

TDAG Online Seminar Series 2024

Registration will be available four weeks ahead of each seminar



**Working in collaboration
for better places**

TDAG Online Seminar Series

Hosted on Zoom

We will provide full details of each seminar as part of a rolling programme

TDAG provides knowledge exchange for issues relating to urban trees

The topics selected for 2024 are based on suggestions put forward by the many, cross-sector TDAG supporters and reflect some of the critical issues relating to urban trees with which many are working.

We are starting the series with a look at some of the positive examples taking place both in the UK and internationally.

Subsequent seminars look at specific challenges and most asked questions:

- Which tree species should we plant in particular locations for longevity in a changing climate?
- How should we both plant, maintain and manage street trees?
- How can we best engage with communities and support their ambitions for trees in their neighbourhoods?
- In times of financial constraint, how can local authorities fund support for their existing and proposed tree populations?
- How can we best design with trees as vital parts of our townscapes?
- How can we use planning and the legal framework and delivery to achieve the best outcomes for trees?

NB. In curating these seminars, the Trees and Design Action Group prioritises having the best qualified speaker for a topic. It is also mindful of ensuring as much diversity of contributors as possible.

Seminar One (See Past Events)

Time for optimism: tree stories from around the UK

16th January, 2-4pm GMT

Seminar Two (See Past Events)

International update – common challenges, common barriers

15th February, 2-4pm GMT

Seminar Three (See Past Events)

Tree species selection and how to get it right in a changing climate

20th March, 2-4pm GMT

Seminar Four (See Past Events)

Getting it right for trees on streets and highways

21st May, 2-4pm BST

Seminar Five (See Past Events)

Engaging with communities to support local tree planting and deliver change

18th July, 2-4pm BST

Seminar Six (See Past Events)

Local authority investment in trees and green infrastructure for multiple benefits

24th September, 2-4pm BST

Seminar Seven (See Past Events)

Designing with trees

29th October, 2-4pm BST

Seminar Eight

When is tree protection not tree protection?

20th November, 2-4pm GMT

Date
16th January

Time
2-4pm GMT

Registration
Zoom

Trees have undoubtedly risen up the agenda significantly in both local policy-making, recognition of benefits, delivery and research. This session looks at some of the approaches taking place across the UK.

England - Urban GreenUp

This EU funded project aims to develop, apply and validate a methodology for Renaturing Urban Plans to mitigate the effects of climate change, improve air quality and water management and increase the sustainability of our cities through innovative nature-based solutions.

Northern Ireland - Belfast's 10-year tree strategy

Developed after extensive public consultation, the Belfast tree strategy's vision is: "*That Belfast is a city which focuses on protecting, enhancing and expanding its woodlands, hedges, and trees, connecting people to nature, and ensuring that these continue to be a major asset to everyone who lives, works in, and visits our city*" – a vision that 97% of consultees 'definitely agree' or 'agree' with.

Scotland - Clyde Climate Forest

We have identified 16 'Target Neighbourhoods' across urban parts of Glasgow City Region which have low levels of existing tree canopy cover and are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In each of these areas we will run a '1000 Trees' Campaign aiming to plant 1000 trees in each of these local neighbourhoods.

Wales - Trees and Planning

Future Wales - the National Plan 2040 is a development plan for addressing key national priorities through the planning system. In Wales *The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* influences the planning of new development and land use. *Woodlands for Wales* aims to ensure that trees and woodland play a greater and more valued role in towns and cities to improve quality of life and surroundings for people who live in urban areas.

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

Partners: Arboricultural Association, Green Infrastructure Partnership

Date
15th February

Time
2-4pm GMT

Registration
Zoom

The challenges and barriers presented by difficult environments can be common issues for us all. This seminar explores three very different situations – Brussels, Riyadh and Ukraine and how to respond to each.

Brussels: Julien Ruelle will outline the ‘renature.brussels’ campaign to create and spread a story around the ‘Nature City’ as a desirable and beneficial environment for all Brussels’ residents. The message is clear – we must learn to share the city with Brussels’ other inhabitants, namely its fauna and flora.

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Dorella Pinter Burus will outline the ambitions and aims of the Green Riyadh project illustrating the scale of planting being carried out in the city. She will focus of specific projects discussing their complexities and challenges to be faced in harsh climatic conditions.

Ukraine: John Parker and Yana Bobrova will discuss the situation in Ukraine and how even in times of conflict trees remain on the agenda and can be seen as a focus for the positive.

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

Introducing ‘renature.brussels’

Julien Ruelle, Head of the Department for Nature Development, Bruxelles Environnement, TDAG’s European partner

Landscape at the edge

Dorella Pinter Burus, Consultant, BPLA, Riyadh

Protecting trees in places of conflict

John Parker, Chief Executive, Arboricultural Association
Yana Bobrova, Executive Director and Co-founder Peli can live, Rotarian

Partners: Institute of Chartered Foresters, Urban Design Group

Date
20th March

Time
2-4pm GMT

Registration
Zoom

'Which species should we plant?' is one of the most common questions sent in to the Trees and Design Action Group. How do we answer that?

