CABINET

DATE	20th December 2023
REPORT OF	Councillor Stewart Swinburn, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Carolina Borgstrom -Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure
SUBJECT	North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy
STATUS	Open
FORWARD PLAN REF NO.	CB 12/23/06

CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS

The Tree Strategy will contribute to the achievement of our place priorities of enabling people to live in a high-quality environment and benefit from a green economy. Our council plan mentions our approved Natural Assets Plan, which was agreed by Cabinet in December 2021. This included trees and woodlands as a key area of focus for improvement, both through planting more trees and through looking after those that we already have. The Tree Strategy provides detail about specific needs and how we will take action to achieve them. The strategy also contributes to our priorities around health and wellbeing, climate change and community engagement.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This will be North East Lincolnshire's first Tree Strategy. This strategy will demonstrate the council's commitment to caring for trees under its management and help respond to the challenges of climate change and the natural ecosystem. It will provide a strategic approach towards ensuring all communities experience the environmental and health benefits that trees afford.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Approves and adopts the Tree Strategy (part one to part five) for use as guidance in the protection and management of our existing trees and planting and management of new trees within North East Lincolnshire.

2. Delegates authority to the Director of Economy, Environment and Infrastructure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport to so implement.

REASONS FOR DECISION

A Tree Strategy provides a strategic framework for the management of the local tree population to achieve agreed aims and objectives. This Tree Strategy helps the council deliver its obligations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities

Act, 2006 (S40: duty to conserve biodiversity), deliver aims contained in the Government's 25-year Environment Plan 2018 to leave our environment 'in a better condition than when inherited it', and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework. North East Lincolnshire's Tree Strategy proposes an integrated approach to tree management across the borough and will help towards increasing our canopy cover.

From the 14th of August to 11th of October 2023 the draft Tree Strategy was live for formal public consultation. 1,758 people viewed the survey with 214 submitting a partial response and 287 completing the survey. The final report of the public consultation is attached.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

1.1 The benefits of trees have long been acknowledged. Trees provide one of the most cost-effective ways to improve the environmental quality of an area, delivering physical, social, health and economic well-being as well as mitigating climate change, improving storm water management, air quality, biodiversity and visual amenity to name but a few. We must work with all our partners to ensure that our tree canopy cover is not only maintained but increased to a level which allows us to mitigate the effects of climate change living within the built-up environment. Planning for the future is key to having resilient towns which are sustainable places to live in.

1.2 As a council we have a number of statutory duties in relation to trees. We have a duty to ensure that highways are safe and, as part of this duty, we inspect the highway tree stock on a programmed cyclical basis. We consult on planning applications where existing trees may be affected and we consult on planning applications where there may be a provision for/or need for a detailed landscaping scheme. The National Planning Policy Framework was amended in 2021, meaning that planning polices, and decisions should now ensure that new streets are tree-lined and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in development, such as parks and community orchards.

1.3 We have the power to make Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) if it appears to be 'expedient in the interests of amenity'. We create new TPOs where we consider trees of importance may be under threat and we review the existing TPO.

1.4 A public consultation comprising of a survey on climate change and the environment took place in August and September 2021. The results of the consultation found that 97% of the respondents wanted to see tree cover increased, to help improve parks, open spaces and other green areas.

1.5 Our Natural Assets Plan sets out three core outcomes that will be reflected in the Tree Strategy:
- The tree canopy cover of the borough is increased towards reaching the national average.
- Trees are valued for the positive environmental, health and social benefits they bring.
- Trees are managed to increase safe useful life expectancy and to

increase biodiversity.
(To note – when trees are mentioned this may also include hedgerows).

1.6 There is a UK national average of 15.8% for canopy cover within our towns and cities. In 2020 an i-Tree canopy assessment was carried out to provide an estimation of canopy cover within North East Lincolnshire. The result of that assessment shows we have an estimated, 10.5% canopy cover. We are currently below the UK national average.

1.7 A North East Lincolnshire tree strategy will demonstrate its commitment to caring for the trees under its management and increasing the number of trees in public places. It will be used as best practice to influence private landowners to look after their trees and encourage planting on their land and will set out the right approach to tree canopy aspirations for the Borough, to set out where trees can be located, to inform and direct partners and stakeholders and to identify how the required funding may be achieved.

1.8 The tree strategy will closely align with the Council's Natural Assets Plan and Net Zero Roadmap and help towards achieving the Council's aims and objectives. It will provide a strategic framework for the management of the local tree population to achieve agreed aims and objectives. This Tree Strategy helps us deliver our obligations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (s40: duty to conserve biodiversity), deliver aims contained in the Governments 25-year Environment Plan 2018 to leave our environment 'in a better condition than when inherited it', and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Environment Act 2021 makes provision about targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment. The tree strategy will help deliver the aims contained within the Environment Act 2021.

1.9 Of particular importance is the role that trees play in mitigating the effects of climate change, by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it. Trees help regulate water levels and also trap airborne dust and absorb pollutants. However, climate change is also causing problems for trees, with new pests and diseases becoming widespread, and with extreme weather events causing drought and high winds. Whilst trees have many benefits, it is appreciated that they cause issues in our community too, such as shading and damage to structures through their roots.

1.10 Our future approach will take the following direction:

   a) Understand our tree population, through surveys and record-keeping, so that we have a good base of evidence for making improvements and tracking changes.

   b) Set targets for increasing canopy cover, and work towards achieving this whilst assuring that we get the right trees in the right places.

   c) Establish guidance for tree planting, which can be used both by the council and by those planting trees on their own land. This guidance will take into account the need for species diversity and the need to plan for future climate changes. Particular focus will be given to how we can

successfully plant trees in hard landscapes.

    d) Support the development of community woodlands and work towards sustainable and successful implementation of these projects.

    e) Engage with our community on aspects of tree planting and management, to achieve buy-in and active collaboration.

1.11. The Tree Strategy will have the following as its core policies:

- TP1 Healthy trees and woodlands will be protected, retained and managed to ensure healthy growth, development and species diversity. No tree will be felled or pruned without good reason as set out in our Tree Management Guidelines.

- TP2 North East Lincolnshire's tree stock and canopy cover will be increased to give greater species and age diversity to ensure a healthy, balanced, tree population.

- TP3 The council will use its powers to prevent unnecessary damage to trees within all construction/development in accordance with the current version of BS5837 and pursue enforcement action where appropriate if trees are damaged or destroyed.

- TP4 Using powers available under the Town and Country Planning Act, related legislation and/or lease clauses, the council will, in the interests of amenity, protect trees and woodlands that are of recognised value where they are visible to the public, are in reasonable health and condition and where there is a threat.

- TP5 Where council land containing trees is to be sold, the trees will be assessed to determine whether protection via a TPO or restrictive clause in a lease is appropriate to ensure retention for the benefit of the wider population.

- TP6 The council will engage with partners, the public and other landowners to raise awareness of tree protection, maintenance, planting and establishment best practice.

- TP7 The council will seek compensation from any external organisation responsible for significant damage to or removal of any council owned tree(s) to the value as calculated by the Helliwell system.

- TP8 In conjunction with the Tree Team, land holding departments and teams will ensure appropriate management of their trees. Requests for work to trees on council land will be assessed in accordance with legislation and the Tree Management Guidelines.

1.12 For trees on private land the Tree Strategy will provide a summary of our powers in relation to trees and development. The strategy will be a material consideration within the determination of planning applications. It will cover

protected trees, implementing planning conditions and actions for unsafe trees on private land.

1.13 The main part of the Tree Strategy document (Part One) will be accompanied by the following:

a) Part Two - Tree management guidelines - These will outline our approach to tree management work and describe in broad terms situations where we are likely to consider pruning, felling or other forms of tree management work for our own trees. They also describe the types of tree work that are normally accepted as good practice, but each tree will be assessed on its own merits. The guidelines will include the process for replacing trees, the management of trees in the highway, the management of trees in green spaces, tree-related damage claims, long-term tree management plans, and training staff to develop the skills required for this work.

b) Part Three - Tree Risk Management Plan – this will identify the risks posed by trees and manage these within reasonable limits, balancing the need to maintain tree cover for environmental and public benefits, with the need to take action before trees fail. We will use a Quantified Tree Risk Assessment to evaluate risks.

c) Part Four - Tree Planting Guidelines - These will outline the council's approach to tree planting and describe in broad terms the best practice for planting our own trees. They also describe the various planting situations we may come across and what planting techniques would normally be accepted as good practice. The planting of new tree stock will normally be carried out by our own grounds maintenance teams and will be in accordance with current legislation, guidance, British Standards and codes of practice.

d) Part Five - Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines – This provides guidance on how future developments should be designed to reflect a sites' local context; create new, attractive and sustainable places for all to enjoy with landscaping and tree planting and which enhance North East Lincolnshire's rich biodiversity value. Planning applications, masterplans and designs for developments which accompany planning applications will need to demonstrate how the principles contained in the Tree Strategy and this guidance have been incorporated into their design. By following the principles of the Tree Strategy and this guidance, developments will also contribute to achieving the council's ambitions to be net-zero carbon by 2030 and towards the aims to increase tree canopy cover across North East Lincolnshire.

1.14 The final report of the public consultation is attached. The online survey was live from the 14th of August to 11th of October 2023. The survey was promoted by North East Lincolnshire Council in a number of locations like the NELC's Have your Say Consultations and Surveys webpage and across various local authority social media platforms. The survey was emailed to members of the public who have signed up to our Consultations mailing list, as well as going out in NEL Sector Support Newsletter to reach Voluntary-Community Sector Organisations (VCSEs). It was also promoted by other organisations; these were not monitored.

1.15 The survey results of the public consultation were positive with an encouraging level of support. Following an analysis of the survey results we are confident that the Tree Strategy, as currently drafted, will provide a strategic framework for the management and enhancement of the local tree population and help to achieve the council's agreed aims and objectives.

1.16 It is recommended that Cabinet formally adopt this tree strategy.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

2.1 The main risks associated with the Tree Strategy are likely to relate to our ability to increase and maintain sufficient tree cover to enable some mitigation from climate change. There are also risks associated with vandalism of newly planted trees, and with our ability to finance a large-scale tree planting and maintenance programme. There is also a large risk of many of our current trees being damaged by new pests and diseases that can now thrive due to climate change, and a risk that some tree species will not be able to survive the temperature changes and extreme weather events that we are now feeling the effects of.

2.2 The main opportunities include engaging with the local community for tree planting projects, which may be the catalyst for community activities and engagement in other aspects of environmental protection and enhancement. Managing our existing tree stock and planting new trees will contribute positively to the improvement of the local environment and help mitigate the effects of climate change.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

There is the option to do nothing, which is not recommended because this would not benefit the council or residents of the Borough.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

There are potential positive reputational implications for the Council resulting from the Tree Strategy and related guidance documents, as trees are generally recognised as a positive benefit, in both urban settings and the wider countryside. An action plan will be agreed with the council's communications service. For some people trees have negative consequences, and we will be prepared for these reactions and explain how we will take those into account in any activities that we undertake.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Tree Strategy does not make any firm proposals for major projects and so no detailed financial considerations can be made at this point. There are multiple grant funds available for planting trees and woodlands, and having this Strategy will prove positive in any bids that we make. Our approach of using trees as natural assets for the purposes of reducing flooding, providing shade and reducing air pollution may provide benefits for climate change adaptation and therefore less expenditure on mitigation.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct implications from this report for Children and Young People, however, given the longevity of trees it is important that we involve young members of our community in decisions to plant trees and to help value and look after them. Due to the many benefits that trees provide, especially in terms of climate adaptation, this Tree Strategy will have a positive impact on the lives of people living in the area.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Increasing our tree canopy cover and maintaining our existing trees has the potential to have positive implications for several environmental issues, including carbon capture and storage, reducing surface water flooding, providing shade to both buildings, people and livestock, enhancing our parks and open spaces and providing increased biodiversity. It is also widely documented that an environment with trees improves physical and mental health and wellbeing. Trees in the landscape provide an economic advantage in terms of producing a high quality of environment attractive to potential developers, businesses, and residents.

8. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY

On the 3rd of November 2022 the panel considered a report setting out the principles of the Tree Strategy and inviting panel members to raise any questions and comments prior to Cabinet receiving a draft of the strategy, after which it would be subject to public consultation.
RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1. There are no direct financial implications currently arising from the implementation of the Tree Strategy.

9.2. Future applications for external funding will be aided by having this strategy in place.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The legal implications and statutory obligations are largely covered in the above report. Clearly the adoption of the strategy will ensure that the Council remains compliant with its obligations and enable it to manage arising issues.

10.2 The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport retains the constitutional authority to make any future amends or modifications to the strategy from time to time.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct HR implications arising from the implementation of the Tree Strategy.

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The Tree Strategy has the capability to affect all wards.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

a. England Trees Action Plan (UK Government) England Trees Action Plan 2021 to 2024 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
b. Natural Assets Plan (North East Lincolnshire Council) Natural Assets Plan | NELC (nelincs.gov.uk)
c. Carbon Roadmap (North East Lincolnshire Council) