

Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 6 December 2022

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Roger Jackson, Cleaner, Safer, Greener

Director Lead: Matthew Finch, Director, Communities & Environment

Lead Officer: Matthew Adey, Development Manager, Environmental Services, Ext. 5253

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open, Key Decision
Report Title	Adoption of an NSDC Tree Strategy
Purpose of Report	For the committee to review the NSDC Tree Strategy and its implications.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>(a) the draft Tree Strategy be shared with key partners (Sherwood Forest Trust, RSPB, Woodland Trust & Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust) and reviewed before being released for public consultation via the Council's website; the outcome of the consultation to be reported back to Cabinet for consideration prior to formal adoption of the final draft Strategy and;</p> <p>(b) the proposal to fund the increase in budget as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report for essential tree survey and maintenance work be approved.</p>
Alternative Options Considered	Not to progress the Strategy at all, or to progress the Strategy but with a greater or lesser allocation of budget. On balance the recommendation is to progress a Strategy, subject to the outcome of consultation, in order to contribute to the Council's carbon reduction plan, and that the budget proposed is proportionate.
Reason for Recommendations	To support the Council's green ambitions to 'Enhance and protect the district's natural environment', as stated in the community plan.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Having adopted a carbon reduction plan in 2019 in response to the climate emergency, with the aim to be carbon neutral by 2035, the council has placed an increase emphasis on the planting and care for new and existing tree cover throughout the council. Our Community Plan sets out the council's objectives to Enhance and protect the district's natural environment, including a commitment to plant over 10,000 trees by 2023. This target has already been met through community giveaways and direct planting. This included the creation of a new woodland at Vicar Water Country Park in conjunction with Sherwood Forest Trust.
- 1.2 Throughout the process of identifying sites and funding, it was identified that the Council had an opportunity to develop a strategy, with associated supported policies, on the planting and care of trees, both on its own land and in the wider district. To begin the process, this strategy has been developed.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The Tree Strategy for Newark and Sherwood has been developed by the Environmental Services Team in conjunction with the Planning Development and Planning Policy and Infrastructure teams to establish the council's objectives towards trees in Newark and to provide an action plan setting out the pathway to achieve those objectives. The objectives are:
- Objective 1 - Establish robust dataset of trees within the District, identifying:
 - Trees under District control (numbers and species composition)
 - Canopy coverage of remaining land
 - Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees in our control
 - Objective 2 - Develop policies and procedures to ensure:
 - The Council has a robust approach to biosecurity measures when planting or supplying trees
 - Trees are maintained and protected, where appropriate, to protect both biodiversity and public safety
 - Objective 3 - Review of upcoming changes to national and regional policy and guidance with regards to trees within the District.
 - Objective 4 - Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.
 - Objective 5 - Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District.
 - Objective 6 - Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out a series of actions designed to achieve these objectives and support the long-term health of tree within the district and to maintain coverage. Key actions to note are:

- A new target for planting at least a further 6,000 new trees over the next ten years (2022 to 2032).
- Develop a new Design SPD including guidance about street trees with consideration to be given to a minimum canopy cover target.
- The Council continues to commit to funds of £1,500 a year to the free tree give away scheme and continues to plough back money from Christmas tree recycling into environmental improvement works with the aim of providing a further 8,000 trees by 2032.
- Increase the trees survey budget to £10,000 every three years to develop a full tree asset register for District Council trees and to maintain the health and safety of our tree stock.
- increase investment in tree health and public safety by increasing the tree maintenance budget to £30,000, to ensure essential tree maintenance and safety works can be conducted. This new maintenance fund will enable us cover about 6% of our tree stock each year.

2.3 These actions will help us build on our existing successes and developments including the annual free tree giveaway, target hardening work and existing partnerships and joint working such as the recent secondment for Lynn Preece to the Sherwood Forest Trust.

2.4 For context we estimate the new maintenance fund will cover about 4% of our tree stock each year. The work is targeted by need with the tree survey identifying works on an urgency basis, with Red (Immediate) works being targeted immediately after the survey followed by Amber (Urgent) and then Green (Maintenance) works. The council will be liable for any damage or injury which occurs following failure to act upon the risks identified by the survey or issue which occurs.

2.5 For context our budget for tree maintenance on housing land (not including trees in gardens) is over £26,000pa and this covers 1325 trees identified on the last survey. The last survey conducted on trees outside of housing areas identified around 1,400 trees in our parks and gardens which are near footpaths, walkways and other accessible areas, however, this survey did not include groups of trees shielded by vegetation where no individual survey was possible, but where the public still have access (which we estimate brings the total up to around 2000). If our woodland areas are added to this figure the figure is likely to be over 4,000.

2.6 With additional trees being planted on NSDC land (over 7,900 so far) additional care and maintenance work is also required to ensure that these trees grow on into the future. The £38,000 would fully fund both the survey and maintenance works required to ensure that our tree stock is well maintained into the future.

2.7 One of the issues discussed in the strategy is the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain which may necessitate a review of some council strategies, including this one. On this basis it is recommended that the strategy and action plan be reviewed on an annual basis.

- 2.8 The Policy & Performance Improvement Committee are to consider this report at their meeting to be held on 28 November 2022 and their recommendation will be reported to the Cabinet.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications (FIN22-23/449)

- 3.1 There is currently there is no set budget for maintenance on trees that are owned by the District Council that aren't covered by the HRA. Budget is found from other areas where works are necessary, albeit this approach is therefore very reactive rather than proactive.
- 3.2 The proposal above is to add £38,000 into the General Fund budget to fund both a tree survey, once every three years, together with an annual allowance for maintenance work to be completed.
- 3.3 The tree survey is estimated to cost £10,000 every three years order to assess the health of the Council's tree stock and identify trees that require maintenance work completing in order to reduce the risk of injury from falling trees.
- 3.4 To supplement this, an annual allowance would be required to complete work identified from within the surveys on the higher risk trees within the Council's stock. This would allow for maintenance of around 4% of the stock each year. This figure would need to be reviewed depending on the outcome of the survey work, as clearly if there were a higher proportion of red risk trees, work would need to be carried out as urgently as possible. This annual allowance would range between £38,000 (in years where a survey does not need to be carried out) and £28,000 (once in every three years when the tree survey needs to be completed).
- 3.5 This would need to be included within the General Fund budget from the 2023/24 financial year.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Newark and Sherwood District Council

Tree Strategy

2022 to 2032



Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES	2
a. <i>The bigger picture</i>	2
b. <i>Trees in a national context - the race is on to reforest Britain</i>	2
c. <i>The Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan for the UK</i>	3
d. <i>Trees in Newark and Sherwood</i>	5
3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY	6
4. CURRENT SITUATION	7
a. <i>Where are the District's trees?</i>	7
b. <i>Where are the District council owned trees?</i>	8
c. <i>How do we protect trees within the District?</i>	9
d. <i>Planning policies for trees</i>	9
5. IDENTIFYING THE GAPS	11
a. <i>Baseline survey of the District</i>	11
6. PROTECTING TREES	12
a. <i>Protecting trees through development</i>	12
Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)	12
b. <i>Felling licenses</i>	13
c. <i>Protecting ancient trees and woodlands</i>	13
d. <i>Protecting trees by reducing biosecurity risks</i>	16
7. PLANTING TREES	17
a. <i>Creating well planned quality woodland</i>	17
b. <i>Site surveys and planting plans</i>	17
c. <i>Landscape character</i>	18
d. <i>Natural regeneration</i>	18
e. <i>Planting projects</i>	18
f. <i>Securing additional trees through development</i>	20
g. <i>Tree canopy coverage policy</i>	20
h. <i>Tree pit size</i>	21
i. <i>Local Nature Recovery Strategies</i>	21
j. <i>Biodiversity Net Gain</i>	21
k. <i>Urban greening</i>	22
l. <i>Air Quality</i>	22

<i>m. Flooding</i>	23
8. ENGAGING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES	26
<i>a. Promoting trees and tree planting</i>	26
<i>b. Supporting healthy lifestyles</i>	27
<i>c. Community Orchards</i>	28
<i>d. Miner 2 Major</i>	29
<i>e. Park volunteering</i>	29
<i>f. Park and woods friends groups</i>	30
<i>g. School engagement and Forest School</i>	30
<i>h. Encourage and support tree partnerships</i>	31
<i>i. Green Champions</i>	31
<i>j. External Funding for planting</i>	31
9. MAINTAINING DISTRICT COUNCIL TREES	32
<i>a. Tree and woodland policies</i>	32
<i>b. Tree risk surveys</i>	32
<i>c. Staff expertise and capacity</i>	33
<i>d. Aftercare of newly planted trees</i>	34
<i>e. Further ongoing considerations</i>	34
<i>Ash dieback</i>	34
<i>Other pests and diseases</i>	34
<i>Invasive species</i>	35
<i>Thinning new plantations</i>	35
<i>The importance of dead and decaying wood</i>	36
CONCLUSION	38
Appendix1 - List of current and potential future partners	39
Appendix 2 - List of currently available funding opportunities	41

• INTRODUCTION

Trees are essential to human life. They clean our air, store carbon, provide shade and provide a home for wildlife. They stabilise our soils and can help prevent flooding.

Having adopted a carbon reduction plan in 2019 in response to the climate emergency, with the aim to be carbon neutral by 2035, this Strategy sets out why trees are important and why emergency action is needed to protect, manage and plant more trees within the District.

This tree strategy has taken into account global environmental issues and the changing local landscape that we live in but also builds on the ongoing work that the Council is already doing under the Greening Newark and Sherwood agenda. From declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019, launching free-tree giveaways, managing and maintaining four Green-Flag award winning parks, helping communities look after their own patch through the work of Cleaner, Safer, Greener action days, and successfully applying for funding for tree planting, this Strategy is the next step in meeting our environmental aspirations.

Most importantly the Strategy will help us increase tree cover in the District and help us maintain and protect our existing trees. It will help us benefit residents and visitors through the opportunity to observe and enjoy nature, and it will help us raise awareness of local environmental and conservation work that is being undertaken.

