Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Forestry Commission

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Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund Conference

Wednesday 3rd July, 2024

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Inspiring Tree Planting Delivery

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Delivering Forest Resilience

Case study from London's urban forest

Rich Cobb
Local Partnership Advisor for Southeast and London

July 2024

Defining resilience in urban forests

Left:
Veteran oak in Dulwich Park.
© London Wildlife Trust

Left:
Hornbeams and oaks at Bentley Priory.
© London Wildlife Trust

'the overall capacity to recover from anthropogenic and natural disturbances'

Forest Research, 2024

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Threats from climate change

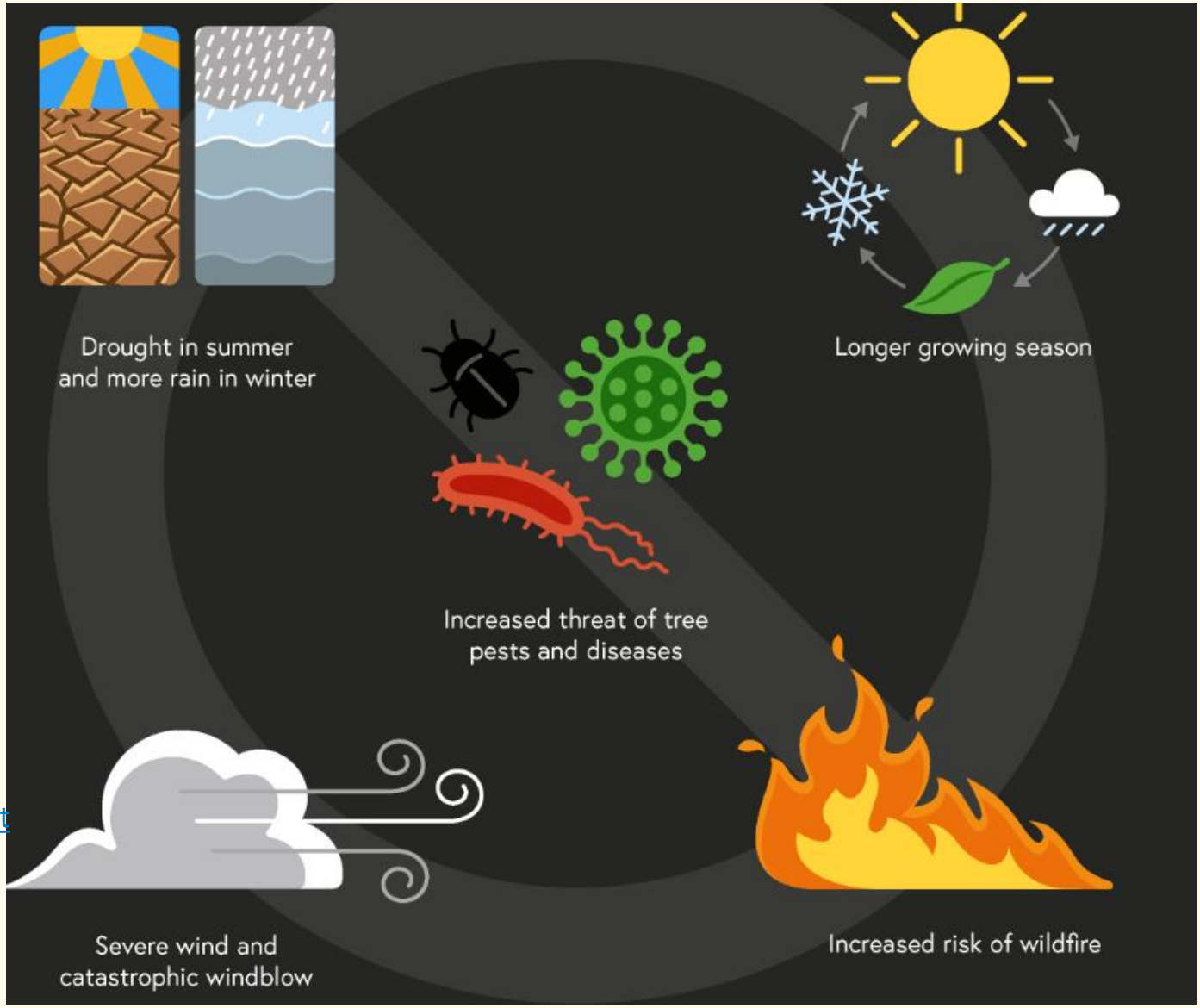

Image from: [The facts: Climate change and resilient woodlands – Forestry Commission (blog.gov.uk)]

Trees improve resilience to climate change

Impact of climate change	Solution provided by trees
Increased energy demand for cooling	Shade
More flooding	Interception
Impacts of heat on health	Evapotranspiration
Water shortages	Cooling
Infrastructure disruption	Habitat, connectivity
Biodiversity loss	Water cycle regulation

Threats from pests and diseases

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London’s urban forest

21%

of London lies under the canopy of trees

Source: Curio canopy cover analysis
https://maps.london.gov.uk/canopy-cover/

Left:
Great North Wood view north from Norwood Park.
© London Wildlife Trust

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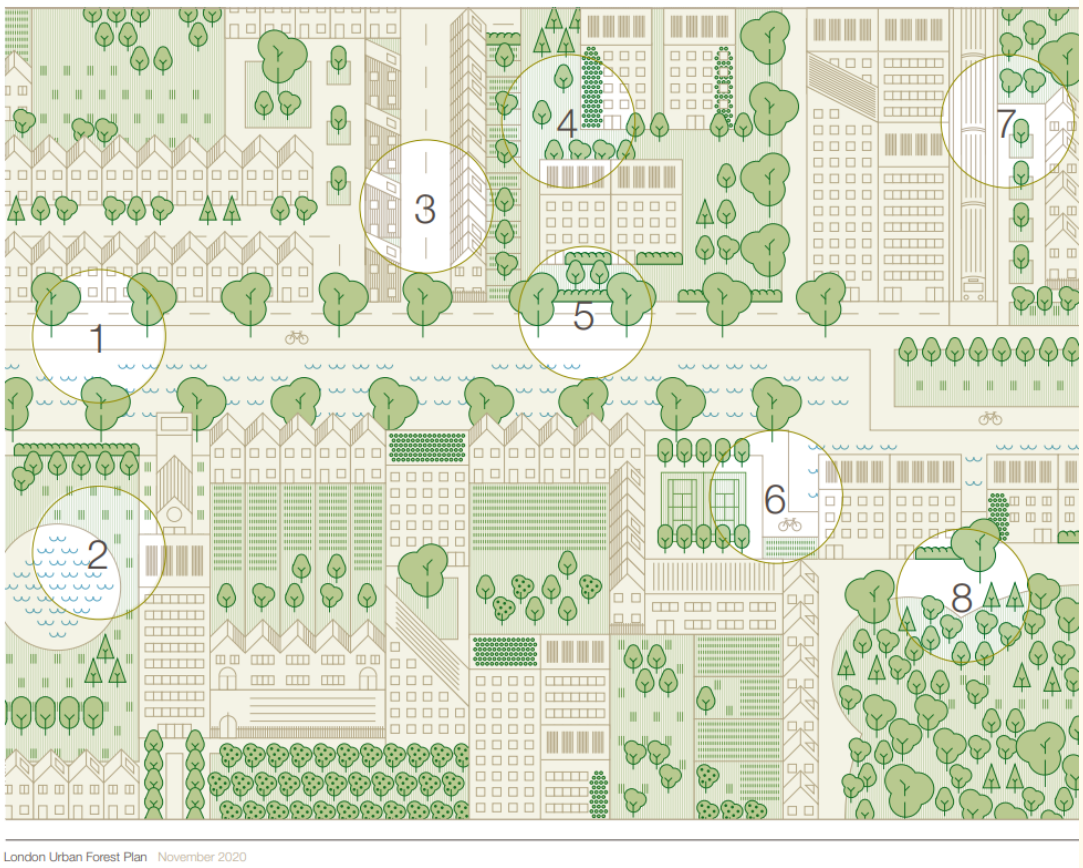
Over 8 million trees across diverse settings

1. Along transport routes and waterways
2. Parks, nature reserves, informal green spaces
3. Street trees
4. Private gardens
5. Hedges
6. Urban green spaces – housing estates, schools, hospitals
7. Urban woodlands including ancient
8. Green belt



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London Urban Forest Plan

Combined vision and roadmap for managing London's Urban Forest (2020)

Convened by GLA and FC, and co-created and being delivered by Partnership Members

Protecting and managing

Left:
Parkland trees in King George's Field, Southwark.
© The Tree Council

Growing and expanding

Left:
Community planting day at Pepys Park.
© Nathalie Weatherald

Promoting and supporting

Timber from Kings Wood management.
© Forestry Commission

Project: Supporting delivery of Goal 1 for resilience

1a: Assess the **threats** of **pests** and **diseases** and **climate change** to London's urban forest.

1b: Develop a set of principles for managing London's urban forest to increase resilience and to combat the threats from pests and diseases, and climate change.

Steering Group

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Treeconomics

LTOA
London Tree Officers Association

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

Outputs

- Baseline for climate change and P&D for London
- 10 Principles to guide future management
- Best practice guidance
- Recommended actions informed by stakeholder engagement, expert input and research review
- Clear signposting to existing resources to help

The Project – Part 1

Assess **high priority P&D** using UK Plant Health Risk Register

Use London tree species data to identify **most prominent species** and P&D most likely to cause an impact

Assess London tree species against **climate change projections**

Literature review to bring together best practice and resources available

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The Project – Part 2

Stakeholder engagement to inform a set of principles and recommended actions

3 Borough Case Studies to highlight how findings from the report can be used to inform priority resilience measures

Engage with stakeholders, experts and practitioners to refine and test the principles and actions against **real experience and peer review**

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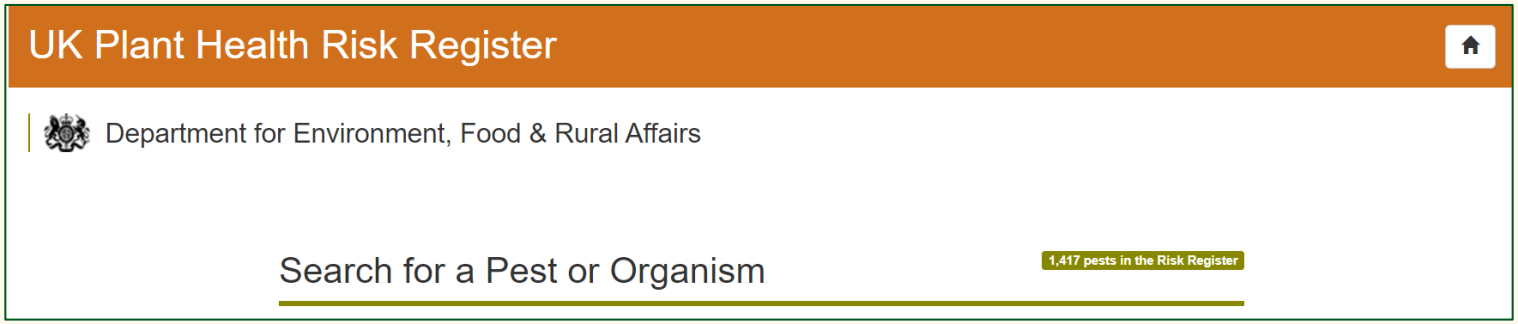
UK Plant Health Risk Register assessed high priority P&D for UK



- **289** pest and diseases examined affecting tree hosts
- **37** of these considered high priority are already in UK
- **51** not known to be in UK but considered high priority (reduces to **7 with mitigation**)

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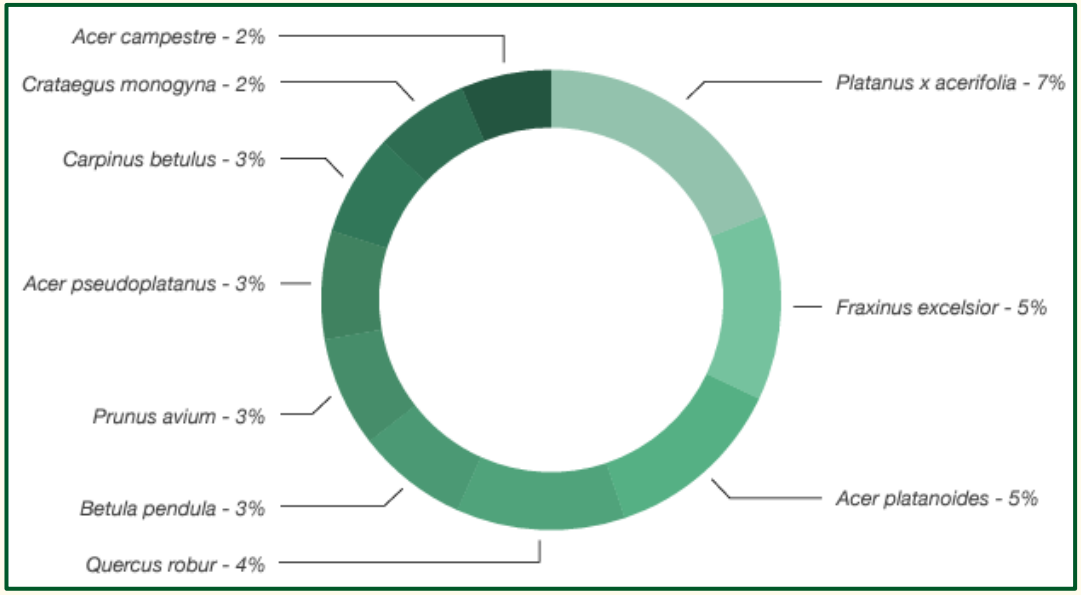
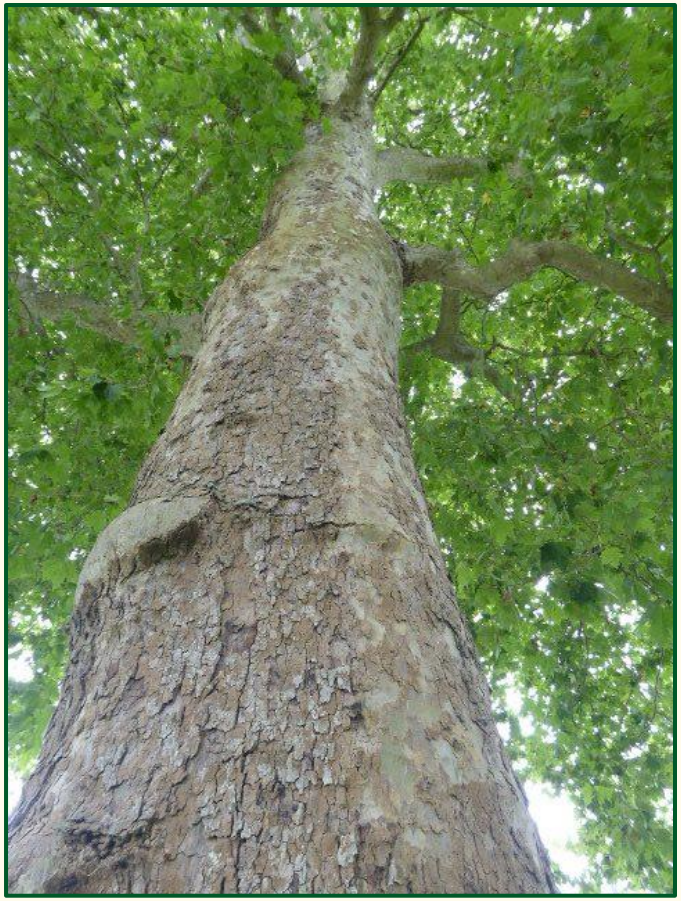
London’s tree species identified





Top 10 species identified represent 35% of all 8 million+ trees (Sourced from London Datastore)

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Top 10 species assessed against P&D data to identify risk rating (unmitigated and mitigated)

Species	% of Total Population	Medium - High Priority Pests affecting species	Present in the UK	Present in London	Unmitigated Risk Rating (1-125)	Mitigated Risk Rating (1-125)
Platanus x acerifolia	7%	Canker stain of plane (*Ceratocystis platani*)	No	No	80	40
		Xylotrechus (Turanoclytus) namanganensis	No	No	40	40
		Massari Disease (*Splanchnonema platani*)	Yes (limited)		48	24
		Aeolesthes sarta	No	No	45	45
		Plane lace bug (*Corythucha ciliata*)	No	No	48	48
		Euzophera semifuneralis	No	No	36	36

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Top 10 species assessed against climate change projections from multiple sources

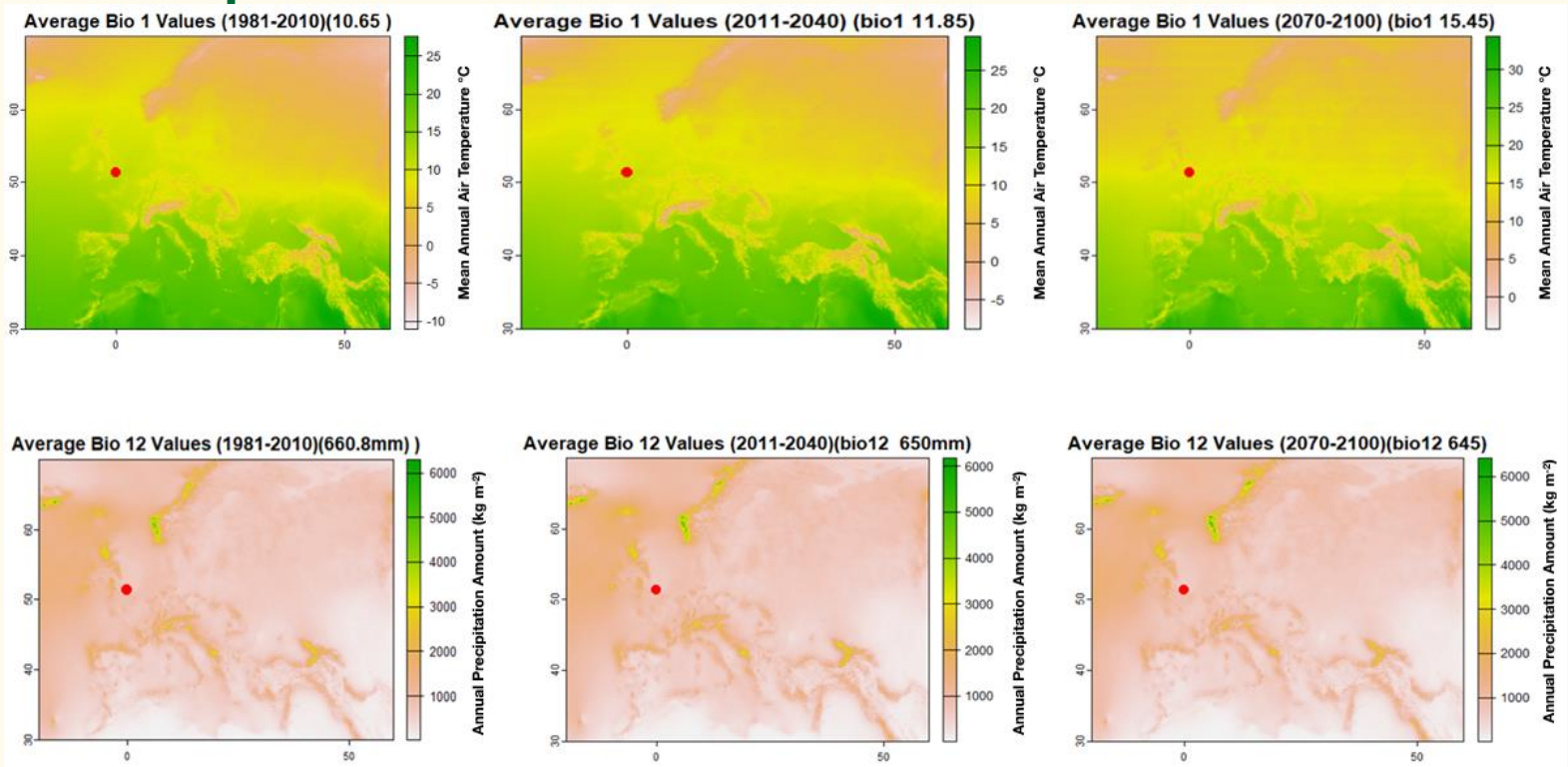

Figure 3. Maps of Europe Showing Mean Annual Air Temperature (°C)(Bio 1 Scenario) and Annual Precipitation Amount (Kg/M2) From 1981 to 2100 (Bio 12 Scenario). Source: CHELSA, 2024

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Drought, flood and wind tolerance considered

Taxon Name	Drought Tolerance	Flood Tolerance	Wind Tolerance
Platanus x acerifolia	Medium - High	Medium	High
Fraxinus excelsior	No data	No data	No data
Acer platanoides	Medium	Low	Medium
Quercus robur	Low - Medium	Low	High
Betula pendula	Low	Medium	Medium - High
Prunus avium	Low	Low	Medium
Acer pseudoplatanus	Low	Medium	High
Carpinus betulus	Medium	Low	Medium
Crataegus monogyna	High	Low	High
Acer campestre	High	Low	High

Table 4: London's Top 10 Tree Species and Their Potential Tolerance to Key Climate Change Threats. Source: Sjöman & Anderson, 2023
Sources: Urban Plants (UP); Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF BGCI); Model (M)

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Aggregated risk for top 10 species

Combined risk rating	Species
High	Ash, Oak
Medium	London Plane, Norway Maple, Silver Birch, Sycamore
Low	Wild cherry, Hornbeam, Field Maple, Hawthorn

Helped to highlight priorities for monitoring and proactive management

Stakeholder engagement

Facilitated workshops and detailed discussions to:

- Establish existing threats, barriers and solutions from those working with trees and woodland in London
- Peer review research report from UK experts
- Create a set of principles and best practice informed by stakeholders
- Included practitioners, tree officers, contractors, researchers, technical experts, policy makers and Government bodies.

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Stakeholder key themes

- Confusion around inconsistent and widely distributed guidance for effective urban forest management

- Importance of resilient tree selection for current and predicted conditions (local wherever possible)

- Challenges with funding mechanisms available to support resilience measures and importance of integrating with different teams

- Huge value that community engagement and citizen science can provide to improve successful planting and management

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Principles

- Think long term
- Monitor impacts London-wide and locally
- Integrate strategies and plans to align actions (eg LNRS, local plans)
- Prioritise tree health
- Expand and enhance tree canopy over

Principles

- Plant species based on resilience criteria
- Maximise funding opportunities
- Adopt strong biosecurity throughout
- Report rapidly to prevent spread
- Embrace the power of local communities

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Actions to improve resilience and make the most of your trees

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Establish your baseline

Assess your existing tree stock and collect data in **consistent** way *'can't manage what you don't measure'*

- Species, age, classes and condition

Establish the current and predicted **local climate**

Establish your existing and **potential P&D** of most risk for the trees you have

Establish your **business case** for trees and their value to open-up funding and support from other departments eg sustainability, highways, planning

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Expanding and enhancing tree cover fit for the future

Select species to increase diversity across County

Develop an agreed list of resilient species based on local expertise, inspections, projections

Think ***quality***, not just *quantity*…get right tree right place, good establishment, learn from experience and repeat

Share your ambitions with other teams, partners and communities – they can help deliver

Specify robust biosecurity measures throughout procurement (e.g. Plant Healthy certification)

