outline how this may be achieved, with profile of costs associated with different planting locations (higher cost to establish trees within built environments v cost to establish trees within green space). Narrative to establish value of trees not just cost of trees.  Noted. Guidance to be addressed in Tree Strategy (supplementary)	<b>Addressed in document</b>  <b>Phase II adopted highway tree planting opportunity to address, via business case, cost and benefit.</b>
The selection and sourcing of trees and finding the right tree for the right place needs to be addressed and made clear within the strategy, including the implications of the changing climate.	<b>Action:</b> review Bristol (CC) Tree Planting Design Guide  <b>Action:</b> Literature review required to identify best current guidance for tree planting and woodland establishment appropriate for Bristol.  Bristol Tree Strategy will incorporate principle of Right Place, Right Tree, Right Reason – expressed in <a href="#">West of England Tree and Woodland Strategy</a> .	<b>Principle of Right tree etc.</b>  <b>BCC</b> <b>Action: review Tree Planting Design Guide</b>

	<p>There is no absolute guidance to direct choice of trees and woodland to plant now to cope with impacts of climate change.</p> <p><u>Emerging position:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritise getting existing woodland into favourable conservation status</li> <li>- Plant wide variety of appropriate native trees of UK provenance in new woodland</li> <li>- Support natural regeneration / natural colonisation of land where appropriate</li> <li>- Adhere to 30:20:10 rule of thumb in selecting tree for planting – including use of non-natives suited to urban situations (no more than 30% from any one Family, no more than 20% from any one Genus, no more than 10% from any one species).</li> <li>- Bristol (BCC) Tree Planting Design Guide (existing – to be reviewed) incorporates principle of planting trees for desired function, diversity in the population, planting design and tree size parameters where planting close to buildings.</li> </ul> <p>From: <a href="#">The England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024, May 2021</a></p> <p>‘While trees will be an important part of our efforts to reduce emissions, trees themselves are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.</p> <p>We need to create and manage trees and woodlands that will remain functioning ecosystems and are fit for the future. By making changes to the species composition, structure and management of our woodlands we can give them the best chance to survive and thrive in 50 years’ time, when we know our climate will be different</p> <p>Reference to ‘Forestry and Climate Change Working Group’</p>	
<p>The guidance around choice of tree species should be discussed with other key landowners across the city, and knowledge shared.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> stakeholder workshops to be arranged (November 2022)</p>	<p><b>Action: develop and publish information note re species choice for a changing climate.</b></p>
<p>The interlinking nature of tree planting and management with other city strategies should be clearly explained in all consultations involving trees.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> to be considered</p> <p><u>Emerging position:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the tree strategy will identify the policy context for management and provision of trees and targets to double tree canopy</li> </ul>	<p><b>BCC Action: will adopt statutory requirement to consult on the loss of street trees as guidance when released.</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- consultation on loss of trees will need to identify the reason and what compensatory tree planting is proposed – this may vary depending on whether statutory requirements (like biodiversity net gain) or choice.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Note: BCC will review its approach to consulting on loss of any council tree following statutory guidance.</b></p> <p><b>Any other land owner to consider how it consults or informs about loss of trees.</b></p>
<b>Funding and Resource</b>		
We agree that the Bristol Tree Scheme should be refreshed and the council should consider joining the national Trees for Cities scheme as ways of driving more tree sponsorship.	<p>The council entered into a collaboration agreement with Trees for Streets in June 2022.</p> <p>All BCC tree sponsorship requests are now managed through <a href="#">Trees for Streets</a> platform.</p> <p>Work in ongoing to confirm the specification and cost for a ‘value’ tree pit to respond to residents requesting to plant new street trees within the adopted highway that require an ‘engineered tree pit’</p>	<p><b>Note re collaboration with Trees for Streets – in context of making it easier for people to support tree planting in public realm</b></p> <p><b>BCC Action</b> <b>Extend and develop tree sponsorship</b></p>
There should be plans and budgets to ensure green infrastructure in the city is properly planned and designed, providing opportunities for trees and their benefits, and that there is resource available for ongoing tree management.	The Bristol Tree Strategy and companion Tree Planting Plan - will define policy ambitions for trees and woodland in the city – including principles drawn from the West of England Tree and Woodland Strategy. Indicative cost will be included to realise the ambition to double tree canopy – this should influence decisions to invest in tree planting from existing budgets / capital programmes and in attracting new resources as these emerge going forward.	Action: seek and secure funding
<b>Risk, Tree Protection and Management</b>		
Options to have more situations where the grass around the base of a tree is cut less frequently should be considered, and public messaging and communication around the safe use of herbicides should be considered.	<p><b>Action:</b> work is ongoing to achieve BCC’s commitment to a 50% reduction in pesticide use by 2030, and create a work stream to explore additional areas of reduction</p> <p><b>Action:</b> communicate current practice to leave grass longer around the base of trees (for nature conservation, tree protection and avoidance of pesticides).</p> <p><b>Action:</b> develop plan to increase the area of grass left long.</p>	<p><b>BCC Action</b></p> <p><b>Communication via Info Hub</b></p>
Communication methods and ways to explain reasons for decisions to fell trees should be reviewed.	<p><b>Action:</b> BCC will review its approach to inform / consult on tree felling.</p> <p>Environment Act 2021 requires that local authorities consult on the loss of street trees. Regulatory guidance is expected.</p>	<p><b>BCC action</b></p> <p><b>As above</b></p>
Council Members would benefit from a briefing around Tree Preservation Orders, Trees in	<b>Action:</b> with colleagues in planning team to arrange	<b>No strategy action</b>

<p>Conservation Areas, and trees as a material consideration in planning applications.</p>	<p>Consultation is due before the end of November 2022 on revised Development Management Policies (led by Strategic Planning), with relevance to trees including protection, compensation for loss and requirements for new green infrastructure, including policy relating to the Bristol Tree Replacement standard and the emerging requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain, including consideration of woodland and urban trees.</p>	
--	---	--