The Strategy considers the importance of all the District's natural spaces and not just Council managed land. It considers urban areas, parks, woodlands and farmed land. It considers a variety of natural habitats and the role of the planning system in protecting trees and hedges. There is scope for enhancing the District for trees and wildlife with appropriate long-term funding, and whether it is the creation of a whole new woodland or a single tree planted in a resident's garden, every action has a value in enhancing the District's natural assets. In essence we want to see the *right tree in the right place*.

We acknowledge that we cannot deliver all of the elements of the strategy alone or all at once. We will continue to play a key role in strengthening our partnerships with tree agencies and trusts, regulatory organisations, parish councils, residents and landowners. We aim to lead, inspire and invite others to join us in this process. The Strategy includes a staggered action plan for short, medium and longer term actions.

The tree strategy provides us with an unprecedented opportunity to transform our District into a better place for people and wildlife.

- **THE IMPORTANCE OF TREES**

- ***The bigger picture***

Trees are often referred to as the lungs of the planet, taking in carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. Trees are a powerful tool in combating the effects of climate change, such as storm events, flooding, changes in weather patterns, and rising temperatures. Trees help by capturing carbon from the atmosphere and storing it (sequestration) along with providing cooling shade in urban areas.

The value of trees and nature came into sharp focus during the Covid-19 pandemic. Green spaces gave people respite and hope through difficult times. Trees play a vital role in the health and well-being of individuals and society as a whole.

An abundance of research shows that trees not only improve our air, soil and water quality but also improve our physical and mental health and provide a sense of place. Trees have been found to enhance mood, reduce stress, improve self-esteem and lower blood pressure. Research in the Netherlands and Japan indicated that people were more likely to walk or cycle to work if the streets were lined with trees, feel better and live longer as a result¹.

Trees and woodlands are home to a wealth of wildlife, from shade-loving plants and delicate fungi, to nesting birds, elusive mammals and rare species of flora and fauna. Ancient woodland, in particular, supports more species than any other land-based habitat in the UK. Often ancient trees and woodlands provide environments that are totally unique and irreplaceable.

However according to the Woodland Trust, a third of all woodland wildlife species are in decline, and one in ten are at risk of extinction. Working to protect ancient trees² and woodlands is of vital importance along with creating new habitats to try to maintain biodiversity and bridge the gap between the oldest trees and the next ones to come along.

On 28 September 2020, the UK Government signed the Leaders Pledge for Nature, at the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity seeking to reverse Biodiversity Loss by 2030. The Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) states “that the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis are inextricably linked and must be addressed together” and calls for “action through nature-based solutions”.

In summary having a Tree Strategy is not just about carbon emissions but also the opportunity for creating a better place for people and wildlife to live. The Council believes that urgent action is needed on a bold scale to prevent irreversible damage to climate and nature.

- ***Trees in a national context - the race is on to reforest Britain***

¹ Van den Berg et al. 2003, Environmental preferences and restoration: (how) are they related? Journal of Environmental Psychology 23, 135-146.

² An ancient tree is one that has passed beyond maturity and is old, or aged, in comparison with other trees of the same species, a veteran tree typically it will have a wide trunk, small crown and signs of decay. A veteran tree is a damaged tree which has developed some of the features found on an ancient tree, not necessarily as a consequence of time, but of its life or environment.

The UK Government has ambitious targets to plant trees, committing to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025. This is the equivalent to planting 50 forests the size of Sherwood Forest, every year. This was the annual rate recommended by the Committee on Climate Change in 2019 to help the UK meet their target of net zero emissions by 2050³. The government is committed to increasing UK woodland land cover, for England the aim is to increase from 10% to 12% by 2060 in the 25 Year Environment Plan⁴.

Government research shows that we need to go further and faster than we are now. Landowners, including local authorities, need to be assessing their land to determine what options there are for tree planting and protecting existing trees.

During summer of 2021 the government released the [England Tree Action Plan](#) outlining the Government's long-term visions for trees, woodland and forestry.

The role of local authorities within the action plan:

- Be part of Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery Networks (the Government's commitment to protect 30% of UK land by 2030)
- Develop local tree and woodland strategies
- Plant trees particularly where they make the most difference, understanding what canopy you have and set targets to increase it
- Apply for grants and invest more funding in trees
- Join woodland creation partnerships
- Plant trees in urban spaces so that people can connect with nature
- Support community-led tree planting schemes
- Use planning and Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) to protect increasing numbers of trees
- Protect, manage better and improve public woodland for resilience and wildlife
- Protect ancient and veteran trees and woodland
- Act for greater tree resilience by following UK Forestry Standards
- Plant the right tree, in the right place for the right reason(s)

We have used the Government's Tree Action Plan to help develop and plan our ambitious strategy.

○ ***The Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan for the UK***

The Woodland Trust published an Emergency Tree Plan for the UK in early 2020⁵. The plan is directed at all levels of government and aims to address both climate change and the nature emergency.

³ Committee on Climate change, 2020, "Land Use: Policies for a Net Zero UK"

⁴ HM Government, 2018, "A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment"

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>)

⁵ Woodland Trust 2020, Emergency Tree Plan for the UK

(<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2020/01/emergency-tree-plan>)

It contains a number of key recommendations for local authorities:

- Look after the trees we have by protecting trees and restoring existing woodland
- Prioritise the protection and restoration of ancient and veteran trees⁶
- Create new policies and funding for woods and trees
- Have quality and quantity targets for new tree cover
- Lead the way by using public land to help with climate action and nature recovery
- Write an emergency tree plan or strategy
- Ensure all development land includes a minimum 30% tree cover
- Support the core principle that new trees should seek to maximise future wildlife value
- Consider all trees, including woodlands, hedges, urban trees and individual trees

The Woodland Trust has also issued a stark warning about ‘planting by numbers’ and advise that we must always plant the **right tree in the right place**.

In 2021 they issued the [State of the UK’s Wood and Trees 2021 Report](#).

The key findings are

- Existing native woodlands are isolated, in poor condition and there has been a decline in woodland wildlife
- Woods and trees are vital for a healthy, happy society. They lock up carbon to fight climate change, improve our health, wellbeing and education, reduce pollution and flooding, and support people, wildlife and livestock.
- Woods and trees are subject to a barrage of coinciding threats. Threats range from direct woodland loss through building developments and farming to more insidious influences from climate impacts, imported diseases, invasive plants and air pollutants.
- Not nearly enough is being done. The report warns that we urgently need to scale up the initiatives to create native woods, put more individual trees back in the landscape, and restore damaged woods.

⁶ An ancient tree is one that has passed beyond maturity and is old, or aged, in comparison with other trees of the same species, a veteran tree typically it will have a wide trunk, small crown and signs of decay. A veteran tree is a damaged tree which has developed some of the features found on an ancient tree, not necessarily as a consequence of time, but of its life or environment.

Priority actions:

- Expand woodland tree cover
- Enhance and protect existing woods and trees
- Improve the evidence with improved tree data and regular wildlife assessments
- Invest time, money and people to take on the challenge and create opportunities for woods and trees

We have used the Woodland Trust's reports to help develop and plan our new Tree Strategy.

○ ***Trees in Newark and Sherwood***

Our Tree Strategy will form part of the Council's response to the incoming governmental policy, but it will also set out our approach and leadership in terms of managing and protecting trees.

We will use our own assets and estate for tree planting, continue to use our powers as a planning authority and we will embrace partnership working. We will set our own targets and implement our own policies.

The Council's Community Plan (2020 to 2023) includes the objective to "enhance and protect the District's natural environment" – this is important, but also for the benefits created for residents and businesses in so doing.

The objective is supported by the action to "contribute to the Emergency Tree Plan for the UK by identifying sites and planting at least 10,000 trees". Through a mix of direct planting and community involvement Newark and Sherwood District Council passed this target in early 2022. This included the development of a new woodland at Vicar Water Park on the Vicardale site. In response to this success this Strategy sets the objective of planting or providing for planting a further 8,000 trees by 2030.

The creation of a Tree Strategy also supports the strategy and action plan produced in response to the declared climate emergency. The Climate Emergency Action Plan recognises that the Council will have some residual emissions requiring offsetting and although tree planting is not a means of offsetting at this time, the World Resource Institute and the Carbon Trust are developing a new accounting standard for greenhouse gas (GHG) removal, which is expected to be published in 2023.

- **OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY**

This Strategy has been developed with the aim of establishing the Council's objectives towards trees in Newark and Sherwood District and setting out an action plan to implement those objectives.

- Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District, identifying:
 - Trees under District control (numbers and species composition)
 - Canopy coverage of remaining land
 - Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees in our control
- Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure:
 - The Council has a robust approach to biosecurity measures when planting or supplying trees
 - Trees are maintained and protected, where appropriate, to protect both biodiversity and public safety
- Objective 3 Review of upcoming changes to national and regional policy and guidance with regards to trees within the District.
- Objective 4 Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.
- Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District
- Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same

- **CURRENT SITUATION**

- ***Where are the District's trees?***

The name of the District being Newark and ***Sherwood*** gives a clue as to the woodland distribution within our District. Using the National Forest Inventory for Woodland 2017, Map 1, shows the extent of woodland cover around the western edge of the District. Notable woodlands over 100 hectares include Clipstone Forest (314ha), Sherwood Forest (600ha) and Wellow Wood (128ha). These are the remains of ancient hunting forests and wooded grazing land which would have been widespread across the Mercia Mudstone area of the District along with more modern Forestry England evergreen plantations.



Map 1: National Forest Inventory for Woodland 2017

The land to the east of the District is less wooded (although Stapleford Woods does provide 90ha of woodlands to explore). The trees and woodland within the Newark area are primarily found within parks and open spaces such as Sconce and Devon Park, and Beacon Hill Conservation Park (managed by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust).

- **Where are the District council owned trees?**

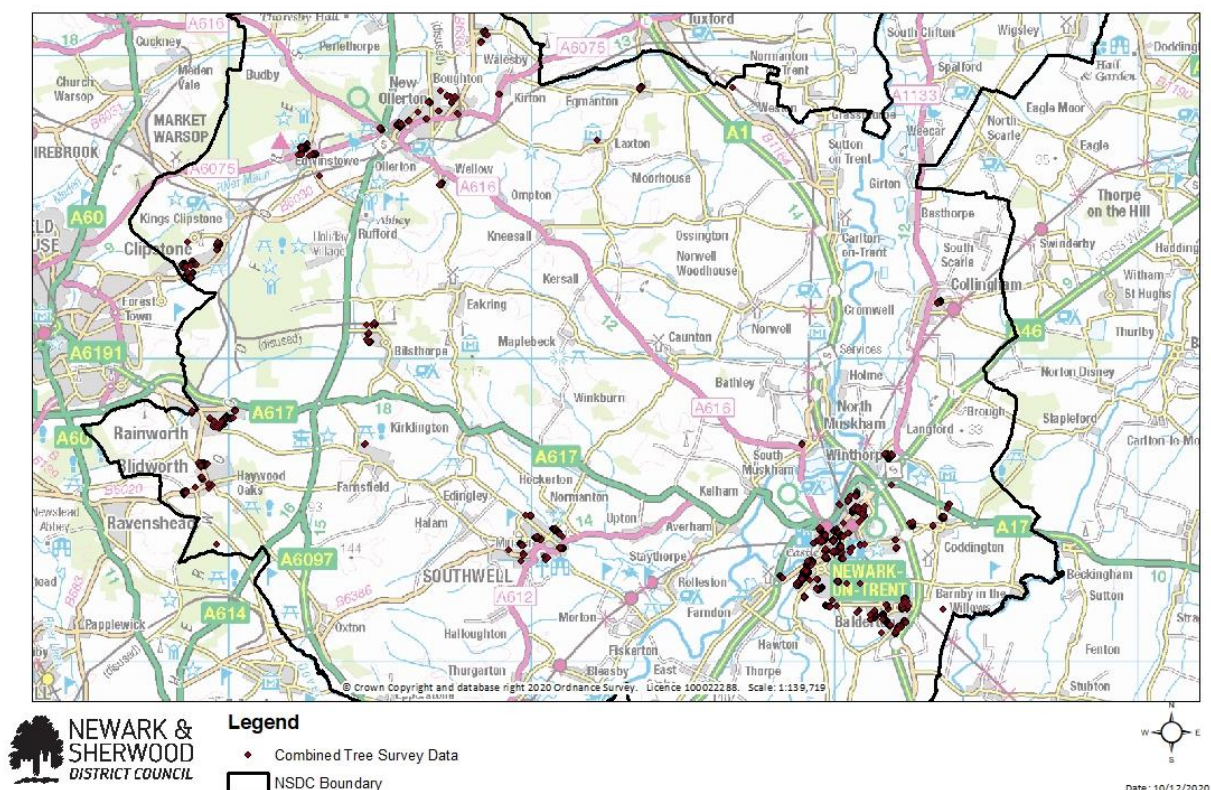
Current practice for the Council is that every three years a Tree Risk Survey is carried out. For District Council land, excluding housing land, the latest survey in early 2020 covered 892 trees, or groups of trees, conducting a visual tree assessment looking for gross or remedial defects.

The survey primarily looked at the risk to people and buildings, fences, highways and public footpaths so does not cover all of the trees on Council land and is only looking at trees with a diameter larger than 75mm. Trees on land managed as part of our housing stock were surveyed in a similar way in March 2022

These surveys have been used to identify where immediate tree work is needed and this work is then being carried out in priority order, ramping down to less immediate work prior to a new survey being carried out.

Combining data from tree risk surveys over the past few years, including housing land, shows the extent of where some of the District Council tree stock can be found, as shown in Map 2. Based on this combined data it is estimated that around 4,000 mature or semi mature trees, or groups of trees, that are managed by the Council.

Newark & Sherwood District Council Tree Survey Combined



Map 2: Combined Tree Survey Data

As these surveys are not looking at all sites, and only selected trees within some of those sites it is thought that this may only cover 70% of the District Council tree stock. However, it does

show that we do have a significant number of sites within the Newark area, and with Newark generally being less wooded, these sites become far more important than ever.

- ***How do we protect trees within the District?***

As the Local Planning Authority, we are responsible for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) under the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012. The law helps protect valuable trees which contribute to an area's landscape and amenity. A tree with a TPO applied is one which has significant public amenity value or potential for amenity value.

Currently Newark and Sherwood has over 350 TPOs but each one of them can include woodland areas (known as 'group TPOs') so across the District thousands of trees are covered by TPOs and are offered a level of protection, whereby any works to be carried out on them must be approved and agreed with by the Council.

Conservation Area legislation also provides some protection to trees. Conservation Areas are generally designated based on historical value of the buildings, structures, and spaces that form the setting of these elements. Trees form an important part of the character of a Conservation Area and for those trees that are not individually protected by a TPO, before an owner does any works on them, they must inform the Council. The Council will consider if the proposed works are acceptable or if the tree needs to be protected by a TPO.

- ***Planning policies for trees***

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. A principle, set out in the NPPF, is that "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment" and which includes "minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures".

The NPPF seeks to ensure that the major pressure for significant housing development, to address the housing crisis, is balanced against the need to protect and enhance the environment. It expects new development to be well designed and to provide open space that "reflect current and future needs and support communities health, social and cultural well-being." Clearly trees play an important role in this.

The Council through its planning policy sets out, in the Amended Core Strategy and the Allocations and Development Management DPD, to protect trees and woodlands and to ensure new development is designed to ensure that it respects biodiversity assets already onsite.

Policy	Purpose
Core Policy 9 Sustainable Design	Requires high standard of sustainable design that both protects and enhances the natural environment
Core Policy 12 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	Protection of Ancient Woodland and seeks to secure development that maximises the opportunities to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity.
Sherwood Area Policy 1	Promotes sustainable development which helps deliver the conservation aims of Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC (Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve) and the other designated nature conservation sites
Policy DM 5 - Design	Part 5 Trees, Woodland, Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure seeks to secure natural features (such as trees) are protected and enhanced and integrated into GI. Part 7 Ecology requires developers to assess onsite biodiversity and seek to ensure that significantly harmful effects are designed out.
Policy DM 7 – Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	Sets out the decision making criteria for the various nature conservation designations.

Alongside the District Council's planning policy individual communities can prepare Neighbourhood Plans which set more localised policies. These plans can include policies which protect important features of a village or town including identifying trees which are considered locally important.

Where sites come forward for development the Council will seek to ensure that trees are integrated into the development; an assessment of existing trees and hedgerows will identify those trees that are worthy of retention. It will not always be possible to retain all trees, particularly if the trees are of a poor standard, however the Council will seek to secure new trees as part of any landscaping scheme. The Council will seek to ensure that existing trees which are to remain as part of the development continue to be maintained by placing them in the public realm, securing their ongoing maintenance via separate arrangement or through protection via a TPO.

In terms of new tree planting, planning conditions can be included in new developments so that landscaping plans have to include tree planting, along with other appropriate green spaces.

- **IDENTIFYING THE GAPS**

- ***Baseline survey of the District***

With the UK Government aiming to increase woodland cover it is important to understand what the District's canopy cover is as a whole. England's cover is estimated at 10%, and in 1998 Nottinghamshire woodland was stated as being 8% of total landcover⁷. We currently only have a limited understanding, based on the small sample of our own trees found within the Tree Risk Survey. The Woodland Trust has also identified a lack of data for the Sherwood Forest area. A baseline figure needs to be obtained for the District, allowing us to compare and measure future planting and changes.

We know from previous research that the canopy cover across Newark Town is approximately 8%⁸, however the information for rest of the District is patchy, which means we don't have a clear assessment of the District's canopy cover. To rectify this, we will carry out a base-line audit to measure the canopy cover across the District. This survey will be carried out using i-Tree methodology⁹, which is the analysis of aerial photographs. This is the accepted method by many organisations, including the Woodland Trust, as the quickest way to estimate existing tree cover.

This baseline figure can be used to measure our own tree planting programmes over time but also enable us to compare the District's tree canopy with neighbouring authorities and national levels. It will help us prioritise areas for tree planting and demonstrate if we are achieving national requirements and goals set out by the Government's Climate Change Committee and England Tree Strategy.

The Woodland Trust is currently running a campaign to map the UK's ancient and veteran trees. We will encourage our residents to take part in this scheme and work with the Woodland Trust to share this information so that trees can be monitored and given tree preservation orders if appropriate.

ACTION – Carry out a baseline study in the short term with i-Tree.

ACTION – To work with the Woodland Trust and others to review collected data and identify gaps and shortfalls in ancient tree coverage identifying potential ancient trees for additional prevention measures.

⁷ Forestry Commission 2001, National Inventory of Woodland and Trees for England. ([National inventory of woodland and trees - England - Forest Research](#))

⁸ The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being [Various Authors](#)

⁹ iTree Canopy, (<https://canopy.itreetools.org/>)

- **PROTECTING TREES**

The Council will prioritise the protection and restoration of existing trees and woodland within the District. An older, larger tree fixes significantly higher levels of carbon compared with smaller and mid-sized trees. Similarly in terms of biodiversity, larger and older trees have far greater value for wildlife. A large oak tree for example can support up to 2,300 species for at least part of their life. Like every species all trees will eventually decline and may require felling or remedial work for a number of reasons including disease and safety.



Photo 1: Mature Oak tree at Sherwood Forest 2022

- ***Protecting trees through development***

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)

The Environmental Act was published in 2021 (although not all sections are currently in force), this and future planning reforms may mean changes to the TPO system, with the scope being widened with the aim to increase the number of protected trees.

The England Tree Action Plan states that the Government wants to make sure trees in the urban environment are no longer seen as a management liability because of the costs, rather that they are seen as an important asset.

Whatever the outcome of the national review it is acknowledged that the current Newark and Sherwood TPO list has not been comprehensively reviewed for many years meaning that

there may be trees that don't necessarily need the protection of a TPO or that new trees or woodlands need adding. Currently we register new TPO's when they are at risk and identified as important as part of new development, when a Tree Works in a Conservation Area application identifies a tree of amenity value or when a tree is nominated and assessed as being important by a town/parish council or member of the public and is at risk.

The review of current TPOs in the District, in line with tree regulations, requires capacity and expertise within the Planning Development Business Unit. This expertise was previously restricted to advice on current tree works applications. A dedicated Tree and Landscape Officer has been recruited to help provide this capacity. This will help ensure that the Council has the necessary resources to regularly review protected trees, consider trees as part of new development and assist the Council in the delivery of parts of this Strategy.

A TPO list review will also aim to ensure that all protected trees are available for the general public to view on a map based system via our website. Planning Development is working on upgrading the Council's GIS infrastructure and this will allow the Council to create interactive maps allowing local residents, developers and landowners to search and view GIS data on TPO's.

- ***Felling licenses***

Better regulation of tree management protecting and sustainably managing existing tree and woodland cover requires strong regulation. The Government introduced Felling Licence Online in 2019 to modernise the customer journey for felling licence applications.

The Environment Act (2021) contains several measures to improve enforcement against illegal tree felling. The England Tree Action Plan suggests reform of the felling licence system and controls, introducing greater flexibility, improved clarity around felling controls and UK Forestry Standard requirements, and improved enforcement capability.

The Act introduces 'Duty to Consult' which will give the public the opportunity to understand why a street tree is being felled and express any concerns regarding this. The Act also introduces Forestry Enforcement Measures which strengthens the Forestry England's power to clamp down on illegal tree felling across England.

- ***Protecting ancient trees and woodlands***

Ancient trees in wood pasture and parkland are totally unique and have decaying wood found nowhere else. They produce crucial habitats with very rich biodiversity.

Projects such as 'Back from the Brink' which is a £4.6 million, lottery funded, 4 year conservation project aims to protect 20 endangered species in the UK and has included 'ancient of the future' as one of its projects¹⁰. The project has targeted tree-dependent species to protect including invertebrates, lichens, fungi, mosses, bats and birds.

¹⁰ Natural England/ National Lottery Heritage Fund (<https://naturebftb.co.uk/>)

Tree species in ancient woodland commonly include Oak, Ash, Sweet Chestnut, Beech, Lime, Birch, Hawthorne and Willow. Nineteen sites have been identified as part of the project including Sherwood Forest in our District. Sherwood Forest is one of the Woodland Trust's 10 priority landscapes within the UK, with the ancient trees being a primary reason.

In Newark and Sherwood, we need to help identify, map and protect ancient woods, veteran trees and others of valued wildlife habitat. We need to ensure they are on national and local inventories by working with the Woodland Trust. As part of this process, we will identify 'future' ancient and veteran trees for protection.

A comprehensive District-wide tree survey would help us identify and record the most valuable ancient and veteran trees within the District.

In 2018, the UK Government strengthened protections for ancient woodland when considering planning decisions for development by amending the National Planning Policy Framework and seeking to do more to continue to raise the importance of this habitat.

The England Tree Action plans states the Government will:

- Introduce a new category of 'Long Established Woodland': woodlands that have been in situ since 1840, alongside ancient woodland
- Consult on the protections these woodlands are afforded in the planning system, recognising their high ecological and societal value
- Update the ancient woodland inventory to cover the whole of England. This will include mapping smaller ancient woodland sites of 0.25 hectares
- Update the Keepers of Time policy on management of ancient woodland and other semi natural woodland.

If we can identify ancient and veteran trees within Newark and Sherwood, we can work with landowners to help protect and care for them and promote their value to local residents.

ACTION – Protect ancient and long-standing woodlands, veteran trees and others of valued wildlife habitat in the District.

ACTION – Tree and Landscape Officer to carry out and then continue to maintain records of the District's TPOs and ensure that TPOs are easily assessable to the wider public.

ACTION – Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and consider additional ways that the Local Planning Authority can protect trees as part of new development.



Photo 2: An example of an ancient Oak tree, Sherwood Heath 2020

○ ***Protecting trees by reducing biosecurity risks***

Biosecurity risks are increasing due to increased international trade of plant materials, and as climate change is altering the geographical range of many pests and diseases. Protecting our new and existing trees from biosecurity risks will be vital to delivering our long-term vision for trees and woodlands.

The Government is aiming to publish a new GB Plant Biosecurity Strategy during 2022 and drive higher international standards of biosecurity.

We will take the following steps to avoid being exposed to problems:

- We will commit to buying UK sourced and grown trees where possible from nurseries with clear Plant Health Management Standards in place. We will also use local nurseries and suppliers where possible and will ensure any partner organisations do the same
- We commit to procuring UK sourced timber from FSC (sustainable) sources and encourage use of hardwood timber sourced from existing and new woodland in the area
- Our Tree and Woodland Inspection Policy will include regular checks for new pests and diseases, with any issues requiring closer monitoring highlighted
- We will report unusual symptoms on Council trees to Forestry England via the online Tree Alert system

Education around biosecurity is an important element and we will encourage and communicate key biosecurity messages to local communities such as:

- Don't risk it: never bring any plants or cuttings back to the UK from abroad
- Buy safely: Source your new trees carefully. Collect local seed and grow your own trees whenever possible. When you buy trees, ensure that your trees have been grown in the UK and that you check the biosecurity policy of the organisation supplying you with trees. Don't just buy online and hope for the best
- Be vigilant: Report any unusual symptoms on trees to the Forestry England's Tree Alert system. <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>

ACTION – We will implement and communicate a robust approach to biosecurity risks across the District, both in our own planting schemes and through advice and partnership.

- **PLANTING TREES**

- ***Creating well planned quality woodland***

As a local authority we need to be clear on our objectives for planting trees and woods

- **Climate change** – the capability of trees to affect climate is becoming ever more important
- **Biodiversity loss** – trees and hedges provide habitat, shelter and food for wildlife
- **Impact on air quality in urban settings** – trees are oxygenating, and they metabolize pollution
- **Reducing flood risk as our climate changes** - trees reduce the rate at how rain falls to the ground, slows it and absorbs it
- **Water quality and soil erosion due to run off**- planting trees along rivers and streams
- **Cooling affect in urban areas** - the shade value of trees is important and increasing as the climate warms up
- **Noise reduction** – trees and hedges can help reduce excessive noise from traffic or other sources
- **Landscape, amenity and recreation** - creating woodland and green spaces for locals to connect with and enjoy

Based on the survey work we would need to identify areas that need trees to be planted, and ensure we met these targets by setting our own targets.

Our core principles will be to plant the right tree in the right place and all new trees should seek to maximise future wildlife value.

The actual process of planting a young tree is not difficult although it must be done properly and with care. However, the success of planting will depend on choosing the right species for the site, and on providing after care and the right environment in which the young trees will thrive. This will include keeping the ground around young trees weed-free, watering during dry spells and providing protection from animals and vandals.

Over the last 3 years though Newark and Sherwood District Council have given away over 10,000 trees and have planted over 7,900 trees on land we maintain. Although the number of currently identified sites provides some restrictions on additional direct planting, we plan to increase this figure by at least 6,000 trees by 2032.

- ***Site surveys and planting plans***

Work has already started on auditing Council owned land, parks and green space for additional tree planting and improved biodiversity opportunities.

When a site has been allocated for potential tree planting a thorough site survey is undertaken. We consider factors including soils, topography, exposure, existing flora and habitats, scale, landscape and sense of place, access (current and future), species, the planting process and aftercare requirements.

When choosing trees for a particular site we will choose the best suited species, species that will contribute to the wildlife value of the site and species that will look right.

The need to plant trees while being sensitive to nature means that we will prioritise native tree species, preferably grown locally and but also consider longevity, oaks and yews for example can live for 1000 years and are great choices. We will always plant a diversity of tree species for future resilience. Note during 2020 Forestry England planted over 42 different species of tree.

We must also not forget the importance of hedges, urban trees and individual trees.

Greening urban areas is an important development area for the Council. Trees in gardens, streets, schools, shopping centres, town parks, and other publicly accessible places will provide shade, reduce air and ground temperatures, improve air quality by absorbing pollutants and help mitigate surface water flooding.

○ ***Landscape character***

The Council's [Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document](#) (LCA SPD) provides an objective assessment of the varied landscape in Newark and Sherwood. It also gives a greater understanding of what makes our landscape locally distinctive and provides a list of the most appropriate tree species for planting schemes in the area.

○ ***Natural regeneration***

In addition to planting new trees, we will encourage natural regeneration in our larger parks and woodlands. Natural regeneration is the process by which existing woodland regenerate and it offers many benefits including:

- It provides a variety of different habitats
- It supports genetic mixing and natural selection
- Reduces the risk from bought trees
- Reduced costs



Photo 3: Naturally regenerated Birch trees, Sherwood Heath 2020

○ ***Planting projects***

In response to objectives within the council's Community Plan work is already taking place to identify Council managed sites with the potential to plant new trees.

Urban Tree Challenge - in early 2021, in partnership with Newark Town Council we planted over 3,300 trees as part of a match funding bid through the Urban Tree Challenge. This involved planting on five sites in Newark and Coddington. The planting has created small, wooded areas within some of the town's key open spaces. The Government is expected to extend the Urban Tree Challenge fund in 2022.

Trees for Climate – in 2022, in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and the Sherwood Forest Trust 4000 trees will be planted at Vicardale in Clipstone.

Local Authority Treescapes Funding – in 2022, in partnership with VIA East Midlands a minimum of 38 large standard trees will be planted in urban parks and green spaces in Newark, North Muskham and Winthorpe.

Target Hardening – in 2022 a number of key sites will undergo natural landscaping including Newbury Road and Autumn Croft in Newark and Thorpe Oaks in Coddington. The landscaping will include the creation of wildflower bunds with additional tree planting.

Town and Country Parks – ongoing work will continue at key Council parks including Sconce and Devon Park and Vicar Water Country Park to renew hedgerows, create community orchards and plant memorial trees.

Corporate Property managed sites - the Corporate Property Team is undertaking an audit of their retail and workshop space in 2022 with a view to managing the sites with nature conservation in mind and assess opportunities for planting trees. This is a collaboration with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. There may be pockets of land that the Council own but are not a commercially viable option to rent, these could be potential sites for further trees.

The Council is also supporting tree planting on private and third-party land by working with local town and parish councils, schools, community groups and homeowners.

Annual free-tree give-way – the annual free tree give-away has taken place since winter 2019 and has given out over 9000 whips so far.

Trees for schools – each year the annual Christmas Tree Recycling project helps raise funds for tree planting in schools and with community groups.

Queen's Green Canopy – in addition to planting our own commemorative tree the Council will encourage all local parishes, schools, communities and businesses to plant a tree for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

- ***Securing additional trees through development***

The Government is currently reviewing the NPPF and is proposing to insert the following statement:

“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with local highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.”

This clearly sets out an approach which expects the provision of new trees as part of new development. There are a number of ways that this can be implemented and the Council has already incorporated new policy wording on this in the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD and will provide guidance within our upcoming Design Supplementary Planning Document.

- ***Tree canopy coverage policy***

The Woodland Trust recommends that all local authorities implement planning policies to secure delivery of 30% canopy cover on all new developments. This is a highly ambitious target, and as of September 2020 the highest agreed canopy cover target the Woodland Trust had seen approved was 25%, at Wycombe District Council¹¹. They came to that conclusion having undertaken a tree canopy assessment and found, in order to maintain a status quo, then new developments (away from town centres and on sites above 0.5ha) would need a 25% canopy cover to match their existing assessed cover.

Different trees clearly have different canopies and at different ages. Any assessment of canopy cover would need a time element as it will take many years for trees to grow to their potential. Guidance could be written on species and sub species which assumes certain canopy cover would be achieved over time.

There is the very obvious risk that if trees are being planted in private gardens once the property is occupied and the developer has left there is nothing to stop that tree being removed. This will decrease the overall canopy cover for the area; however, this should not stop the District from aspiring to increase canopy cover on new developments.

¹¹ Wycombe District Council, and Forest Research , “Canopy Cover Assessment & Recommendations for Wycombe District”. (<https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/uploads/public/documents/Planning/New-local-plan/Tree-canopy-cover-assessment-report.pdf>)

- ***Tree pit size***

There is a direct relationship between how well a tree can grow above the ground and the health and resources of the root system below. Trees need enough room at three levels, below (for roots), at ground level (for the stem), and above (for the crown). All of these elements must come together for success. Often trees on new developments may only be planted in a small pit, which is then surrounded by compacted inhospitable soil, as a result the trees barely grow to their full potential. This can also have the wider benefit of improving onsite drainage through uncompacted soil.

Recent developments such as Middlebeck has included some street trees. Street trees have the potential to provide great value to developments, not only helping with the visual appearance but also achieving all the benefits described earlier such as reducing pollution and mitigating urban heat. The NPPF has been updated with an expectation that new streets should be tree-lined, the District Council will need to work closely with the County Council to implement this approach. The Council's Planning Policy and Infrastructure Business Unit are working on a new Design Supplementary Planning Guidance which is due to be completed in the next 3 years and it will include guidance about street trees including guidance on tree pit size.

- ***Local Nature Recovery Strategies***

The Environment Act (2021) introduces provisions requiring the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies across England. Local Nature Recovery Strategies will be produced locally to help identify priorities and opportunities for conserving and enhancing nature. This will of course include the consideration of new trees and woodlands.

The proposals focus on creating local collaboration with a partnership of organisations across roughly 50 Local Nature Recovery Strategies in the UK. A lead 'responsible authority' for each will be appointed. In Nottinghamshire, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust submitted a proposal to pilot the Local Nature recovery Scheme in the Sherwood area. Newark and Sherwood have agreed to be a partner in this pilot scheme which is currently being held as a 'first reserve scheme.'

In 2020 officers from Planning Policy and Environmental Services took part in a BOM (Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping) exercise for Newark and Sherwood. The findings and a full report are now available on the Notts BAG website.

[Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group](#)

In Nottinghamshire, the County Council together with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (Notts BAG) are following developments very closely and even if the LNR pilot does not go ahead, there is value to be gained through the partnerships and information gathering conducted as part of the bid process.

- ***Biodiversity Net Gain***

The Environment Act's wider biodiversity provisions include the requirement that new development will need to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This requirement will lead to developers having to demonstrate how they have met the 10% net gain as part of the consideration of the planning application. This approach will, in many circumstances, lead to the planting of trees to increase biodiversity, and the Council will need to consider how this works with any canopy cover proposals. It is feasible that a biodiversity strategy will be required which could supersede this document. On that basis this strategy and the associated action plan should be reviewed annually.

○ **Urban greening**

It is important for trees, planting and wildlife to be considered and encouraged during all Council building and development programmes including town centre developments. This includes a proactive approach towards new green spaces for residents to enjoy, new street trees and individual trees, biophilic¹² architecture and other urban greening opportunities.

Achieving biodiversity net gain in urban areas will help us find and create 'green routes' through town centres, which will greatly improve the options for walking and cycling.

The England Tree Action Plan talks of future planning reforms to ensure more urban trees are planted and ensure strong protections for existing trees.

"Protecting and improving our trees outside of woodlands Trees outside of woodlands are among the most valuable to society. People place great value on trees and green spaces in their local communities, which also provide connections in our fragmented treescapes and vital habitat for threatened biodiversity. Yet they often slip through the gaps between funding mechanisms, contributing to their long-term neglect and decline. We need to reclaim our neglected public land, create tree-based community green spaces and encourage new trees in non-woodland settings, for people and nature."

We will: open the Local Authorities Treescape Fund, to work in partnership with organisations, local land-owners and community groups to deliver strategic planting and natural regeneration of trees outside of woodlands for the benefit of local communities and nature"

○ **Air Quality**

Currently the Council measure air quality across the District at 13 monitoring stations (mainly close to residential properties), measuring NO₂ in accordance with Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) guidance. We currently do not have any sites above the limit of 40mg/m³ and therefore do not have to declare an air quality management area with DEFRA. However, trees do have the potential to reduce air pollution at a local level.

Our higher level areas include Ollerton roundabout, Beaumont Cross road junction and Bowbridge Road in Newark and Newark town centre. Tree planting and urban greening

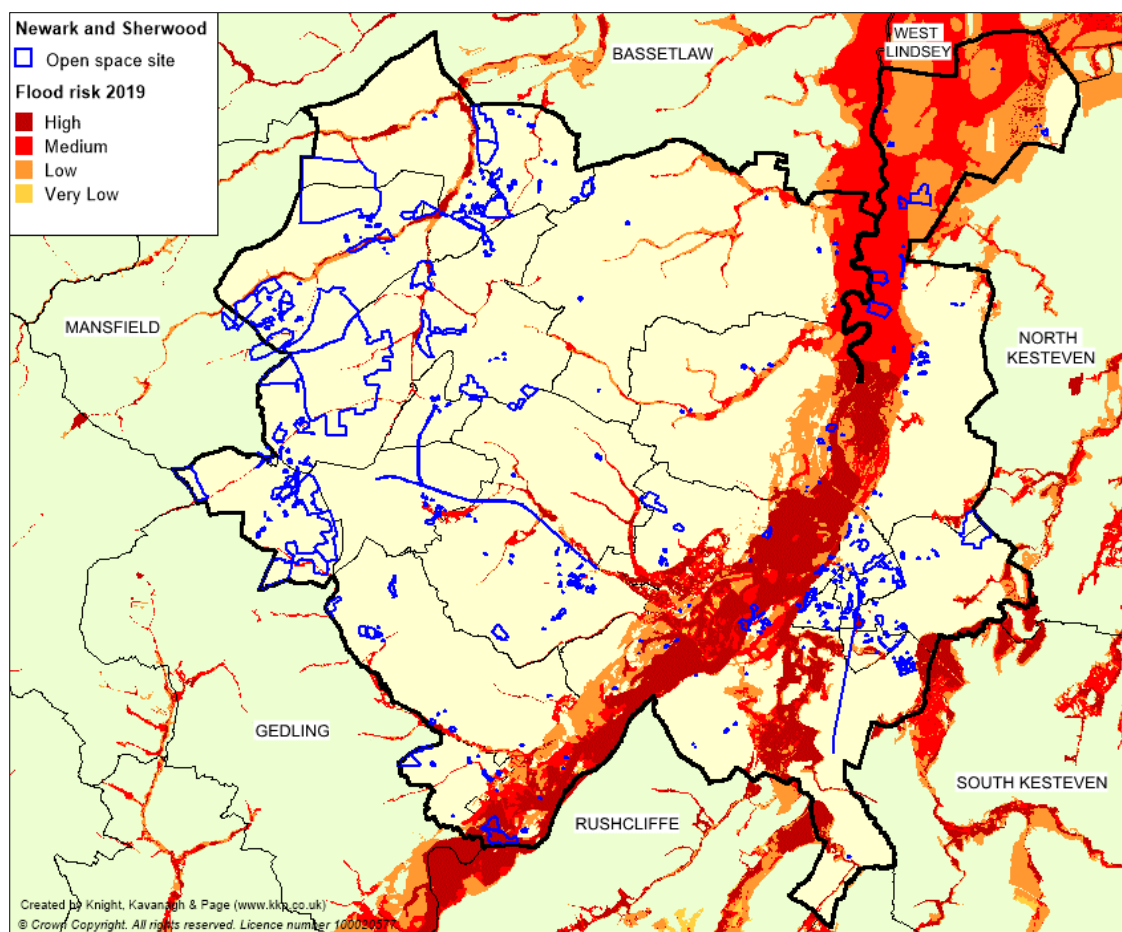
¹² Biophilic design is a concept used within the building industry to increase occupant connectivity to the natural environment through the use of direct nature, indirect nature, and space and place conditions.

should take place wherever possible around the areas of the District with the highest air pollution.

- **Flooding**

Many areas of the District are often seasonally affected by flooding, and with climate change impacts, this is only going to be more prevalent.

The Council's incoming Open Space Assessment and Strategy highlights the risks that much of the District faces, as show in Map 3. The map identifies 24 sites of open space that are at high risk to flooding. These are the same areas that are affected year after year with the difficulties and costs of dealing with flooding.



Map 3 Flood Risk and Open spaces, taken from the Open Space Assessment and Strategy 2020.

There is the potential with tree planting to target some of the often affected areas and to try to reduce the risk of flooding, whether this be on our land or encouraging others to do the same.

The Open Space Assessment and Strategy goes further to identify 16 sites within the District that have potential for greater climate resilience. This includes simple measures such as more

tree planting and wildflower meadow creation to potentially help reduce CO₂ levels, provide flood reduction, mitigate impacts of urban heat island effects, and poor air quality.

Table 1: Site with Potential for Climate change resilience, as taken from the Open Space Assessment and Strategy, 2020

Ref	Site name	Settlement	Resilience measure
15	Riverside Park A	Newark	Planting/meadow creation
23	Barnby Road Community Park	Newark	Greater planting
31	Cleveland Square Playing Field	Newark	Greater planting
32	Former Sconce School Playing Field	Newark	Greater planting
67	Jericho Road	Balderton	Greater planting
72	Hollowdyke Lane	Fernwood	Greater planting
88	Old School Lane	Newark	Planting/meadow creation
96	South Collingham Open Space	Collingham	Greater planting
105	College Close	Newark	Greater planting
214	Corner Chestnut Dr & Whitewater Rd	Ollerton & Boughton	Greater planting
260	Marina/rear of Sandhill Road	Farndon	Greater planting
294	Mill Field	Ollerton & Boughton	Meadow creation
303	Sherwood Heath	Ollerton & Boughton	Greater planting
305	Ollerton Pit Wood	Ollerton & Boughton	Greater planting
458	Willow Holt	Farndon	Planting/meadow creation
460	Millennium Wood	Farnsfield	Greater planting

ACTION – set a new target for planting at least a further 6,000 new trees over the next ten years (2022 to 2032).

ACTION – Develop a new Design SPD including guidance about street trees with consideration to be given to a minimum canopy cover target.

ACTION – Review the findings of the BOM mapping exercise and work with partners to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.

ACTION - Work with Notts Wildlife Trust and other partners on the information gained from the Local Nature Recovery Network scheme and seek to secure new woodland planting and development opportunities.

ACTION - Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and Biodiversity Net Gain and consider ways that the Local Planning Authority can secure new trees as part of new development.

ACTION – Continue to apply for appropriate funding for urban tree planting such as the Local Authorities Treescape Fund.

ACTION – Consider Street trees, biophilic architecture and other urban greening opportunities during all Council building and development programmes.

ACTION – Review the findings within the Open Space Assessment and Strategy and work to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.

ACTION – This strategy and action plan should be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance.

- **ENGAGING WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

There is only so much land that the Council can plant on ourselves, it is important that all landowners do their bit, from residents, community groups, town and parish councils, farmers and businesses. We can use our position to try to positively influence local landowners to consider the options for tree planting or meadow creation.

We will continue to encourage residents to understand the benefits and value of planting trees and hedges in domestic gardens, allotments and community orchards across the District.

In 2019 the Council launched the first of its free tree giveaways, handing out over 4,000 trees to residents and community groups. This has been repeated in the winters of 2020 and 2021, with a further 5000 trees being given out.

Also starting in 2019 our Christmas Tree Recycling service not only helps ensure that all real Christmas trees can be recycled but it also raises money for more tree planting and conservation work within the District.



Photo 4: Tree planting at Chuter Ede School December 2020 funded by the Christmas tree recycling scheme

- **Promoting trees and tree planting**

We want to celebrate trees and help focus attention on trees at a local level. We will join in with national events and campaigns such as National Tree Week (23 November to 1 Dec). National Tree Week is organised by the Tree Council and promotes the winter tree planting season.

Other campaigns and celebrations include Clean Air Day, World Environment Day, Love Parks, Green Flag, Free Tree Give-aways, Southwell Bramley Apple Festival, the Major Oak Festivals, tree planting events and volunteer task days.

- ***Supporting healthy lifestyles***

We will support healthy lifestyles by promoting woodland access for recreation, exercise, engagement with nature and wellbeing.

The Environmental Services Team works with colleagues in the Health and Communities team and external partners including Newark and Sherwood Community and Voluntary Service, the Sherwood Forest Trust, Forestry England, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and local schools.

We will continue to promote local woodlands and encourage locals to explore local woodland walks and cycling opportunities at sites across the District.

Local woodland sites with good access include:

- Boughton Brake
- Clumber Park
- Farnsfield Millennium Wood
- Haywood Oaks and Blidworth Woods
- Intake Wood in Clipstone
- Ollerton Pit Woods
- Sconce and Devon Park
- Sherwood Forest
- Sherwood Heath, Cockglade Wood and Rotary Wood
- Sherwood Pines
- Stapleford Woods
- Thoresby Park
- Vicar Water Country Park
- Wellow Wood

Where suitable and feasible we will seek to improve access to these sites and work with our partners and landowners to ensure interpretation and communication boards are deployed where needed.



Photo 5: Boughton Brake family walk and orienteering trail, 2020

The District is fortunate to have many community organisations that carry our valuable nature conservation work within the District. The Council's Environmental Services team and the Health and Communities team supports, offers advice and promotes the work being undertaken by these groups and volunteers.

Our parks rangers offer outdoor school education opportunities and Forest School activities for children at our parks in Newark, Clipstone and Ollerton.

- **Community Orchards**

The Biodiversity Action Plan for the UK highlights community orchards as hotspots for biodiversity in the countryside, supporting a wide range of wildlife and containing UK BAP priority habitats and species, as well as an array of Nationally Rare and Nationally Scarce species.

We will investigate and support the development of community orchards within the District. Fruit trees have long been planted in gardens and orchards, and as well as contributing to our diet, provide the same important environmental benefits as other trees.

Fruit trees tend to be more expensive to buy and can require careful formative pruning for at least three years to form a balanced framework of branches. Fruit trees are also often prone to a variety of pests and diseases. The additional costs and maintenance requirements need to be considered when planting orchards. The District owns and maintains an ancient orchard

on Sconce and Devon Park and an additional orchard located within the Hawton Holt area of the park.

We assist the Tree Council by sharing their 'Orchards for Schools' programme and help promote the Woodland Trust's 'Free Trees for Schools' scheme.

We help promote The Bramley Fund (via the Notts Community Foundation) which offers small grants to grow apple trees locally.

- ***Miner 2 Major***

We are a partner in the Miner 2 Major (M2M) landscape partnership. This is an exciting five-year project (2019 to 2023) supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The scheme is delivering a range of projects that celebrate and help protect the diverse wildlife, important habitats and rich heritage of Sherwood Forest.

There are many opportunities for local people to get involved with volunteering, have-a-go activities, restoring natural habitats, monitoring threatened species, planting hedges and trees, improving walking trails, free training and up-skilling courses, surveying historic woodland and learning traditional woodland crafts. There are opportunities to take part in activities at locations including Rainworth Heath, Budby South Forest, Sherwood Forest, Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath.

Hedgerows and hedgerow trees are a key features of Sherwood's agricultural landscape. They are important not only for their wildlife and landscape value but have practical benefits such as reducing windblown soil erosion and water runoff. Miner 2 Major is delivering a number of projects with local farmers and landowners, one of them being trees and hedges.

Currently, we have limited information about hedgerows and hedgerow trees throughout Sherwood. Miner2 Major is working with landowners and managers to improve understanding of the number and condition of hedges. Trained volunteers including Council staff are undertaking surveys, recording information such as species, condition, connectivity, wildlife value and location of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Hedgerow Health Reports are then given to the farmer or landowner.

The Miner 2 Major project is also helping the District Council with managing invasive species in our woodlands, wildlife surveying, volunteer maintenance tasks, Forest School Training opportunities and signage, community engagement, interpretation and trail access at Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath.

[Miner2Major website](#)

- ***Park volunteering***

We have a well-established and rewarding volunteer programme in four of the Council's larger parks and woodlands – Sconce and Devon Park, Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath. The park rangers work with regular volunteers, drop-in volunteers and organised groups including Duke of Edinburgh students and National Citizen Service (NCS) participants. Often the tasks involve tree care and tree planting for example thinning new

plantations, coppicing willow, creating dead-hedge habitats, creating log pile habitats and planting new trees.

The volunteering is open to all and no experience is needed, only enthusiasm.

- ***Park and woods friends groups***

We have park friends groups in our larger parks. The friends volunteer their time to meet up regularly, usually once a month and help us manage and maintain the parks and woods. This may involve providing us with feedback and giving us ideas for improvements, fundraising for new projects, helping with park events, helping to plant trees or simply joining us for organised walks and wildlife surveys. The friends groups are free to join and as the name suggests they are very friendly. We actively promote the activities undertaken by the friends through the park communications channels. As part of the new ten year management plan for Intake Wood we will aim to establish a new friends group for the wood.



Photo 6: Winter bird walk with the Friends of Sherwood Heath, 2020

Involvement in community action, community tree planting and conservation, volunteer task days, friends of groups, celebration events, school programmes, awareness raising, interpretation boards and so on will require funding to be available.

- ***School engagement and Forest School***

The Environmental Services team offer support to schools including visits, tree planting, regular newsletters, advice on school gardens in addition to outdoor activities in our parks including habitat building, pond dipping, wildlife surveying and nature trails.

Uniformed groups enjoy regular visits to our three main parks in Newark, Clipstone and Ollerton for guided activities. We plan to ensure park staff are Forest School trained and continue this offer in future years.

- ***Encourage and support tree partnerships***

Around the Newark and Sherwood area there are a large number of committed organisations and groups that have expertise in not just trees but all aspects of work that protects and enhances the natural environment.

Some of these groups are regularly contacted for advice and support and for partnership working on joined-up projects relating to trees and woodlands. For others there are opportunities to create new partnerships or to develop existing relationships.

- ***Green Champions***

2022 will see the launch of our Green Champions scheme. This scheme will provide a gateway for our environmentally minded residents to interact with the council. As the scheme develops we will work with its members to be our eyes and ears on the ground, reporting issues with existing trees, and planting or finding locations for new ones.

i. External Funding for planting

With an increased focus on trees nationwide, there are a growing number of funding opportunities available for certain groups. We will continue to monitor and apply for funding to help with tree planting where possible.

ACTION - The Council continues to commit to funds of £1,500 a year to the free tree give away scheme and continues to plough back money from Christmas tree recycling into environmental improvement works with the aim of providing a further 8,000 trees by 2032

ACTION - We will continue to promote tree schemes and volunteer days, using the Green Champions scheme as a resource to encourage residents to get involved with increasing tree coverage in their area.

ACTION – continue to build our community engagement, volunteering and ‘friends of’ offers to help more local residents connect with trees.

ACTION – Ensure all park rangers are Forest School trained. Develop and extend the Council’s school education and Forest School offer.

ACTION – Continue to monitor and review tree funding opportunities and work in partnership with others to increase tree planting in the District.

- **MAINTAINING DISTRICT COUNCIL TREES**

- ***Tree and woodland policies***

The Council follows national and local policies on the management of trees but there some identified opportunities to develop new tree policies and procedures to support this strategy.

New tree policies could include:

- **Tree Pruning and Felling Policy** the aim to establish a transparent approach of when we will do tree work and for what reasons.
- **Diseased tree management policy** ensuring management options are available in response to any tree die back and disease and bio security threats.
- **High Winds Policy** many of our woodland areas create a risk to site users from falling branches and trees. Having a procedure in place to respond to weather warning helps to mitigate that risk.
- **Tree and Woodland Inspection Policy** a clear procedure for Council staff to follow when inspecting trees and carrying out any associated works, such as the removal of ad hoc rope swings.
- **Approved tree supplier list** ensuring all trees purchased by the Council come from an approved supplier with the required bio-security checks.
- **Approved contractor list** ensuring all tree works are undertaken in line with industry standards for health and safety, tree health and wildlife regulations.

Developing a proactive approach to managing and maintaining the Council's tree stock will help us stay on track with the surveying and maintenance. If a member of the public complains about a tree blocking out light, for example, or dropping leaves the Council will have the policies in place to support our decisions.

- ***Tree risk surveys***

As identified earlier, the most recent Tree Risk Survey does not include all of the Council tree stock of around 4,000 trees. A new wider, all-inclusive survey combining all land within Council remit will give a clearer picture of the current situation. This will enable us to properly manage our trees as the assets they are into the future.

Moving forward, a planned full tree survey every three years will cost approximately £10,000. This could be staggered so that the costs are spread over a number of years in a rolling programme of inspections.

There is a risk at the moment, without specific tree policies in place that critical tree work is being missed. More regular and wider tree inspections will help keep trees on Council managed land in a healthier state for the future. It will also reduce the potential for costly health and safety issues.

While some of the current survey data can be mapped, as the survey is carried out by an external contractor, so we do not have full control of the data. We will develop and maintain a full tree asset register using current data that will then be built on over time. This register

will store the location, tree id, species, approximate age, canopy cover, records of work undertaken, all providing with readily available information to the Council.

○ ***Staff expertise and capacity***

We need to ensure we have enough qualified staff, contractors or partner resources available to implement our ambitions. Additional tree work being identified through wider surveys will have budgetary impacts.

The Planning Development Business Unit has recently recruited a new Tree/Landscape Officer. This role will deliver the majority of the Council's TPO and Tree Works in Conservation Areas service with assistance from the Planning Technical Support team in addition to initiating a review of historic TPOs keeping this under continuous review. As well as these core functions the role will also: -

- Provide technical arboricultural advice to colleagues in the Council's planning teams on planning applications and the development of planning policies which encourage trees as part of new development
- Provide technical arboricultural advice to colleagues in Environmental Services with regard to Council owned and managed trees and woodlands
- Be an advocate for trees within the Council and the community supporting tree planting schemes, conservation activity and owners of protected trees

However, there is concern that one person will not be able to achieve anywhere near this amount of work. The implications of this work and biodiversity net gain are currently being assessed.

For the Environmental Services Team, the Tree Risk Survey carried out in early 2020 highlighted approximately £60,000 worth of essential tree work that needs to be carried out. Having used the risk rating to identify where the immediate work is, some of this has been completed, by in-house staff or contractors. The work is prioritised so that the immediate and dangerous work is done as a priority and less important work is diarised for a later date. This is not simply tree felling work, but essential safety work to ensure trees are safely maintained and healthy so they can continue to be enjoyed and provide benefits to all.

Failure to conduct this work and to maintain the Council's tree stock puts residents, visitors and workers within the district at risk. Unlike our housing land where a dedicated budget exists for tree works, there is no budget set aside for tree works covering the rest of the district. It is proposed the maintenance budget for essential tree work needs to be created of at least £30,000 each year. For context it is estimated that this work will cover around 6% of the District's tree stock per annum.

- ***Aftercare of newly planted trees***

All newly planted trees require aftercare and on-going maintenance. The main priority in the first three years is weed control and watering. As we plant more trees the time and costs for ongoing care and maintenance will increase.

Newly planted trees ideally require a weed-free area of at least 1m diameter around the stem. Weeds, especially grasses compete strongly with new trees for water, light and nutrients. There are a number of options for weed control including herbicides, mulch mats, loose mulch and hand weeding. We will continue to use a combination all methods.

New trees and especially larger standard trees require regular watering during the growing season and during prolonged dry periods, saturating the ground if practicable. This is labour intensive and requires specialist equipment including a water bowser and water tanks.

The newly planted trees will need to be regularly checked for pest and diseases including predation by mammals such as rabbits or deer.

- ***Further ongoing considerations***

Ash dieback

Ash is the third most common broadleaved tree in Britain. There are an estimated 60 million ash trees outside woodlands in the UK. Ash trees are found in woodland and non-woodland settings, in both urban and rural landscapes across the District.

Ash dieback is a fungal disease affecting the common ash tree (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and other *Fraxinus* species. It is caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (formerly known as *Chalara fraxinea*) which is native to eastern Asia.

The disease is now widespread across Nottinghamshire and is starting to have a huge impact. Trees in woodlands with high proportions of ash are likely to decline more quickly as spores spread. Ash trees growing in open areas such as streets and hedgerows will probably deteriorate more slowly. A small proportion of trees will have a genetic tolerance to the disease. All infected trees can dramatically deteriorate in condition in as little as four years

As well as the cost of felling, the loss of benefits provided by Ash trees will also be costly for example air purification and carbon sequestration. Many wildlife species rely on Ash trees. As a Council and landowner we must consider our Ash dieback management options.

Other pests and diseases

We need a good awareness and regular checks for other pests and diseases such as Oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*).

The oak processionary moth was first found in London in 2006 and has been spreading ever since. It was accidentally imported to the UK in egg form in the canopy of trees for planting. The Council need to help tree health authorities identify and manage outbreaks early.

Acute oak decline is another example of problems Council staff must look out for. Acute oak decline is essentially a tree's response to environmental stresses including drought,

waterlogging and pollution. Insects, fungi and bacteria then move in on the vulnerable tree and push it into decline. We can help by planting as many new oaks as possible and manage areas so that oaks can naturally regenerate to make sure that the next generation of trees is better adapted to our changing climate.

Some tree pests and diseases are notifiable, which means that, in England they must be reported to Forestry England. The preferred way to make a report is with TreeAlert the online pest and disease reporting tool.

<https://www.forestryresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/tree-alert/>

Invasive species

The park ranger team undertake an annual woodland maintenance plan that involves controlling invasive species. For example, at Vicar Water Country Park there is invasive Italian Alder in Portland Meadow. Removing alder saplings each winter helps keep the meadow as grassland and protects the early Marsh Orchids which are quite rare in Nottinghamshire. Italian Alder was often planted on former pit tips to stabilise the ground as they can survive on nutrient poor and compacted ground. They can soon take over though and herb-rich grassland is more valuable and precious for wildlife.

Similarly at Sherwood Heath we undertake a programme of tree thinning to protect the important health and grassland of this SSSI site.

Himalayan Balsam is a very invasive plant found on riverbanks, ditches and in woodlands, where it prevents native species from growing. We have balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) in Intake Wood and on Sherwood Heath. The park's team has however recently joined forces with conservation officers from the Miner2Major Project, Notts Biodiversity Action Group (BAG) and the Sherwood Forest Trust to try and eradicate the plant via a 3 year programme of 'balsam bashing' with volunteers beginning in the spring of 2021.

Although not currently recorded on any of our parks or green spaces Japanese and other Knotweeds are highly invasive species which can grow from a piece of rhizome (root) as small as 1cm.

Thinning new plantations

The Council's park ranger team work with volunteers to thin new plantations at Vicar Water Country Park, Intake Wood and Sherwood Heath. All the wood is left in the woodland or made into habitat piles which helps mimic the conditions in natural woodland.

The Council's Street Scene team work to thin and manage small woody areas on council managed green spaces across the District. Thinning can help let in light to the woodland floor and help strong trees thrive.

As we plant up more areas of the District with new trees it is recommended that the sites are thinned after around 10 years. This involves selecting some of the poorer, struggling trees and removing them. The timber from these trees will usually be sold on for paper pulp or stacked on site for habitat creation. On occasion it may be sold on as firewood which will result in a release of the carbon which has been captured over the trees life, however, by removing these smaller trees you promote healthier growth in the remaining stock. These stronger

trees will be able to capture more carbon throughout their lifespan and should mature specimens need to be felled their trunks may be suitable for timber which will result in any carbon being held indefinitely.



Photo 7: Tree at Sherwood Heath marked for removal, 2021

The importance of dead and decaying wood

As part of our tree and woodland maintenance programmes we will value the importance of standing dead wood, fallen branches and log piles. Dead and decaying wood has huge ecological and wildlife value. This is why we do not remove it and 'tidy up' our woodlands too much, where appropriate.

Decaying wood is a hive of activity, food and home to huge a range of fungi, thousands of invertebrate species and even birds and mammals. It can also look beautiful and be a sculptural feature of our parks, woodlands. Where appropriate, fallen trees and branches will be left.