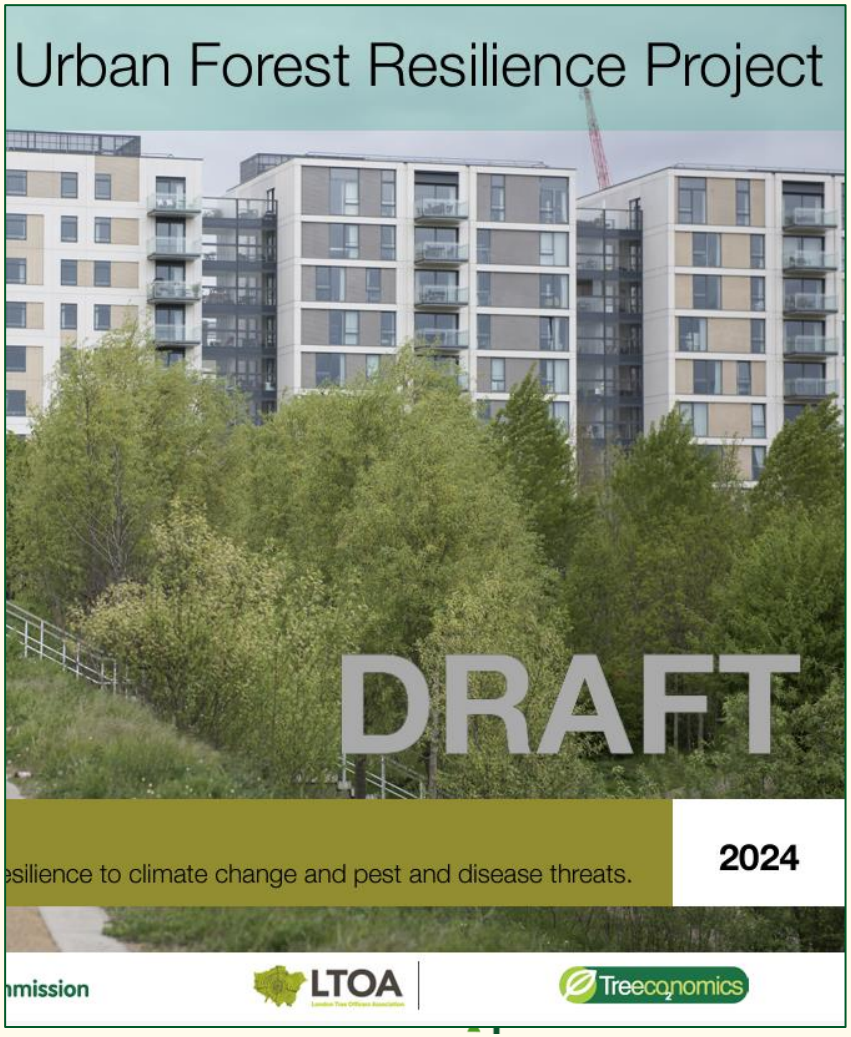
Adopt robust monitoring and reporting

Make the most of existing resources

Use the London report

- It has done much of the research for you to give you confidence in the solutions
- Use the UK-wide findings for climate and P&D as a starting point
- A model to follow to adapt for your region
- See case studies to follow at Borough level
- Signposting existing resources and guidance

[London Urban Forest Resource Hub | London City Hall]



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Land Acquisition for Woodland Creation

WCAF Conference 3rd July 2024

Will Tyson

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Overview

Site Search

Acquisition Process

Delivery

Case Study

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Overview

Woodland creation programme to create 2000 hectares of new woodland by 2027

- Resilient
- Publicly accessible

- Leasehold Scheme
  - Looking for sites over 20 ha
  - Open to private and public landowners
  - 60 – 120-year term
- Freehold Acquisitions
  - Ideally sites of 50 ha plus
  - Focus on sites with strategic value

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Overview

Site Search

Acquisition Process

Delivery

Case Study

Site Search

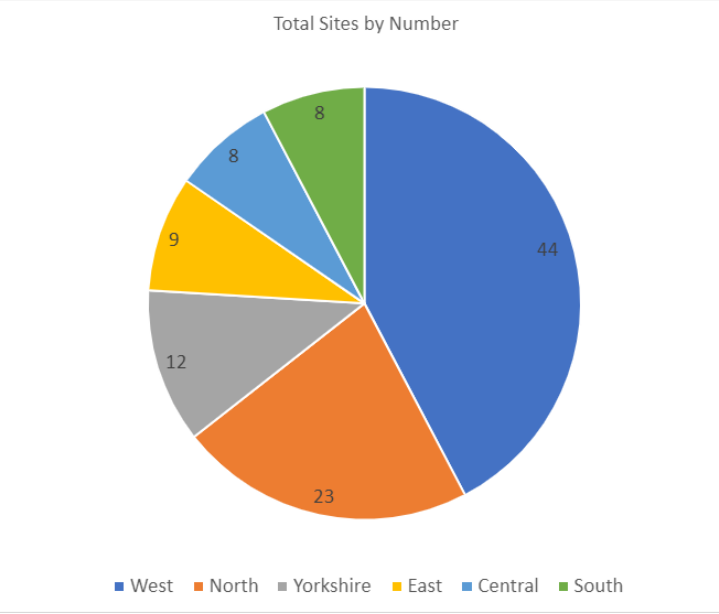
Leasehold

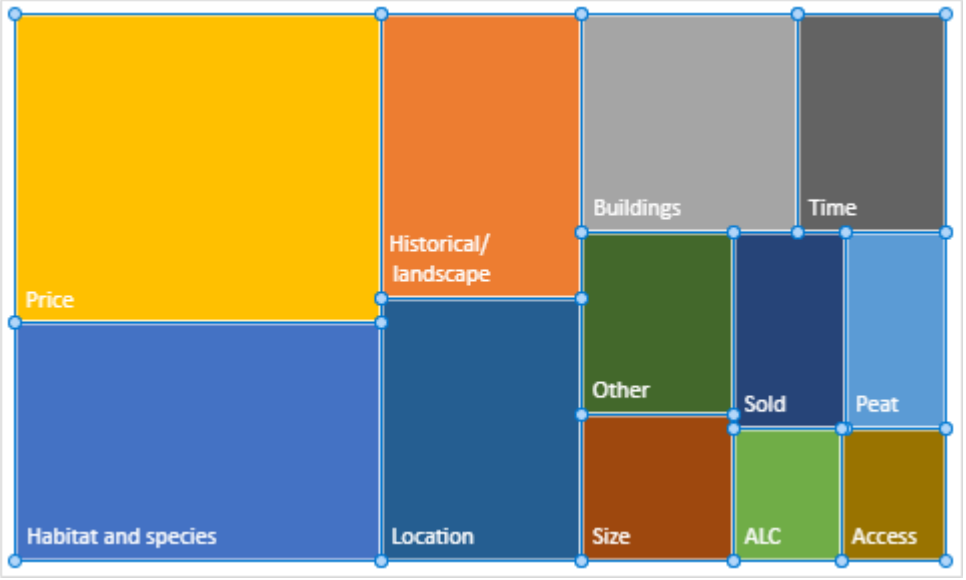
- Call for sites
- Target landowners with particular interest in woodland creation
- Build on contacts through Forest Services (One Team approach)
- Advantages of partnership working (partner buys site and FE lease)
- Limited by number and location of sites which come forward

Site Search

Freehold

- Search of farmland market
- Register interest with national agents
- Use local contacts
- Off market opportunities
- Greater ability to select suitable sites through early sift





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Acquisition Criteria

- Anywhere in England
- Minimum size of 50 ha
- Target average land value of £20,000 per ha
- Target plantable area of at least 70%
- ALC grades 3, 4 and 5
- Sites which are ‘low sensitivity to woodland creation’ on FC map browser
- Bare land
- Suitable access to public highway
- Close proximity to agreed timber transport routes
- No onerous restrictive covenants etc.

