

OXFORD URBAN FOREST STRATEGY

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

To achieve the aims of the Urban Forest Strategy it is essential to work together. Although Oxford City Council has direct control over most of our parks and green spaces we are heavily reliant on private landowners to help us find the spaces to expand our urban forest. We also need our landowners and land managers to manage their tree stock well so that we keep our existing urban forest healthy and maximise the benefits it provides us every day.

A number of actions for different stakeholder groups are identified below that will help us to deliver this strategy. The stakeholder groups include: Oxford City Council; public and private institutions and landowners (schools, universities, businesses, etc.); local communities and individuals; the arboricultural Industry (nurseries, tree surgeons, professional grounds maintenance etc.) and community and conservation organisations.

Oxford City Council

What will we do?

- Lead by example by managing land within the Council's control to contribute to delivering the aims of this strategy
- Promote partnership working
- Seek funding opportunities to undertake projects that will help deliver our objectives
- Review this strategy every 10 years to monitor progress

Public and Private Institutions and Landowners (schools, universities, businesses, etc)

What can you do?

- Produce a tree management plan following best practice guidance and goals that align to this strategy
- Undertake regular tree health checks, manage according to best practice and report any disease to: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>
- If you have land available and suitable for tree planting, offer it to community groups and tree planting schemes
- Follow best practice with regards to Ash dieback <https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Public/Ash-Dieback-%E2%80%93-Practice-Guidance>
- Celebrate the trees on your grounds and encourage site users to interact with them
- Enhance the existing green spaces on your land/site
- Plant hedgerows! <https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/hedgerows/>
- Consider introducing Carbon Storage Certificates for Trees and Shrubs <https://www.treeeconomics.co.uk/projects/barchamcarbonperformanceproject/>
- Create opportunities for biodiversity
- Encourage site users, such as staff and visitors to interact with the green spaces provided for example, by providing benches or lunch tables if appropriate.
- View your trees and green spaces as assets and value them accordingly. See TDAG's guidance <http://www.tdag.org.uk/first-steps-in-valuing.html>
- Adopt the Plant Health Management Standard and become Plant Healthy certified <https://planthealthy.org.uk/>
- Assess opportunities for new tree or hedgerow planting. Use guidance such as TDAG's "Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery" <http://www.tdag.org.uk/trees-in-hard-landscapes.html>
- Make sure the right species is chosen for the location. <http://www.tdag.org.uk/species-selection-for-green-infrastructure.html>
- Enhance the public realm for instance in reducing visual impact of industrial sites or business parks
- Link existing green spaces and trees within sites and to adjoining sites to form wildlife corridors
- Use well-designed tree pits to maximise tree health

- Check that existing tree pits are well designed and are not negatively affecting the tree. Minor alterations can have significant benefits to the tree
- Consider tree pit design to help deliver other benefits such as reducing surface water run off or providing electric vehicle charging infrastructure <https://greenblue.com/gb/>
- Use tree planting and landscaping to reduce noise pollution at source <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/urban-regeneration-and-greenspace-partnership/greenspace-in-practice/benefits-of-greenspace/noise-abatement/>
- Support innovation and knowledge building around our natural and built environment
- Get involved in helping to create attractive tree lined walking and cycling routes to employment sites and schools etc
- Schools can get involved with Forest Schools programmes <https://www.forestschoolassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/>
- Schools should take opportunities to plant trees in school grounds particularly along boundaries for the potential air quality and wellbeing benefits for children.
- Schools can get involved with tree planting initiatives
- Familiarise with guidance and advice for businesses and how they can impact on biodiversity: <http://www.businessandbiodiversity.org/impact.html>, the British Standard BS 8583:2015 Guidance for businesses on managing biodiversity and the risks and opportunities <https://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail?pid=000000000030282815>
- Businesses on business parks can club together to increase tree cover on their sites
- Ensure that any tree planting schemes do not negatively affect any view cones relating to the conservation of our built heritage.
- Consider planting “understudy” trees for particularly special trees on your site so that it is replaced before that tree reaches the end of its life.
- Provide support or funding to the development of citizen science projects that will help us to monitor progress to our target.

Local Communities and Individuals

What can you do?

- If you have space, plant an appropriate tree or shrub. The Woodland trust and the RHS have advice on what to plant in your garden, even if it's small: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/03/british-trees-to-plant-in-your-garden/>
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=117>