Retrenchment is the very slow decline of aging trees and it is an enormously important phase of their lifecycle. We will not be too eager to cut down aging trees and replace them. Dependant on location, we will only remove a tree in decline if it creates a risk to the public.



Photo 8: Deadwood covered in moss, winter at Vicar Water Country Park, 2021

ACTION – Create and adopt policies for District Council managed trees and woodlands

ACTION – Increase the trees survey budget to £10,000 every three years to develop a full tree asset register for District Council trees and to maintain the health and safety of our tree stock

ACTION – increase investment in tree health and public safety by increasing the tree maintenance budget to at least £30,000, to ensure essential tree maintenance and safety works can be conducted.

CONCLUSION

It is time to take action for trees and woodlands. On both a national and local level, targets are being set for expanding UK tree cover and the District Council can help.

Often in the past, local authorities have viewed trees as a burden rather than as an asset but things have significantly changed. The climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis require urgent and prolonged action. Now councils are being asked to provide a long-term commitment to investing in trees and woodlands. If the Council wish to become carbon neutral by 2035 then time is critical.

The value of trees and nature has also come into sharp focus during the Covid-19 pandemic. Green spaces have helped us through difficult times. We must all do more to protect, plant and restore new woods and trees, for people, nature and climate. The District needs a green recovery and trees need to be a part of it.

It is easy to rush in to planting trees but we need to be clear on the Council's objectives and undertake due diligence in assessing our base-line tree data. Our tree objectives will prioritise climate, wildlife and people.

Our strategy is comprehensive and considers trees and woodlands across the whole District as well as specifically the trees and woodlands on Council owned land. We will also consider urban greening provision and crucially the landscape of the District with its local characteristics, constraints and opportunities.

We will aim to lead, inspire and enable local communities, businesses and landowners to become involved with trees. The enormity of climate change and biodiversity crisis can be terrifying to people and so making people feel empowered and able to help, even if it just means planting an acorn and growing a tree is incredibly important.

Some trees can live for hundreds and even thousands of years. Such timescales dwarf human lifetimes and so we aim to deliver this Strategy not for ourselves but for generations to come.

Appendix1 - List of current and potential future partners

- **The Environment Agency** – looking at natural flood prevention through Natural Flood Management, advice of riverside trees and tree planting
- **Natural England** for advice and guidance, licencing, wildlife conservation and protected species, tree planting, funding and maps and data and Countryside Stewardship grants (from the Rural Payments Agency)
- **DEFRA** for funding and nature recovery schemes
- **Nottinghamshire County Council** for highway trees, woodland management advice, rights of way and wildlife conservation advice, tree planting and funding support
- **Notts Biodiversity Action Group (BAG)** for wildlife and special habitat advice, help with invasive species, biodiversity opportunity mapping (BOM), partnership work and the local biodiversity action plan (LBAP)
- **Forestry England** – for advice, licenses and information, community engagement, joined up events and volunteering opportunities
- **The Woodland Trust** for advice on tree and woodland strategy, tree data, community tree planting, protection of ancient and veteran trees and general tree advice
- **Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust** for advice and support on local flora, fauna and habitat on all Council managed green space, wildlife walks and talks in our parks, joined up projects, habitat mapping, funding opportunities and local nature recovery networks
- **RSPB Sherwood Forest** for wildlife advice and support, woodland events and community engagement
- **Sherwood Forest Trust** our partner organisation helping with the management of our Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in Ollerton, Sherwood Heath. Also, assistance with community engagement, ecological expertise, tree planting, woodland events, wildlife expertise and volunteering
- **Local environmental groups** that look after parish trees and woodlands including Green Southwell, Friends of Southwell Trail, Bilsthorpe Green Spaces and Farnsfield Green Spaces
- **Nottingham Trent University** we link in with the NTU species recovery team, and NTU provides staff education opportunities through the Miner 2 Major partnership. In turn we offer student volunteering opportunities within our parks.

- land owners to protect and maintain their existing trees, plant new woodland and undertake more agroforestry
- **Neighbouring authorities** – explore partnership opportunities at the District's borders and information sharing.
- **Miner2Major** are helping to deliver a number of projects including Trees and Hedges, Better Habitats and Connecting Trails
- **Schools and uniformed groups** we help with education on climate change, nature and the importance of trees in order to help inspire future generations

Appendix 2 - List of currently available funding opportunities

England Woodland Creation Offer

Landowners, land managers and public bodies can apply to the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) for support to create new woodland.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer>

Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf)

This is a government fund (which requires match funding) to plant trees in urban environments.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund>

Local Authority Treescapes Fund

This fund is aimed at establishing more trees in non-woodland settings such as in riverbanks, hedgerows, parklands, urban areas and beside roads and footpaths.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-treescapes-fund>

Trees for Climate (Nottinghamshire County Council) part of the Government's 'Nature for Climate Fund'

Ambitious plans to plant 280,000 over five years starting in 2021.

The Woodland Trust MOREwoods - Where 500+ trees are planted as woodland on at least half a hectare. The Woodland Trust can help us design the woodland, create a bespoke species mix, supply the agreed trees and tree protection and cover up to 75% of costs.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/morewoods/>

The Woodland Trust MORE hedges – The Woodland Trust can subsidise up to 75% of the cost if we plant more than 100 metres of new hedging allowing a large tree to grow every six metres.

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/morehedges/>

The Woodland Trust also offer free support and tree packs to community groups and schools.

Woodland Carbon Code

For businesses with a carbon reduction strategy. Creating woodland with the Woodland Carbon Code allows you to sell the carbon units from your woodland.

<https://www.woodlandcarboncode.org.uk/>

Woodland Carbon Guarantee (WCaG)

The woodland carbon guarantee is available in England and is an additional income stream for woodland owners, with thirty-five year contracts for guaranteed payments of woodland carbon budgets.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-carbon-guarantee>

Tree Appeal

Free trees for schools, community green spaces and nature reserves.

<https://www.treeappeal.com/index.html>

The Tree Council

Grants for planting and orchards for schools

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/>

Crowdfunding and local fundraising

Other local authorities have invited members of the public to help fundraise for local trees

Objective	Action	Business Unit	Target	Resource Requirements
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Carry out a baseline study in the short term with i-Tree.	Environmental Services	Apr-23	Officer Time
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Protect ancient and long-standing woodlands, veteran trees and others of valued wildlife habitat in the District.	Environmental Services	To begin May-23	Officer Time
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Tree and Landscape Officer to carry out and then continue to maintain records of the District's TPOs and ensure that TPOs are easily assessable to the wider public.	Planning Development	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 1 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District	Increase the trees survey budget to £10,000 every three years to develop a full tree asset register for District Council trees and to maintain the health and safety of our tree stock	Environmental Services	Apr-23	New fund to be established
Objective 1 & 5 Establish robust dataset of trees within the District & Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District	To work with the Woodland Trust and others to review collected data and identify gaps and shortfalls in ancient tree coverage identifying potential ancient trees for additional prevention measures.	Environmental Services	To begin May-23	Officer Time
Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure - Trees are maintained and protected to protect both biodiversity and public safety	Increase investment in tree health and public safety by increasing the tree maintenance budget to £30,000, to invest in upskilling staff in Environmental Services and invest in appropriate arboricultural equipment and tools.	Environmental Services	Apr-23	New fund to be established
Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure - Trees are maintained and protected to protect both biodiversity and public safety	This strategy and action plan should be reviewed annually to ensure its continued relevance.	Environmental Services/Planning Policy/Planning Development	Dec-23	Officer Time

Objective 2 Develop policies and procedures to ensure - Trees are maintained and protected to protect both biodiversity and public safety	We will implement and communicate a robust approach to biosecurity risks across the District, both in our own planting schemes and through advice and partnership.	Environmental Services	Formal Policy to be developed by June 23	Officer Time
Objective 3 Review of upcoming changes to national and regional policy and guidance	Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and consider additional ways that the Local Planning Authority can protect trees as part of new development.	Planning Development	Currently Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 4 Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.	Develop a new Design SPD including guidance about street trees with consideration to be given to a minimum canopy cover target.	Planning Policy / Environmental Services	To begin in 2024	Officer time and LDF budget
Objective 4 Work within the planning system to not only support and maintain the biodiversity of the District but actively improve it.	Consider Street trees, biophillic architecture and other urban greening opportunities during all Council building and development programmes.	Planning Development	Nov-23	Officer Time and subject to appropriate staffing resource
Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District	We will continue to promote tree schemes and volunteer days, using the Green Champions scheme as a resource to encourage residents to get involved with increasing tree coverage in their area.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain and improve the biodiversity of the District	Continue to build our community engagement, volunteering and 'friends of' offers to help more residents connect with trees.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 5 Work with residents and partner organisations to maintain	Ensure all park rangers are Forest School trained. Develop and extend the Council's school education and Forest School offer.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time

and improve the biodiversity of the District				
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Review the findings of the BOM mapping exercise and work with partners to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Set a new target for planting at least a further 6,000 new trees over the next ten years (2022 to 2032).	Environmental Services	Ongoing	TBC
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Work with Notts Wildlife Trust and other partners on the information gained from the Local Nature Recovery Network scheme and seek to secure new woodland planting and development opportunities.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Review changes being brought about by the Environment Act (2021) and Biodiversity Net Gain and consider ways that the Local Planning Authority can secure new trees as part of new development.	Planning Policy	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Continue to apply for appropriate funding for urban tree planting such as the Local Authorities Treescape Fund.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Review the findings within the Open Space Assessment and Strategy and work to secure new woodland development and tree planting opportunities.	Environmental Services/Planning Policy	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	The Council continues to commit to funds of £1,500 a year to the free tree give away scheme and continues to plough back money from Christmas tree recycling into environmental improvement works with the aim of providing a further 8,000 trees by 2032	Environmental Services	Apr-23	Officer Time

Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Continue to monitor and review tree funding opportunities and work in partnership with others to increase tree planting in the District.	Environmental Services	Ongoing	Officer Time
Objective 6 Continue to plant more trees in suitable locations and encourage others to do the same	Create and adopt policies for District Council managed trees and woodlands	Environmental Services	Policy set to be drafted by June 23	Officer Time