

London & South East

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**Forestry Commission response to 'A City for all Londoners':
'An urban forest for all Londoners'**

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the 'City for all Londoners' document.

The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands and increasing their value to society and the environment.

A key benefit of London's Urban Forest (a collective term for all of the trees of London) is that they are multi-functional and hence deliver across a range of agendas identified in A City for All Londoners, for example:

- Improving air quality, cooling the air and capturing / storing carbon, reducing stormwater run-off - so mitigating and adapting to climate change and the urban heat island
- Contributing to the low carbon and circular economy with sustainable wood products and ecosystem services
- Providing a visually appealing treescape that complements London's architecture and creating an attractive city for people to live, work, visit and invest in
- Increasing London's resilience to trends such as climate change and population increase
- Creating an environment that encourages physical exercise, social integration and community cohesion, especially if activity is targeted where inequalities exist e.g. limited greenspace access
- Supporting 'good growth' with the creation of attractive and functional greenspace alongside sustainable development
- Complementing other agendas e.g. trees as part of the healthy streets initiative, creating well designed, attractive, cool places for walking and cycling, thus reducing vehicle use / lowering speeds

All these multifunctional benefits of the urban forest support the Mayors overall objectives for London and so should be taken forward in the policies and actions in the range of Mayoral strategies to enable their delivery.

“An Urban Forest for all Londoners”

Pleased find attached the draft document “An urban forest for all Londoners” which sets out a vision for London’s urban forest and identifies the activities needed to deliver it. It is based on a review of the London Tree & Woodland Framework (LTWF - embedded in Mayoral Policy), the ‘A vision for a resilient urban forest’ and SWOT analysis.

It has been developed with input from the London Forestry & Woodland Advisory Committee (FWAC) and the London Tree Partnership, so represents a wide range of London tree interests. The intention is that it will provide an additional level of detail that complements urban forest and green infrastructure references in strategic documents such as the London Plan, London Environment Strategy and All London Green Grid – and as such would like to see reference to it in such documents, providing a successor the LTWF.

Once this document is finalised, we foresee the development of an action plan that will prioritise activity, define specific tasks, set timescales and determine who will support delivery. This will again be done with input from the London Tree Partnership and London FWAC. We envisage different contributions from different organisations to reflect their role e.g. tree NGOs focussed on tree planting and management programmes that involve local communities; government bodies providing regulatory controls and policy direction.

FC Role and collaboration with the Greater London Authority

The FC has been working closely with the GLA for many years, focussed on the delivery of the London Tree & Woodland Framework and involving projects such as the Mayor’s tree initiatives, Community Grant Scheme, London Tree Week and London Tree & Woodland Awards.

In recent years a notable collaboration is on the London i-Tree Eco Project which resulted in world renowned and ground breaking use of volunteers. We jointly lead the London Tree Partnership to build collaboration across London on tree matters, and sincerely hope this will continue.

In terms of FC contribution to ‘An Urban Forest for all Londoners’, key areas we foresee are:

- Being a leader in strategic direction for London’s urban forest
- Preventing loss or damaging woodland activity via forestry regulations
- Leading the battle against pests and diseases that threaten tree and public health
- Offering funding streams for woodland creation and management
- Delivery of woodland programmes by Forest Enterprise, particularly leading on woodland expansion in Thames Chase
- Research development and dissemination to support urban forest activity, such as land regeneration, air quality benefit calculations and valuing urban forests
- Disseminating good practice to ensure the urban forest of the future is resilient
- Promoting the benefits of and celebrating the work - particularly by communities - to manage London’s trees

The Mayor and GLAs role

We foresee the Mayor/GLA playing an important leading/contributory role on the urban forest in the following areas:

- Embed the vision for the urban forest in the London Plan and ALGG; not only in green infrastructure policy but also related to health and wellbeing, heritage and climate change to underpin the value and importance of the Urban Forest. The vision is important in providing a long term perspective that transcends Mayoral terms and focussed on social and environmental outcomes, for example access to trees and greenspace in the most deprived parts of the city
- Providing strategic leadership and direction for Greater London – setting out and supporting strategic objectives and targets; for the urban forest this equates to supporting the vision and setting tree canopy cover targets
- Influencing other strategies and policies such as those at Borough level. This could include an update of the SPG on Preparing Borough Tree Strategies to encourage more consistent tree management policies
- Deliver and support tree based programmes such as community based projects, woodland management and tree planting
- Promoting the urban forest and benefits it provides, as well as helping facilitate cross sector collaboration such as the London tree Partnership, London Tree Week and London Tree and Woodland Awards
- Help build the data and evidence base for London's urban forest to support informed future policy and practice

Trees & Design Action Group (TDAG) comments

Please find enclosed the response from TDAG, which is based on "An Urban Forest for all Londoners". The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG) is an open collaborative forum facilitating cross-sector and cross-disciplinary dialogue and projects promoting the role of the urban forest throughout the United Kingdom.

