

Developing a Partnership Street Tree Strategy for Sheffield



Sheffield &
Rotherham

CONFIRMED NOTE AND ACTIONS

Meeting 1: Tuesday 20th August 2019

Attending

Chair: Liz Ballard, Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust (LB)

Joe Coles, Woodland Trust (JC)

Glen Gorner, Leeds City Council (GG)

Christine King, Co-Chair of Street Tree Action Groups (CK)

Deepa Shetty, Street Tree Action Groups (DS)

Alison Holt, Natural Capital Solutions (also Trustee SRWT) (AH)

Brian Stocks, Amey (BS)

Darren Butt, Amey (DB)

Karen Ramsey, Sheffield City Council (KR)

Mick Croft, Sheffield City Council (MC)

Apologies: Paul Selby, Street Tree Action Group (PS)

Welcome & Introductions

LB thanked everyone for coming and everyone introduced themselves and the organisations they represented. LB noted that the agenda had been circulated some time in advance and no comments had been received so it was assumed that everyone was happy with the agenda.

Scope of Work

LB, referred to Agenda Item 2 Scope of the Project. This had been circulated previously for information. This has been agreed with STAG, SCC and SRWT through open discussion and was not open for further amendments. This paper sets out the tasks in hand for this group. LB highlighted that the work of the group was to develop an *Exemplary Partnership Sheffield Street Trees Strategy* so at the end of this process we will have a strategy that we can each sign up to and promote and deliver within our organisations and networks. LB then ran through some of the key areas in the Scope to help outline the process for developing the strategy based around potentially 4 meetings (workshops) to cover the main theme areas. The timeline is very challenging to have a final version (launch) April 2020, with a draft by Dec 19 but this is what we will work to.

Terms of Reference

LB noted this had been circulated previously and there had been no comments back. LB asked for any final responses on the document.

KR asked if we needed to declare a personal or organisational opinion, LB would like people to be able to express their opinions freely.

LB said this was a key document as it gave her a mandate for chairing the meeting and driving the process forward. All were asked if they were happy to adopt the terms of reference.

AGREED to Adopt the Terms of Reference. All signed the paper.

GG asked for meeting dates to be planned as far in advance as possible

ACTION: LC to arrange the next 4 meeting dates asap (doodle polls are out)

LB proposed that SRWT provide a section on the Trust's website where notes, presentations and key documents can be uploaded for public access. We will try to put as many documents online as we go so as to try to make the process as open and transparent as possible.

DB and AH both agreed their presentations could be made available.

ACTION: LB to establish webpage for STS documents to be made publicly available.

Theme 1: Visions, Aims and Targets

LB facilitated a workshop exercise to start to develop a shared vision.

The first draft of the shared vision was transferred on to a single flipchart (**See photos: Draft vision flipchart 20 August 2019, Shaping a shared vision 1&2**)

There was some discussion and agreement about different key words in the statements. In particular the group recognised that an overall ambition or target could not be set without first understanding our baseline and what we wanted to 'value' and measure.

LB proposed that the group had gone as far as they could at this time, all agreed and supported the suggestion of LB developing this draft a little further for the next meeting.

ACTION: LB to wordsmith next iteration of draft vision by next meeting at the latest.

Baseline Tree Data

BS & DB gave a presentation about the current data on Street Trees collected by Amey and some of their analysis and understanding of the current tree stock.

(See presentation: Agreeing a Baseline – Baseline Data, Brian Stocks, Amey)

DB, Amey use "*ConfirmConnect*" information management system for surveys and data storage. The data recorded includes: species, location, tree condition, qualitative risk assessment, maintenance history, tree groups or clusters, special trees, e.g. veteran, landscape, rarity.

BS, the "Live" records show there are 35,225 street trees (does not include trees to be planted this winter) - individually plotted live tree features. 5 year resurvey rota minimum to cover the entire city. Looking at a different re-inspection frequency for veteran trees.

Age profile analysis suggests two thirds of tree stock are currently maturing trees.

LB asked if STAG had any other data to add to this information from Amey. CK confirmed that she drew on the data from Amey and there was no other data she was aware of.

There was some sharing of information about different species choices going forwards. JC noted that the Woodland Trust were reviewing their approach to species selection in terms of local provenance or more southern sourcing, biodiversity and resilience. CK raised the concern that some species eg cherry are very poor for biodiversity. LB noted that species selection would be part of Theme 2 which would be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: GG to share link to 'tree species selection for green infrastructure' with LB/LC/group

Key areas of interest for the strategy from the presentation were identified as: species current and future (thinking about climate change resilience, pests & diseases, wildlife and other ecosystem services), distribution of canopy/tree stock across the city, tree quality. BS agreed to do some further data analysis to share with the group in preparation for the next meeting.

ACTION: BS to produce and email to LB/LC/the group additional presentation slides from Amey data set as follows:

- Analysis of cross city distribution – are there areas with a lot less or more trees/m²?
- Indication of likely impact of ash die back across the street tree network
- Analysis of high rates of tree vandalism

DB asked if there was anything else you would like us to capture in future? No immediate response but all agreed it was something to return to later.

LB, this data will be key for helping us to shape and finalise our vision and targets.

The value of Sheffield's Street Trees

AH gave a presentation looking at how trees have multiple values eg how they can mitigate carbon footprint, can reduce the cost to NHS, meeting climate change targets. Improving air quality. How can we look at the tree stock as a whole as an asset that provides numerous benefits. Once we know our baseline we can use models to make decisions on maximising the benefits. **(See presentation: Slides for meeting Dr Alison Holt).**

The group discussed the different methods for valuing trees and considered what it was important to value specifically for street trees. The discussion led to the following being considered as key street tree benefits: reducing air pollution, oxygen production, locking up carbon, reducing climate change impacts such as flood run off, island heat effect, and amenity value, including heritage. All agreed general health and wellbeing benefits that flowed from street trees were important to include but nobody was aware of a useful valuation method at this point.

ACTION: ALL to explore potential to reference the value or contribution of street trees to health & wellbeing eg qualitative information or modelling options.

Of the different valuation methods currently available the group felt the following were most useful for our requirements:

- i-Tree Eco and i-tree eco canopy
- CAVAT (capital asset value for amenity trees)

Possibly natural capital accounting for some of the services eg health & wellbeing.

Bluesky data was probably not needed. GG had tested i-tree canopy and Bluesky and felt that learning from the Leeds CC approach, i-tree eco canopy would be accurate.

DB, Amey are considering a new sensor system and this can also capture timely data.

DS highlighted that i-tree eco result for Sheffield overall was 16% canopy cover. LB suggested Dave Aspinall had led on this work. MC, if i-tree eco had been undertaken across Sheffield we needed some understanding of that so we can have consistency when applying just to street trees.

ACTION: KR to find out and report back/email the group with information about SCCs current thinking in relation to carbon capture/measurements and the method used for i-tree eco canopy cover by the SCC Trees & Woodlands team.

ACTION: GG to send LB/LC link to draft Leeds i-tree eco & valuation work (done)

AH proposed that once we start valuing current stock we can then potentially run scenarios for different canopy cover across the network to help us agree our vision and aims.

AGREED to take forward i-tree eco, i-tree eco canopy and ideally CAVAT modelling. But data is currently limited for CAVAT as only available for young trees.

ACTION: KR/LB/AH/DB to use Amey data to try and establish i-tree eco baseline for street trees

LB asked and CK indicated that some additional targeted surveying might be undertaken by volunteers from STAG. Training would be needed. BS to advise on sampling levels.

ACTION: BS/DB and liaise with LB/AH to review current data and CAVAT requirements and recommend to the group if any additional data sampling would be required for a robust assessment.

Next Steps

LB, important to have these actions progressed as soon as possible. There is no need to wait for the next meeting to report back to the group. Updates can be done by email, so please crack on with actions asap.

For the next meeting:

- Update on actions from Meeting 1, especially progress on establishing baseline.
- Theme 2: Decision making – process, species lists etc

ACTION: DB to bring short presentation on current approach to decision-making on tree management. Also current species list.

ACTION: GG presentation on Tree Guidelines and approach used in Leeds

ACTION: DB/BS and AH to send copies of presentations to LB/LC asap after the meeting

Meeting Closed 1pm.