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Overview

Site Search

Acquisition Process

Delivery

Case Study

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Site Screening

- Sites screened against various categories:
  - Existing habitats
  - Agricultural land classification
  - Landscape sensitivity
  - Heritage and archaeology
  - Affordability
  - Practicalities (species suitability etc.)




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Site Screening

- Timeframes:
  - 6 weeks between site identification and making an offer for freehold
    - Desktop screening
    - Site visits
    - Essential surveys and consultation with essential stakeholders
    - Valuation
  - Longer process for leasehold
    - More detailed site appraisal while heads of terms agreed
    - Agreement to lease signed to allow surveys to be undertaken
    - Lease takes effect on confirmation of EIA screening approval

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Overview

Site Search

Acquisition Process

Delivery

Case Study

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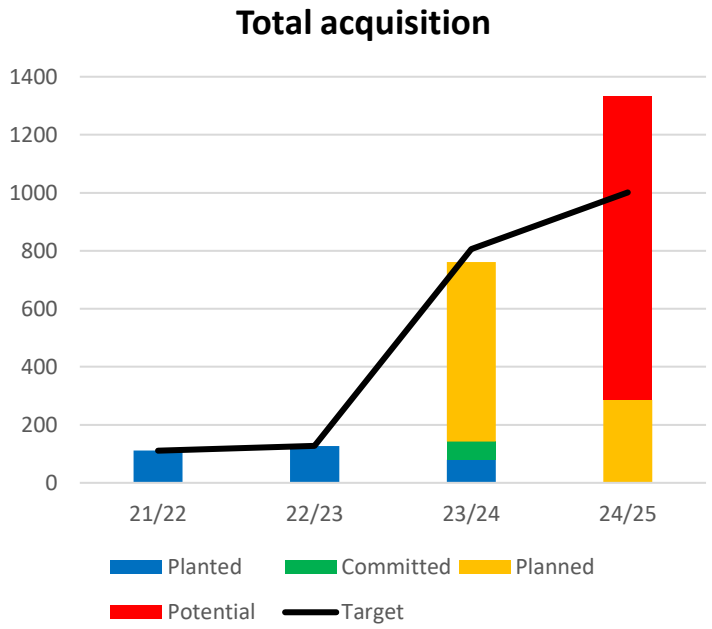
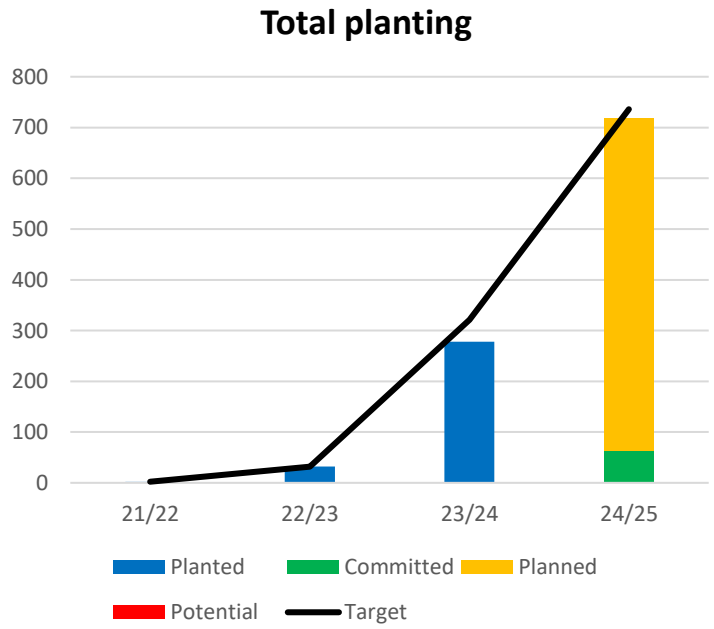
Overall Performance





- Potential – speculative
- Planned – offer accepted on purchase/ lease heads of terms agreed
- Committed – legally acquired and permission to plant obtained
- Planted – planting complete

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Overview

Site Search

Acquisition Process

Delivery

Case Study

York Community Woodland

- Site located on the edge of the city of York
- A 78ha site
- 120-year lease

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Objectives

Carbon capture, as part of a wider commitment to reach net zero carbon by 2030.

Plant 210,000 trees - 1 for every resident in York

Increase biodiversity, wildlife habitats and protect endangered species

Increase access to green space and improve the health and wellbeing of residents

Enhance York's active travel network, including new walking and cycling routes

Opportunities for new green jobs, green skills development and volunteering

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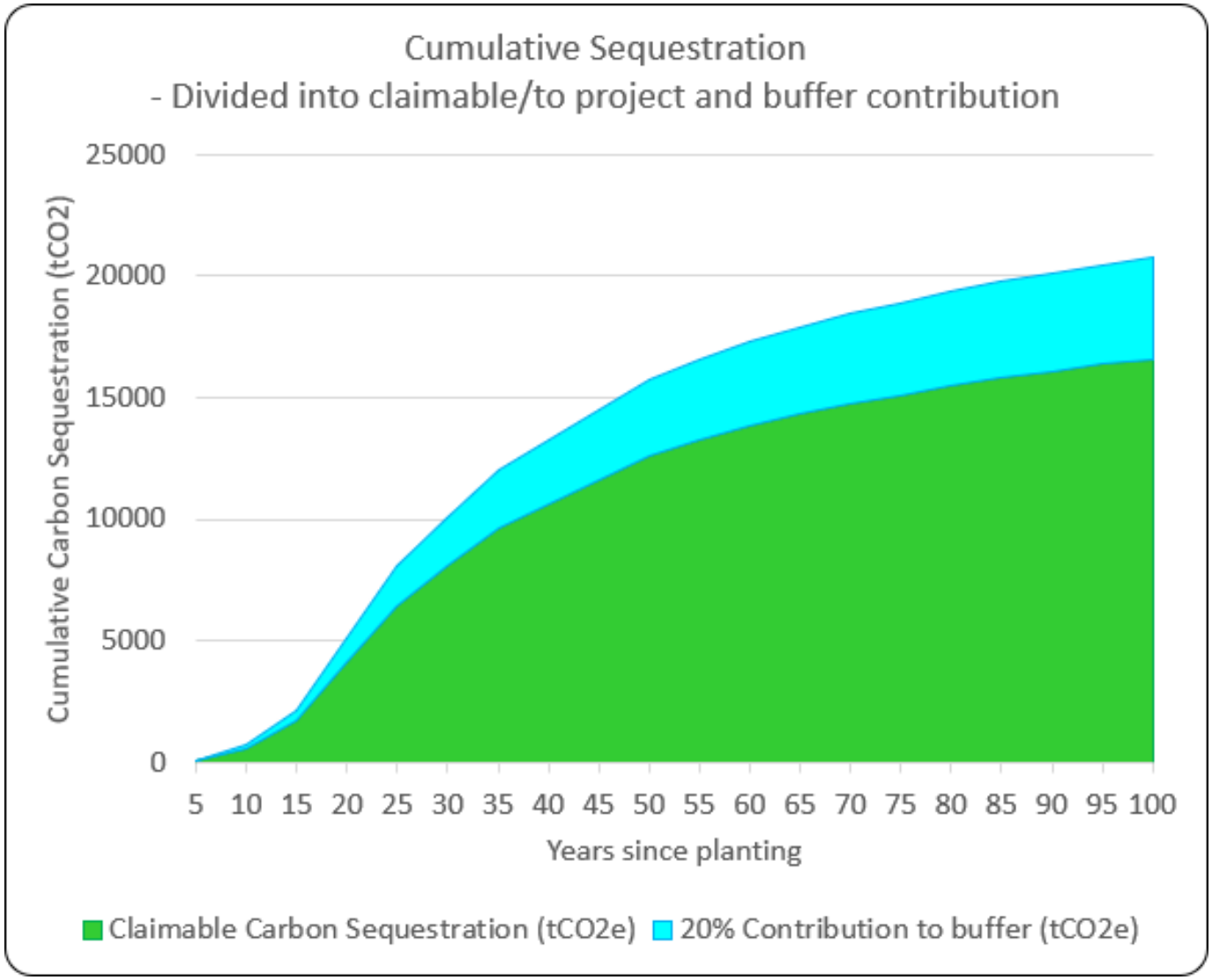
Carbon Capture

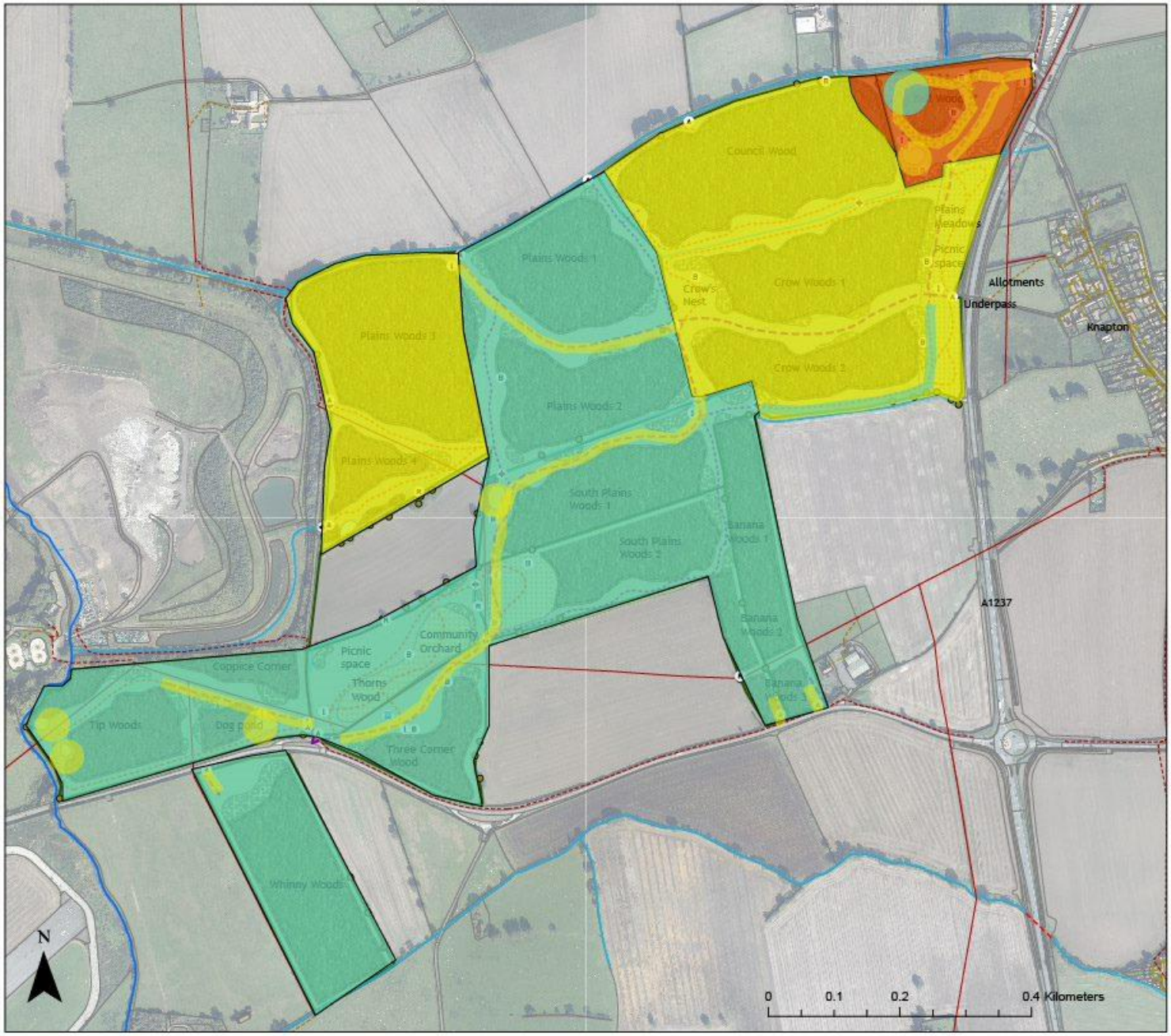


Key

Phase 1 (2021/22)
Winter 2021/22 3,000 trees planted
Queen's Green Canopy tree collection planted

Phase 2 (2022/23)
Spring '22, subsoil and establish grass sward
End Summer '22 light scarification completed
Winter 2022/23, 50,000 trees planted
Primary access roads, operational access points, QGC easy access path and ponds constructed
Deer and rabbit fencing installed

Phase 3 (2023/24)
Spring '23, subsoil and establish grass sward
End Summer '23 light scarification completed
Winter 2023/24 remaining trees planted
Spring '24 Trail and recreation infrastructure constructed
Deer and rabbit fencing installed
Forest school location established



York Community Woodland
Phasing Plan
Revision B
15.02.2022

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Forestry England

York Community Woodland

Sustainable Travel Plan

Walking
Walking from York city centre will take about 1hr 15 mins and passes through Holgate, Acomb and Knapton.

Cycling
2 off-road shared use tracks (A59 and Knapton underpass) 18–30mins from the city centre.

E-bikes & E-scooters
Both can be hired from Cycle Heaven in York – a 20–30min ride from the woodland. There are docks on Boroughbridge Rd (10min walk from the woodland), and plenty in the city centre.

Train
Poppleton station (15mins walk).

Bus
59 Bus Route (Park and Ride) – 10 mins walk from park & ride.
412 Bus Route into Knapton (twice a day) Both 10mins walk.

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York Community Woodland

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Introduction to afternoon breakout sessions

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Collaboration and Support

Plan

- Achievement, Issues and Blocker individual activity
- Lunch
- Breakout rooms – discussion

Lunch Tasks

1. **Eat**
2. **Collect post-its from main room**
3. **Go to the right room – see badge**

Pre-Lunch Task – 10 minutes

Top 5 Achievements

What have you achieved as an individual or organisation:
- Planted X amount hectares
- New stakeholder

Issues

What support do you need?
- Site identification training
- Best practice for….

Blockers

An obstacle that prevents woodland creation:
- Environment factors
- Economic constraints
- Regulatory issues

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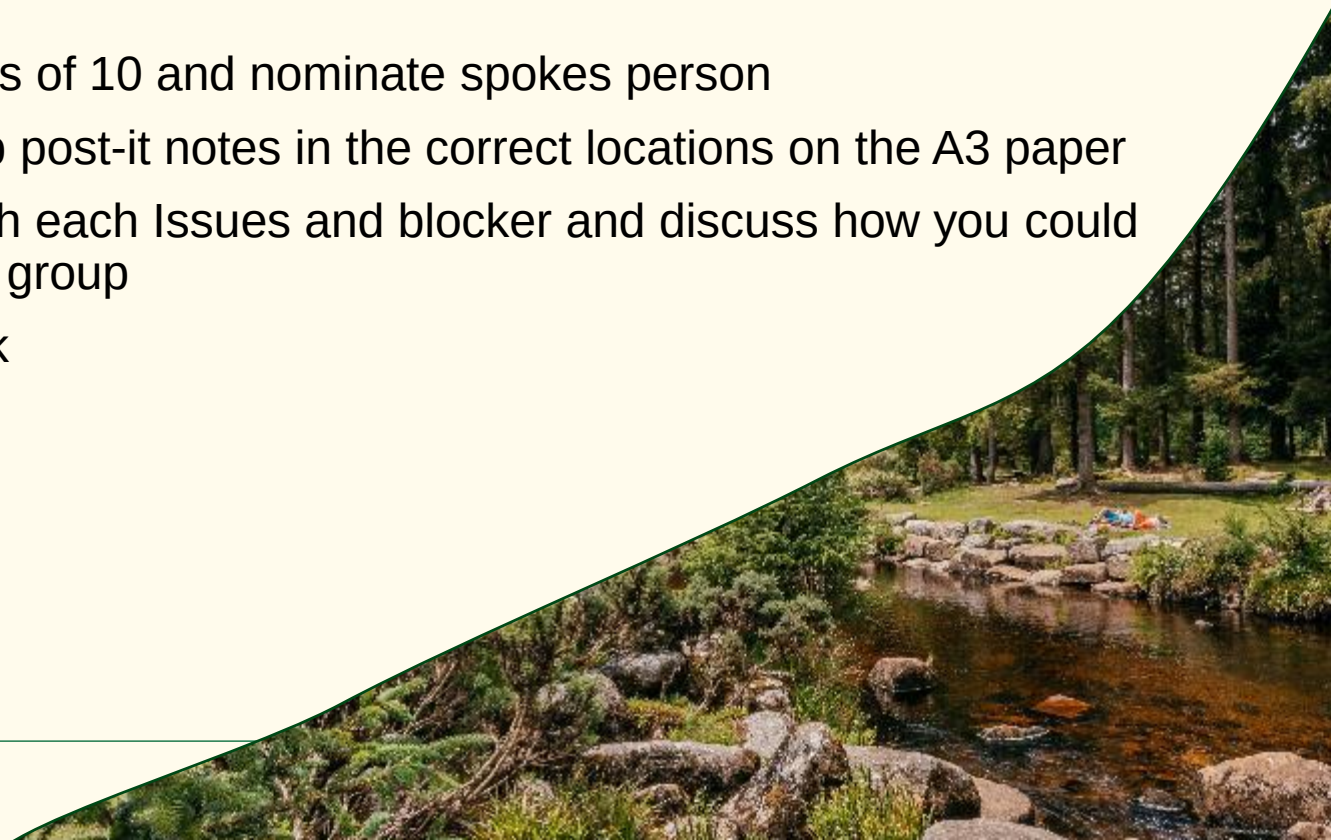
Breakout Room Objectives

- Identify barriers to woodland creation.
- Identify solutions for woodland creation from other local authorities.
- Develop networking within geographical areas.

Breakout Room Tasks

- Task 1 – Form groups of 10 and nominate spokes person
- Task 2 – Place/group post-it notes in the correct locations on the A3 paper
- Task 3 – Work though each Issues and blocker and discuss how you could overcome them as a group
- Task 4 – Report back




Example
Example
Achievements
Example
Example
Example
Example
Issues
Example
Example
Solution - Name, how, type of issue
Example
Example
Blockers
Example
Example
Solution - Name, how, type of issue

Commission

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Summary

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Thank you for attending the 2024 Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund Conference