You will see that their comments echoes ours, adding their particular expertise in design and construction.

Thank you once again for the chance to comment on "A City for all Londoners". The Forestry Commission enjoys working closely with the GLA and would be delighted to discuss this response further, including how we can work together to agree, prioritise and set timescales for the activities identified.

If you have any queries or require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Craig Harrison
Forestry Commission London Manager

An Urban Forest for All Londoners – Trees & Design Action Group (TDAG)

	To deliver the Urban Forest Vision for London we need to:	Priority H/M/L	Your organisation's contribution to the vision	GLA contribution – if so, how?	Other comments
Vision and Strategic Direction	Build understanding of and support for London's Urban Forest Vision	H	TDAG: -Trees in Hard Landscape: A guide for Delivery -Trees in Townscape: A guide for decision Makers -The canopy -No Trees, No Future Landscape Institute: -Promote vigorously as part of Green Infrastructure	Embed the vision for the urban forest in the London Plan and ALGG, not only in green infrastructure policy but also related to health and wellbeing, heritage and climate change to underpins the value and importance of the Urban Forest	Ensure Forestry Commission expertise and research continues to underpin activities
	Agree a target for future tree canopy cover and common understanding of the rationale behind it	H	Case studies and best practice exemplars	Be bold, set a target supported and promoted by the Green Infrastructure Task Force and natural capital targets in a way that reflects current research.	Encapsulate FC and Local Authority tree officers detailed knowledge and expertise to make realistic targets, and utilise i-Tree Eco London to the full as evidence Clarify the reasons for tree planting and anticipated outcomes i.e. not just numbers of trees for their own sake.
	Ensure the urban forest vision and tree canopy cover targets are embedded in future strategic London documents	H	Strong emphasis during the consultation process of the need for a proactive approach to advocating, designing and accommodating trees of stature in our urban landscape	Ensure there is greater reference to urban forestry in GLA documents, in particular TfL publications such as Slow Streets and Healthy Streets , and SuDS	
Governance	Embed urban forest vision and targets in wider agendas including development, transport and health	H	Advocate and deliver through practice and research	Support the London Tree Partnership, help to effect the idea of a city partnership between London and Lyon	City of Lyon have over the last 20 years run an in-house laboratory specifically to research urban forestry practice to inform the rolling out of their Tree Charter and SuDS strategy
	Work with public, private and non-government urban forest organisations to (i) embed support for and coherence in the vision (ii) identify what	H	Foster relationships with other key individuals and organisations in cities that have experience of rolling out a vision for urban forestry, in particular Lyon,	GLA increased support for the London Tree Partnership, with a higher profile perhaps underpinned by hosting the 21st European Forum on Urban Forestry 2018 in London (2017 in Barcelona) as a focus	Publish and monitor industry partners in TDAG / Landscape Institute including CIRIA, Landscape Institute, ICE etc in loose leaf format such as the FC case studies, that can be continually updated

	organisations can offer and how they contribute to the collective vision		Stockholm and	of world wide expertise	
Policy	Ensure the urban forest vision is embedded in GI policy documents and wider agendas such as health, transport and development	H	Advocate for a tree charter or Tree strategy Policy as a specific policy driven aspect of Green Infrastructure policy and also develop a Greater London Urban Forest Strategy building on the survey information from the Greater London i-Tree survey. This would provide the overview that boroughs need for individual tree management strategies that should then be embedded in their planning policies.	Embed in the Infrastructure Task Force vocabulary via the Green Infrastructure Task Force to	Encourage the Landscape Institute to publish a position paper on Urban Forestry (as with position statement on Public Health and Landscape) and use this to lobby GLA and government and influence the industry
	Ensure there are Tree & Woodland strategies in place across London, that recognise both public and private tree ownership	H	Contribute to consultation and best practice from industry point of view, with knowledge of developer and local community priorities and aspiration	GLA to create a fund (as for GI strategy) to specifically for Local Authorities to apply to enabling the production / update of Borough Tree & Woodland strategies	Engage LTOA, local communities / citizen science / volunteers in accurate collection of data as for iTree eco London to ensure detailed information collected private as well as public, such as the Ealing Tree Strategy
	Create pan London policies that (i) protect the current urban forest resource from inappropriate loss/damage (ii) apply a consistent approach to compensatory tree planting where loss is unavoidable		Promote Tree Strategy SPG through the industry and put policy to practice , especially through TfL related work on healthy streets, cycling infrastructure and Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategies	GLA to create a new funding model for planting and management / maintenance to promote a long-term vision	Promote planned and coordinated action related to tree resource as a whole in an integrated manner
Evidence	Collate evidence so it is easily accessible and understandable		Evidence dissemination through FWAC and TDAG alliances, private practice and design advisory panels	More effective use of i-Tree Eco London data sets for engaging the London community in the vision funded by GLA	Through evocative mapping and exhibiting of data sets to date not fully utilised (Exhibition for instance in City Hall, in NLA Store Street etc)
	Enhance the evidence base with London specific information and urban forest information within a wider GI context		Trans-disciplinary approach through activities of TDAG and guidance	GLA to promote Tree rights, tree specie diversity, character, capacity and priority for London to nurture and prioritise the quality of human and bio-diverse life in London	The updating of the ALGG need to bring forward a specific urban forestry objective

	Advocate the benefits of trees using language that is easily understandable and context relevant (including non-professional and other agendas)		Promote exhibition of i-Tree Eco London mapping to a wider audience in Tree Week	GLA to host and support in City Hall / NLA Store Street etc in addition to and alongside London Tree Week / RE:LEAF, with evident mayoral presence at the awards , for instance as related PR	Local enthusiasm for trees has great value in relation to quality of life in the city, tree and woodland networks have infectious enthusiasm, and the awards are critical to keep this alive
Increasing and improving woodland management	Promote why active, sustainable woodland management increases the benefits that woodlands deliver		Liaise with interested groups for funding such as Grown in Britain, Stobbarts etc.		
	Increase the capacity and skills to manage woodlands				
	Empower communities to become more engaged in local woodland management				
	Empower communities to be more involved in managing local trees, to help build community cohesion and engender a sense of ownership/responsibility for their local environment		Through community engagement and supporting the work of social enterprise, such as Dalston Eastern Curve, Bethnal Green Nature Reserve	Instigate a grant award for Urban Forestry management in London which can be accessed through social enterprise and community groups	Instigate a special prize for young people advocating for trees in their neighbourhoods. To help engender long-term stewardship
Developing a wood culture and involving communities	Increase day to day contact with nature – more trees and woodland near people and improved access / recreation opportunities		Through practice and social enterprise initiatives such as Landscape Learn that target like minded networks	GLA to draw out deprivation in access to woodlands in collaboration with GiGI and i-Tree Eco London to highlight deficiencies and map in a dynamic way that indicates what will happen in the future if we do not act to secure and enhance the resource into the future	Instigate a central London Urban Forestry HQ field centre to focus education and practice dissemination. Delivery point to be used by wide range of organisations to provide CPD rated green infrastructure sessions. This will help to collate London knowledge.
	Connect people with nature, by increasing the utilisation of woodland produce, especially local materials		Explore supply chains through local community engagement related to practice	Create greater website presence for the Urban Forestry network	
	Support and celebrate London's urban forest and community		Support the awards through exposing commercial clients to the		

	engagement through events such as London Tree Week and London Tree & Woodland Awards		London Tree Partnership and related benefits		
Resources	Develop recognition of the urban forest as an asset and important component of natural capital. Secure the value of existing funding streams by demonstrating the long term cost benefits			GLA to establish a fund for capital and revenue that is balanced appropriately and smartly not for numbers but based on the reality of stewardship for the long-term	
	Attract investment from other sectors in recognition of the multiple benefits the urban forest provides e.g. health, transport			See conference idea above for engaging in with multiple sectors	
	Develop new and innovative funding mechanisms, such as the use of green space factors and the carbon economy		Inspire developers to take part as they are delivering and taking responsibility for more and more of the public realm	GLA to create an award system for development, that give a credit rating according to Urban Forestry and other GI factors	
	Develop funding for the that is closely related to development and growth activity, in recognition that the urban forest helps deliver good growth		See above		
Good Practice	Provide an easily accessible library of existing good practice, appropriate to both professionals and community groups / the public		See above		
	Review, refine and produce new good practice				
	Right tree in the right place – encouraging a diverse treescape with large canopy trees that can fulfil their long term potential				