- If you are able to maintain them, plant hedges as a boundary walls, particularly in front gardens along roads.
- Garden for wildlife! Learn how to attract birds and a range of other wildlife into your garden. <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/gardening>
- Look at the front of your house? Could you provide space for a tree to help green your street? Here are some ideas for front gardens from the RHS: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=877>
- If you only have access to a paved area or balcony, consider planting in containers: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=274>
- If you have an established large tree in your garden, consider planting an “understudy” tree for it, to replace it when the original one dies.
- Plant hedgerows! <https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/hedgerows/>
- Avoid neighbour disputes by discussing your tree plans with your neighbour. Know your rights and responsibilities: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?PID=1022> and <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-neighbour-disputes/high-hedges-trees-and-boundaries>
- If your community already has high canopy cover, consider helping to support a community with lower canopy cover.
- Avoid using chemical pesticides or inappropriate fertilisers in your garden. The RHS has some good advice: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=817>
- If you have established trees in your garden, learn to manage them properly and look for signs of ill health. The Tree Council has lots of advice on how to care for trees: https://treecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/TCHandbook_5_Care.pdf
- Add your tree to Treezilla: <https://treezilla.org/>
- Get involved! Join a community group or volunteer organisation for undertaking conservation activities: <https://www.ocv.org.uk/>
<https://www.bbwt.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer>
- Mobilise your community to be volunteer tree health checkers. Report any disease to: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>
- Follow best practice with regards to Ash dieback <https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Public/Ash-Dieback-%E2%80%93-Practice-Guidance>
- If you are involved in organising a community tree planting project, make sure that it is properly resourced and funded to include maintenance and aftercare for at least 5 years post planting <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=237>
- Local community groups can help raise awareness of our urban forest. Organisations such as The Woodland Trust have many resources for communities. For example, this Street trees celebration kit <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/protecting-trees-and-woods/street-trees/>
- Encourage your employer to plant trees following our “right tree, right place” guidelines.

- Make sure you are up to speed with your responsibilities as a tree owner <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=1022>
- Encourage your school to plant trees and participate in forest schools: <https://www.forestschoollassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/>
- Learn to spot tree pests and diseases and report them: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>
- Start a friendly rivalry with another local community and see who can increase their canopy cover first.
- Help us to protect biosecurity by following this advice from Forestry England: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/article/biosecurity-advice-forest-visitors>
- Source plants and trees from reputable sources and check that they have a plant passport.
- Don't bring plants, fruits, vegetables, seeds or flowers home from abroad. See the government advice here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/public-urged-not-to-bring-plant-pests-and-disease-into-the-uk>
- Seek out your community's special or notable trees or trees that bring a particular benefit to an area. Consider if there is scope to plant an "understudy" tree in close proximity so that it is replaced before it reaches the end of its life.
- Visit your local park and enjoy the trees!
- Involve landlord and tenant groups in helping to support planting small trees in residential gardens
- Individuals can access information through Naturehood (<https://naturehood.uk/>) on how to plant trees and shrubs for wildlife and climate benefit, and can register their trees with Naturehood, contributing to local and national research on the distribution of urban trees, and the impact that this is having on our wildlife.
- Establish a Tiny Forest ([Tiny Forest \(earthwatch.org.uk\)](http://TinyForest(earthwatch.org.uk))) These tennis court sized plots of land are planted with 600 saplings consisting of a mix of approx. 15-25 native species, selected for their suitability to the location, to recreate a woodland. The forests are cared for by the local community for at least two years, but generally left to develop naturally, They are also regularly monitored to understand their environmental and social benefits and performance.

Case Study

Caroline, a homeowner in West Oxford has planted a magnificent Liquidambar Worplesdon in her garden.

She planted it when a mature elder in a neighbours garden was chopped down. It left a terrible gap. Caroline then decided to invest in her own tree and one that would give her and her neighbours pleasure for years to come. She bought an established tree which was about 5 years old. She thought carefully about where to plant it to protect house foundations and blocking light to neighbours houses and gardens. She discussed it with her neighbours too. She bought the tree from a reputable nursery who arranged for it to be planted by a professional and provided her with expert advice and detailed aftercare instructions. The tree has taken well and is very beautiful. Her neighbours regularly comment on how much joy they get from the tree.

Investing in an older tree can be quite expensive. However, there are benefits such as that it is more likely to survive, provides benefits more quickly. Consider clubbing together with neighbours to share the cost as you will all be sharing the benefits.



Arboricultural Industry (nurseries, tree surgeons, professional grounds maintenance etc)

- Follow best practice with regards to Ash dieback <https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Public/Ash-Dieback-%E2%80%93-Practice-Guidance>
- Make sure the right species is chosen for the location. <http://www.tdag.org.uk/species-selection-for-green-infrastructure.html>
- Adopt the Plant Health Management Standard and become Plant Healthy certified <https://planthealthy.org.uk/>
- Garden centres can help by marketing “tree kits” consisting of an appropriate species of tree and information specifically for gardens in Oxford
- Our tree surgeons, professional gardeners and landscapers and grounds maintenance companies can be our “eyes and ears” for tree health and pests and diseases. Report any disease to: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>
- Identify special or notable trees or trees that bring a particular benefit to an area. Consider if there is scope to plant an “understudy” tree in close proximity so that the notable tree is replaced before it reaches the end of its life
- Consider introducing Carbon Storage Certificates for Trees and Shrubs <https://www.treeeconomics.co.uk/projects/barchamcarbonperformanceproject/>
- Provide support to community groups or citizen science projects by offering technical expertise.

Community and Conservation Organisations

- Help to mobilise activity towards increasing canopy cover across the city but particularly in our deprived areas or in the Nature Recovery Network
- Help to convey the benefits of the urban forest to our communities to include hedgerow as well as tree planting
- Link existing activity to the objectives outlined in this strategy
- Support your communities in developing tree planting initiatives
- Help access funding for local tree planting initiatives and their ongoing maintenance
- Help to monitor progress towards our vision