Firstly, what is the strategic context? Many local authorities have developed Urban Forest Masterplans/Tree Strategies and the starting point for these should be the strategic vision – the mission statement.

Evidence now shows us that we need to consider our local tree populations as a whole so that we avoid becoming over dependent on one species such that there could be a catastrophic decline in the urban forest if this species is compromised by a changing climate, pests or pathogens.

Secondly, having got our strategic vision, what do we do? There are several principles to understand before decisions about species selection can be made. These principles span issues from climate change and risk to how to tree establishment.

Thirdly, another vital element in species selection for the future is to know what you already have. What is your tree inventory?

Finally, with the above clearly understood, you can consider which species of trees to select; this is where TDAG's *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers* will help. However, the guidance is not prescriptive, it simply helps to lead the specifier through a decision-making process.

This seminar will explore the issues surrounding species selection and how all those engaged – landscape architects, developers, planners and arboriculturists – can make decisions that will support future resilience of the urban forest.

Agenda

Chair: Phil Askew, Director of Landscape and Placemaking, Peabody

The strategic context

Glenn Gerner, Natural Environment Manager, Leeds City Council

10 principles for tree success

Andy Hiron, Senior Lecturer in Arboriculture, University Centre, Myerscough and co-author of *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers*

Know what you have – how to use tree inventories creatively

Kenton Rogers, Director and Co-founder, Treeconomics

Using TDAG's *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers* – a review and update

Andy Hiron, Senior Lecturer in Arboriculture, University Centre, Myerscough and co-author of *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers*

Partners: Institute of Highway Engineers, Landscape Institute

Date
21st May

Time
2-4pm BST

Registration
Zoom

How can we ensure that street trees are regarded as assets, part of our critical infrastructure, rather than as liabilities? One of the key requirements is to ensure that planting is carried out in the correct way to support tree establishment and avoid some of the common concerns expressed by highways departments asked to adopt them. TDAG was invited to produce technical working drawings for street trees in a number of typical scenarios/ common locations in both new streets and retrofitting in existing streets.

The document, which is being developed by the Forestry Commission and TDAG, Civic Engineers and Urban Design Learning with DLUHC support, will be useful for the implementation of the National Planning Policy Framework Clause 136 (all new streets to be tree-lined), for local authorities for the development of the required Authority Wide Urban Design Codes and, in due course, to support the updated *Manual for Streets 3*.

Agenda

Chair: Jim Smith, Urban Forestry Adviser, Forestry Commission

The challenges for existing streets

Robert Huxford, Director, Urban Design Group

Why highway engineers welcome technical planting guidance

Hen Abbott, Highways Engineer, Gloucestershire County Council

The benefits for developing Authority Wide Urban Design Codes

Esther Kurland, Director, Urban Design Learning

Understanding the process to get the specification and contractual/technical drawings right

Chris Kendrick, Associate Director, Civic Engineers

**Partners: Institute of Civil Engineers,
Institute of Highway Engineers, Institute of Chartered Foresters**

Engaging with communities to support local tree planting and deliver change

Date
18th July

Time
2-4pm BST

Registration
Zoom

The importance of 'community engagement' is a big topic for many trying to deliver development projects or tree planting on public land. There is often an implication that the community will be 'engaged with' as and when it is necessary. However, there is another side to local groups which want to engage in their own right to plant trees in their own communities but often do not have access to, or the funds to access, the level of professional advice and guidance that will enable successful outcomes to reflect their aims which, when all works well, are demonstrated by the 'arboretum town' status that some community groups are achieving. So, we have the classic 'top down or bottom up' situation. Given the increasing community interest in trees and the need to capture and encourage this enthusiasm, what guidance do local communities need? This session will explore these challenges.

Agenda

Chair: Esme Jones, Engagement and Marketing Director, Trees for Cities

Public engagement to build a shared vision

Phil Bixby, My York Central

The importance of community engagement roles in Urban Forestry

Catherine Nuttgens, Consultant Urban Forester

Creating our urban arboretum

Audrey Jarvis, Lewes Urban Arboretum Project

Stonehouse Community Arboretum

John Parker, Chief Executive, Arboricultural Association

Useful arboricultural guidance for community tree projects

Keith Sacre, Urban Forestry Director, Barcham Trees

Partners: Landscape Institute, Arboricultural Association, Town and Country Planning Association, Urban Design Group

Local authority investment in trees and green infrastructure for multiple benefits

Date
24th September

Time
2-4pm BST

Registration
Zoom

Trees are part of our critical urban infrastructure.

The majority of councils in the UK have declared climate emergencies and are committed to achieving net zero targets along with the need for climate resilience, economic development and improvements to health and wellbeing. The evidence shows that trees (and green infrastructure) can make a positive contribution towards achieving these ends.

