

Tree costs and financing options
Held on 16th January 2024. Questions, comments and references
Partners: ICF, Green Infrastructure Partnership



Time for optimism: tree stories from around the UK (Held online)

Agenda

Chair: Tony Kirkham MBE, former Head of Arboretum, Gardens & Horticulture Services, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Vice-President of the Arboricultural Association and TDAG Patron

Urban GreenUp – lessons from Liverpool

Juliet Staples, Senior Project Manager, Urban GreenUp, Liverpool City Council
Elaine Cresswell, Director, reShaped Landscape Architecture

Belfast's new 10-year tree strategy led by public consultation to connect the city's residents to nature

Alan McHaffie, Senior Woodland and Recreation Adviser, Belfast City Council
John Rose, Senior Urban Forest Consultant, Treeconomics

Target Neighbourhoods, Clyde Climate Forest

Chris Stark MICFor, Head of Forestry & Land Services, GAT & Director, Clyde Climate Forest

Trees and Planning in Wales

Siobhan Wiltshire, Planning Policy Team, Welsh Government

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND REFERENCES BY TOPIC (AS FAR AS POSSIBLE!)

NB. Questions and comments are anonymised unless answered in the chat by one of the speakers.

Tree establishment

In his introduction, Tony Kirkham called for a change of terminology from 'tree planting targets' to 'tree establishment' and this got general support from the meeting.

- At the Environment Agency, we undertake plant stock implementation and then a defined period (normally 5 years but can be up to 10 years) of establishment aftercare. This is distinct from maintenance and management activities which we believe better describe a routine or defined activity which follows-on beyond establishment.
- Does time depend on location i.e. longer for street trees?
 - The duration of our establishment aftercare is largely related to planning conditions, but we do extend the lesser period of 5 years in specific situations and for larger specimens including street tree planting. We also have defects liability (warranties) that apply for annual replacements throughout the specified duration.

Utilities

Question: does Belfast have good maps of underground utilities and what is happening there?

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- Same question as above, once you access service maps (i think the limit is trees cannot be planted less than 6m from gas mains pipes and water pipes) how do you navigate complex underground systems especially in urban areas?
 - These distances are 'invented' by the utilities not legal
- Yes, as above - Which criteria do you use to identify tree planting opportunities?
 - Space is defined based on sufficient pavement width and absence of constraints including existing tree canopy. Priority was then determined using a calculated value based on a mix of surface flood risk, pollution levels, peak surface temperatures, proximity to arterial roads and deprivation levels
- Not just space alone...

Belfast Tree Strategy - www.belfast.gov.uk/treestrategy

Was this driven by officers and/or politicians? How was it possible to fund such a great piece of work? Question coming from Plymouth!

How do you estimate(?) tree species across the whole city? Presumably most of those trees are on private land? Or do you count /measure only public trees?

- This was done using an I-Tree Eco sample survey using several hundred sites across the city including on private land
 - John Rose: Is there a detailed methodology available for the opportunity mapping you have undertaken?

Q for Alan and John - the WT decided strangely to use LSOA's for their equity maps, you used ward based - was there a definite reason?

- The analysis in Belfast was executed in 20x20m tiles allowing a very granular approach down to individual street level. It can be aggregated and reported at either LSOA or Ward level. In this case, we picked wards to tie in with local decision-making frameworks.

Congratulations to Belfast - <https://treecitiesoftheworld.org/>

Urban GreenUP - <https://www.urbangreenup.eu/>

I like to concept of being able to 'try and make mistakes' as the fear of getting it wrong can often stop us from exploring how to get it right

- This is why the GreenUP project was so special. It pushed us to read the research journals and change standard landscape specifications. We retained budget to put anything that went wrong right.
 - Agreed, Lorraine. How much budget did you need to retain - guidance for others in planning costs?
 - Usual projects need 10% contingency. Id increase this for an experimental project. I ended up needing £2000 for plants as the landscape contractor struggled to find skilled labour. We had 60 members of the public turn up to plant them over 3 nights.

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I sometimes found businesses were concerned that trees would obscure their signage, discouraging customers - did you find this was an issue?

- It will be interesting to hear what they found in Liverpool. Kathy Wolf research shows that the presence of trees increasing dwell time and increases retail spend
 - Agreed - concern was expressed before the planting took place.

Were the air surface temperature changes modelled or measured?

Love the 'saved lives' data associated with urban tree planting!

- How was that data generated on saved lives, etc.?
 - GIVAL calculator. Its free to download from Mersey Forest's web site. It's difficult to use though.
 - <https://mainstreaminggreeninfrastructure.com/resources.php?gi-val-mersey-forest>

Are the carbon savings made on an average of carbon absorption of all trees or per species and over what length of time or lifetime assumption

In Lyon France...the engineers were nervous about SuDS only until they proved themselves and so no longer require the back-up engineering!

Q for Elaine. How large and interconnected do habitats have to be to designate them as e.g. a 'pollinator corridor' ?

Is the GreenUp project ongoing? Have you got a simple guide to the baseline data as seems a very compelling argument for these interventions! Will you keep monitoring?

- GreenUp has finished although Juliet is busy sharing and collating data. I'd love to continue monitoring the pollinator sites and am working on developing citizen science events with the Merseyside Biobank so we can check in once a year. The plantings are outside reShaped's office door so I informally monitor most lunchtimes and post on LinkedIn and Twitter.

Are there any plans to do more Urban Greenup projects within the UK?

Elaine, do you have any online guidance on creating the wildflower meadow?

www.urbangreenup.eu/resources

Certainly, an excellent demonstration, thank you! And better than some roundabout schemes planted with colourful "wildflowers" that are not natives or pollinator friendly

Thanks Juliet - so good to have the time to gather baseline to underpin results - this information is precious!

Elaine is happy for you to email her: elaine@reshaped.uk.com

Have you been able to do research to indicate the effects on any increasing biodiversity as a result, a lowering of temperature in the surround in the summer? Have you planted gardens for business?

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Question for Juliet: tiny forests. Have the best/most appropriate locations been identified?

Clyde Climate Forest

It is so encouraging that areas of deprivation are being included in tree planning!

Question - every present issue - when offering trees in gardens, do we have to be conscious of geology i.e. shrinkable soils given that insurance companies get very exercised about trees proximity to housing on shrinkable soils...very tedious but potential problem which is why TDAG is trying to ask that going forward foundations are more tree resilient (as well as lower carbon)

- Also, some newer houses may have crate soakaways in the garden. I assume tree roots could damage them?
- Some insurance companies and mortgage lenders are also concerned about the height of trees and dwellings within the fall height, sometimes forcing felling
- Sadly true and something we need to bear in mind
- Q: Concerning compensation for trees lost at 3 to 1, how is the ecological equivalent of a tree measured? In some cases (they say) the equivalent of a single big old tree can be several thousand trees...

Planning in Wales

I'm interested in get a link to that review by the Law Commission on Welsh TPO
[https://chcymru.org.uk/cms-assets/legacy/Dr_Mynors - DocumentsPLW - RTPI - Feb 18 FB.pdf](https://chcymru.org.uk/cms-assets/legacy/Dr_Mynors_-_DocumentsPLW_-_RTPI_-_Feb_18_FB.pdf)

Certainly, the TPO legislation for England and also Scotland's is in desperate need of review and redraft so it is fit for purpose for the 21st Century and in addressing climate change.

<https://www.gov.wales/addressing-nature-emergency-through-planning-system-update-chapter-6-planning-policy-wales>

Does your 12th edition cover how trees work with SuDS drainage schemes? Some great examples in Wales.

Siobhan - with the qualitative approach, are you expecting the improvements to be in place in perpetuity rather than the England 30 years where it seems we can get biodiversity gains and then + 30 years lose them again?

For planners in the audience - I have long felt that Wales is ahead of England...would that be a fair assessment???

Siobhan re pre-emptive site clearance work. Really agree, but wonder how you enforce it. Does it mean that local authorities have to hold much better information?

- Are Planners willing to ask for this and are developers willing to provide all the data and long-term management plans? I get quite a bit of kick back from

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both when asking for info to satisfy biodiversity enhancement (we don't have net gain) in Scotland.

How do you articulate and record the biodiversity baseline ?

Siobhan - with the additional tree planting, are there conflicts with other land uses. I suppose I am thinking some of the hill farms?

Siobhan, do we have an issue with outsiders/companies buying up land to plant trees for off-setting (of course, I don't support off-setting!_?)

General comments

This really highlights the need for the industry as a whole to engage with local communities. All these initiatives are great but without proper understanding I fear it could lead to false economy.

How do our speakers feel about the 3-30-300 rule - is it useful in the real world or is it something academics think is useful?

- Better than nothing

Why plants trees?

Tony - the Birmingham UFMP moved to right reason, right place, right tree and right way in their tree establishment sections, as this makes more sense.

We musn't be scared of planting large trees where space permits

- @sue large stature trees. agreed. we need it written into policy! Charnwood has done so.

Native species

With tree strategies - should we also be promoting planting trees adaptable to a warming climate which may therefore not be deemed as native species?

We do need to consider more than just native species

Webinar: Tree selection for climate resilience (With Arit Anderson and Henrik Sjöman) (youtube.com)

Henrik wrote the TDAG tree Species guide with Andy Hiron and I assume this is the base document for species evidence.

The list of about 35 native trees has always seemed highly artificial compared to the much greater variety of European species which could provide much enhanced resilience - never understood why the channel is a valid boundary. Trees get moved by all manner of means including humans...

- Need an ecologist to answer this, but broadly agree that more care is needed in rural than urban areas

Books

I can recommend Guy Shrubsole's book on *The Lost Rainforests of Britain* - can we get the cultural change needed to reinstate them?

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Another good book and ancient forest restoration campaigner –
Julian Hight <http://www.britainsancientforest.co.uk/>

- Sue, I read recently that rainforests are being reinstated and new are being introduced to double the size. Will let you know when I find ref.

And <https://forestofselwood.org/forest-of-selwood-partnership/>

Great stuff happening in Scotland <https://savingscotlandsrainforest.org.uk/>

References round up

www.belfast.gov.uk/treestrategy

<https://www.urbangreenup.eu/>

www.urbangreenup.eu/resources

<https://www.gov.wales/addressing-nature-emergency-through-planning-system-update-chapter-6-planning-policy-wales>