

# [Detailed guide: Urban forestry](#)

Find out how to protect and manage trees and woodlands in urban areas from information provided by both Forestry Commission and urban forestry partners.

The Forestry Commission works in partnership with national and local urban forestry partners. Our partners lead the management of trees and woodlands within urban and peri-urban areas across England. The Forestry Commission's work demonstrates how protecting, expanding and improving woodland can help deliver the Government's priorities in urban areas.

## **Understand what the urban forest is**

The urban forest is made up of all trees in towns and cities including:

- along linear transport routes and waterways – eg canals and rivers
- in amenity areas
- in urban woodlands
- in parks and informal open spaces
- along streets
- in domestic gardens
- on institutional land

### [urban forest](#)

(PDF, 486KB, 2 pages)

is a big element of urban green infrastructure and contributes to all the wider benefits provided by these varied land use types.

## **Understand what benefits the urban forest brings to our towns and cities**

The urban forest brings many benefits to our towns and cities. The Urban Forest and Woodland Advisory Committee Network (UFWACN) advises the Forestry Commission on urban forestry. Find out more about the work of the Urban FWAC Network. Their

### [Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee \(FWAC\) vision for urban forestry](#)

(PDF, 2.9MB, 26 pages)

sets out how a resilient urban forest can deliver these benefits:

- strategic planning and infrastructure
- climate change
- natural environment
- human health and quality of life
- planning and development
- economy and growth

- value and resources
- risks and resilience

Look at

[The case for trees](#)

(PDF, 1.97MB, 28 pages)

to see great pictures of how trees improve our urban areas and to understand the benefits and evidence for the positive role that trees play as part of green infrastructure.

You can maximise the benefits of the urban forest by considering 3 principles set out in the Urban FWAC vision:

- do you know the scale and value of your urban forest?
- how well do you support the care of your existing urban forest?
- do you have a target to increase canopy cover in your town or city?

You also need to ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place.

The Trees and Design Action Group have set out [12 principles](#) to help decision makers incorporate trees in the urban area.

## **Understand the scale and value of the urban forest**

To understand how you can value the urban forest, read

[Urban Forestry and Woodlands Advisory Committee \(FWAC\) – introduction to England’s urban forests](#)

(PDF, 5.76MB, 15 pages)

. The Urban FWAC Network has also published a

[guide to using tree canopy cover data](#)

(PDF, 922KB, 6 pages)

as an indicator of the extent, and to secure the benefits of the urban forest, using [i-Tree Canopy](#). It demonstrates [the variability in tree canopy cover across England’s towns and cities](#).

To more fully assess the value of the urban forest in your area, you can support or participate with i-Tree Eco surveys. In the UK this started with [Torbay](#) in 2011 and is still happening, the most current survey being in [Bristol](#). Forestry Commission led the development of iTree London, which estimated that the city’s 8.4 million trees provide more than £133 million worth of benefits annually. i-Tree Eco assesses the value of certain ecosystem services delivered by trees. Read their final report,

[Valuing London’s urban forest](#)

(PDF, 5.59MB, 84 pages)

[Find out where iTree Eco surveys have happened.](#)

Find out more on iTree Eco direct from [i-Tree](#), from [Forest Research](#), or the social enterprise [Treeconomics](#).

You can use [Treezilla](#) to help generate a 'monster map' of urban trees.

For London, you can access data on the status of woodland management with [Making London's woodlands work: summary](#).

(PDF, 3.59MB, 4 pages)

It outlines the proportion of London's woodlands in sustainable management and opportunities / barriers to management. Read the [full report](#).

(PDF, 5.94MB, 56 pages)

## Ensure resilience of the urban forest

Data on the urban forest individual towns and cities enables effective management of the urban forest in those locations. This data can be the basis of a Tree and Woodland Strategy, which can outline objectives, management and monitoring approaches for a local authority area. Find out [how to develop a Tree and Woodland Strategy](#) (based on work in London).

The [Right Trees for a Changing Climate](#) database helps you decide what trees are suitable to plant in urban areas in face of a changing climate. TDAG have set out [species selection for green infrastructure](#).

Large trees bring particular value to the urban environment. The Forestry Commission assisted [the Construction Industry Research and Information Association](#) (CIRIA) and partners to produce [The benefits of large species trees in urban landscapes: a costing, design and management guide](#), which you can buy. It highlights how to integrate large species trees into new and existing developments.

[Tree Preservation Orders](#) help to protect the urban forest, as a key part of green infrastructure. They are issued by local authorities.

Further guidelines, produced in London, can help in managing the urban forest:

- [woodland management](#)  
(PDF, 2.41MB, 12 pages)
- [woodland management for bats](#)  
(PDF, 2.67MB, 24 pages)
- [woodfuel](#)  
(PDF, 2.63MB, 28 pages)

- [social dynamics of trees](#)  
(PDF, 3.26MB, 24 pages)

## Manage the risks, including tree health, in the urban forest

Find out about [tree pests and diseases](#) and make sure your [biosecurity measures](#) are appropriate.

The [National Tree Safety Group \(NTSG\)](#) brings together organisations with expertise in tree risk management who offer [free guidance for you to download](#).

The [Joint Mitigation Protocol](#) (JMP) sets out best practice in investigating building damage where trees are implicated as being the cause of building movement. Find out more from the [London Tree Officers Association](#).

## Support people to enjoy and care for their local urban forest

These partners work in different locations across England to engage local communities with their urban trees and woodlands:

- [England's Community Forests](#) – the economic impact of community forests has been measured in a number of localities, including for the [Mersey Forest](#) and the [Forest of Marston Vale](#).
- [The Woodland Trust](#)
- [Tree Council](#)
- [Trees for Cities](#)

The [Northern Forest](#) will include tree planting in urban areas.

## Evidence to help you manage the urban forest

Forest Research is the research agency of the Forestry Commission. They develop evidence on the benefits and value of [urban forestry](#), eg:

- planning green networks for urban communities
- exploring urban health inequalities
- identifying the social and economic value of street trees