However, these ambitions are also being declared at a time when councils are financially challenged. Unfortunately, council budgets, along with national government, NHS and other budgets, are also controlled in silos and so the investment in one area of activity may not be reflected in the benefits gained by another. This is particularly so in the case of trees (and green infrastructure) which are actually an integral part of several budget areas such as health and wellbeing, placemaking and housing and job creation to name a few.

This is especially problematic in the case of trees as trees potentially have, and should have, the longest lives of all elements of the natural environment in urban areas. This means that they may require a longer timeline to ensure that they have become established for longevity. This timescale, which may be up to 10 years in the case of street trees, is usually outside the budget timetable such that an annual tree revenue budget is rarely ring-fenced for this purpose. Trees (and green infrastructure), despite the multiple benefits delivered, are not often given the priority spending that is needed – but trees have moved up the agenda from ‘nice to have’ to key players in future urban climate change resilience and healthy placemaking.

How do we resolve these conflicts to provide a better environment for trees and people?

Agenda

Chair: Julia Thrift, Director, Healthier Placemaking TCPA

Demonstrating the cost benefit for trees and green infrastructure using CIRIABest

Adrien Baudrimont, Senior Research Manager, CIRIA

Making the case for local authority investment in green infrastructure

Dr Ingo Schüder, Director, Brillianto

TreesAI – What we’ve learned in Glasgow and beyond

Chloe Treger, TreesAI UK Lead, Dark Matter Labs

Coed Caerdydd – a 10-year programme to increase tree cover

Christopher Engel, Project Manager, Coed Caerdydd, Cardiff Council

Partners: Institute of Chartered Foresters, Institute of Highway Engineers, Landscape Institute, Urban Design Group

Date
29th October

Time
2-4pm BST

Registration
Zoom

With few exceptions too many trees planted today, in new developments or retrofitting, are small, shorter-lived species presumably seen as causing fewer disbenefits and requiring less space than larger trees. Some key questions to ask are:

- Why are we planting a tree(s)? What are we trying to achieve? Is it for climate adaptation and/or climate mitigation? How can the way we design with trees enhance the quality of place for both people and nature? Are we in an area of social and environmental deprivation? Is there a requirement to increase canopy cover? Are there active travel routes that need canopy cover? Are trees part of surface water management and SuDS schemes?
- Where are we planting tree(s) and what space is available belowground/at ground level/aboveground now and in the future (trees must be thought of in 4 dimensions)?
- How large a tree can we plant and how can we design places that enable the planting of the larger forest trees that provide the greatest long-term benefits?

Finally, understanding trees and which species will suit which location is part of the critical toolkit for designers. This session examines how 'designing with trees' is as serious as any other design endeavour - it needs purpose and clarity of outcome which will improve over time.

Agenda

Chair: Joe Stenson, Group Head of Urban Design at Barratt Developments plc

The plant expert's perspective – choosing species for multiple benefits in a changing climate

Peter Thurman, Principal, The Thurman Consultancy

The landscape design perspective for healthy places and healthy streets

Lee Heykoop, Manager, Landscape, Master Development & Design team, Homes England

Case Study 1: Placemaking with trees

Ryan Murphy, Director, Bradley Murphy Design

Case study 2: Green space connectivity, guided by trees – trees as signposting for green space entrances and connectivity

Marion Preez, Director, Landscape Architect, Urban Pioneers

Partners: RIBA, Urban Design Group, Landscape Institute

Date
20th November

Time
2-4pm GMT

Registration
Zoom

We are in climate and nature emergencies and this puts a spotlight on the benefits provided by our trees especially urban trees, and particularly mature ones, for the multiple benefits that they deliver including their contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation, biodiversity, placemaking, quality of life and health and wellbeing for all.

The principal forms of protection for trees is through Tree Preservation Orders which are made by the local authority, along with trees in conservation areas, but cash-strapped councils can agree to tree felling because of the greater threat of financial loss if they are sued.

But, whenever conflicts arise between trees and the built environment it seems that, too often, the trees lose out and, by their loss we all lose out and even more so in the case of big trees. There are questions to ask and alternative solutions to apply. How do we balance costs against benefits?

Who are the decision makers? Building owners, their insurance providers and the local authority are central players, but many trees have an impact on the wider area and community for which the removal of an individual tree or trees might have a significant detrimental effect.

The seminar will explore the issues and propose alternative solutions.

Agenda

Chair: Tony Kirkham MBE, author and former Head of the Arboretum, Gardens and Horticultural Services, The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and TDAG Patron

Why are we losing too many trees for many different reasons?

Jeremy Barrell, Managing Director, Barrell Tree Consultancy

What does the law say and how can we improve tree protection?

Sarah Dodd, Founder and Director, Tree Law

Tree protection in practice? How protective are TPOS and Conservation Areas?

Jim Smith, Urban Forestry Adviser, Forestry Commission

A Council's Perspective

Cllr Simon Martin, Executive Leader of Fareham Borough Council

What about the wider community?

Laura Ancell, local resident

Partners: Arboricultural Association, Institute of Chartered Foresters, Institute of Highway Engineers