The right budget for planting and establishment aftercare

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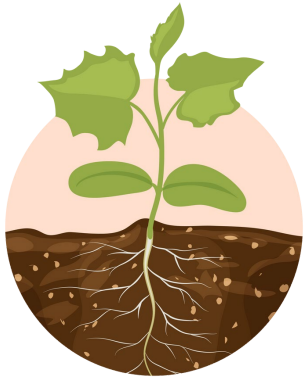
The Mersey Forest

- One of England's Community Forests
- Covers Cheshire and Liverpool City Region
- Formed in 1991

Our journey

1990 – 2025
Create and deliver a Plan, establish a Community Forest



2025 – 2050
Grow and nurture the Community Forest, establish a wood culture.

2050 onwards
Living in a wood culture

What have we done

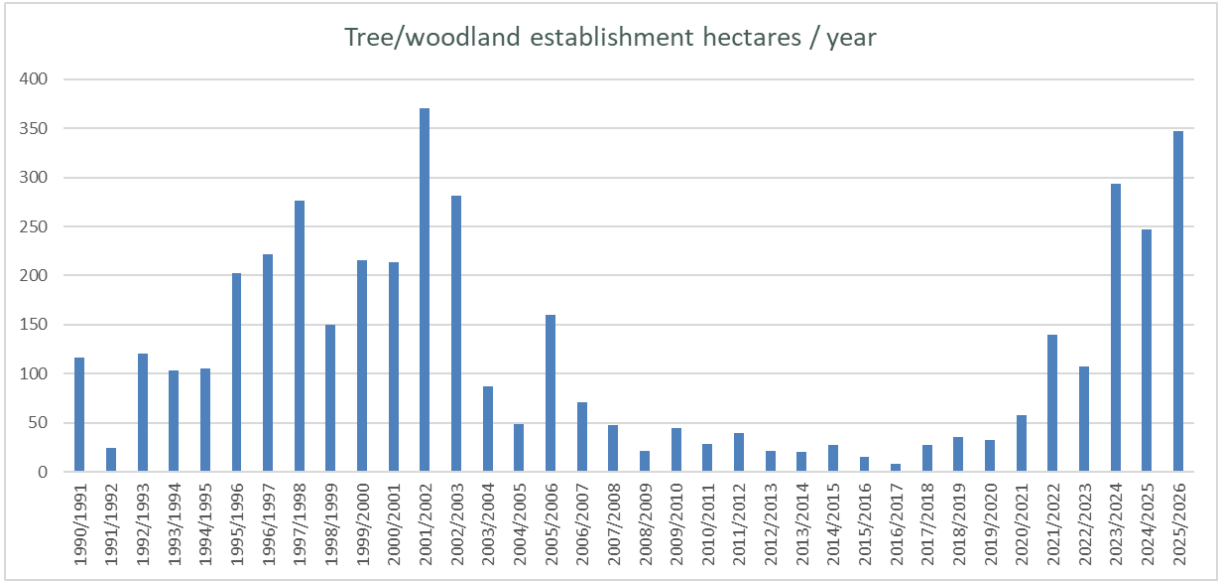
Over 4000ha of new woodland and trees in and around our towns and cities since 1991

6,629 urban/street trees planted since 2020-26

£23m + of external resources brought in to support projects in the past 6 years

- Planting
- Up to 15 years of establishment
- Focus on the first 3 years for urban trees

A constant challenge



What tree planting can we fund?

Multi-purpose woodland (>5 ha)
Minimum of 1,600 tree per ha
No single species more than 70%
Up to 20% woody shrubs

Small scale tree planting (0.5-4.99 ha)
Minimum of 1,100 trees per ha
Up to 20% woody shrubs

Very small scale tree planting (0.1-0.49 ha)
Minimum of 1,100 trees per ha
Up to 20% woody shrubs
Fruit trees accepted

Urban Trees here

Low density tree planting
Minimum of 25 trees per ha
Minimum final canopy cover of 20% across area planted
Species appropriate to context

Hedgerows with trees
5 plants per linear metre
Trees planted every 15 metres as appropriate
70% native or locally characteristic

Hedgerows without trees
5 plants per linear metre
Double-staggered row planting pattern, or similar
70% native or locally characteristic

The "right" budget

- For whom?
  - The funder
  - The landowner/client
  - The landscape architect
  - The contractor
  - The nursery
- And what
  - For what type of urban tree?
  - For the outcome we want

per tree, incl Establishment	% that we have funded in past 6 years	Comments
50,000	0	
20,000	3	hard landscape, city centre
10,000	0	
5,000	0	
1,000	5	
900	10	
750	**60**	**mainly verge and green sites**
500	25	Likely to have been community planted
100	5	Likely to have been community planted

Budget

Too high - Fantastic scheme - but unrepeatable

Great Scheme - exemplar, but it is "special" and not replicable generally, how can we learn lessons to inform other schemes. How can specialness be replicated?

Good Scheme - Trees Thrive - achieve all the benefits needed - provide evidence that we need to do more

Not good enough - trees survive but do not thrive - do not provide the benefits needed

Too low - poor scheme - Trees die, bad for tree reputation

Who can pay for the benefits that urban trees provide?

Community Forests, are trying to fund adaptation activity – urban trees - from budgets that are earmarked for Net Zero, mitigation targets

Planning is providing significant funds too

But even combining the two still means we can do these

But not these

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Making the case

TDAG continue to do this for us!

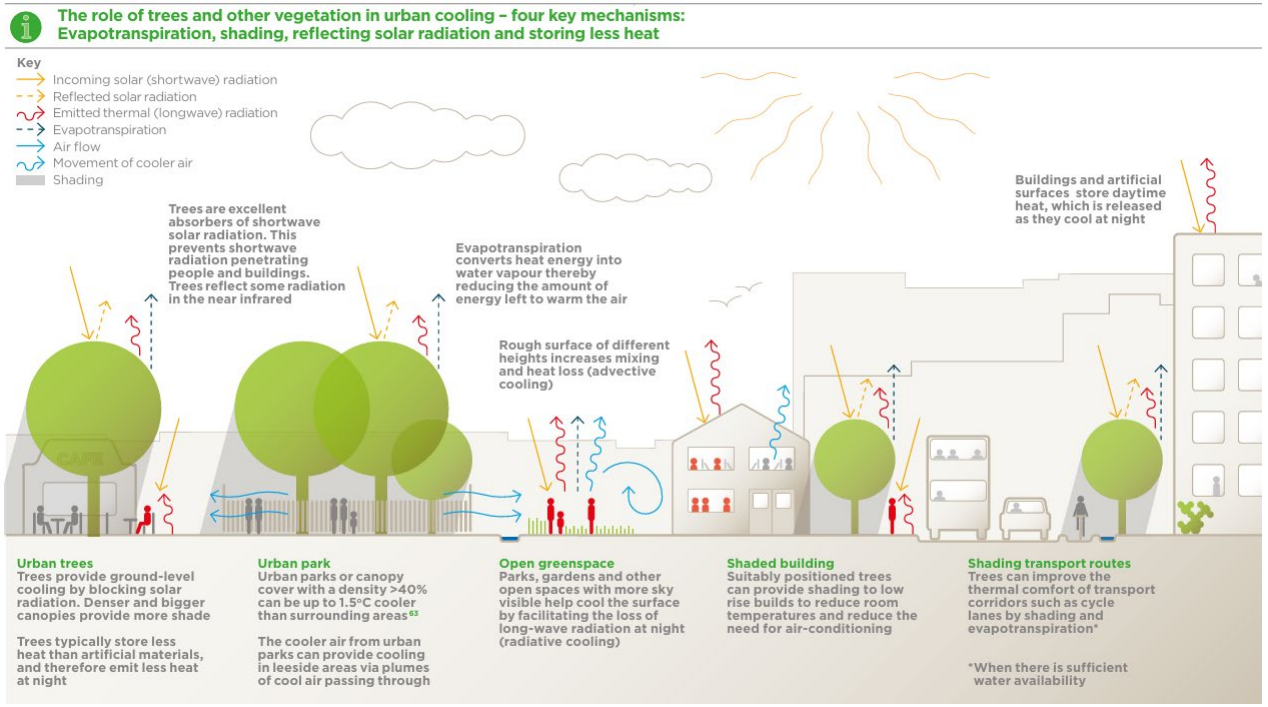
"Thank You!"

The evidence is robust

The need for the benefits of urban trees is increasing

But the "market" for the main benefits is not present

This is our (MF) next challenge: the **"right budget"** to invest in green infrastructure for adaptation and health benefits



Thank you

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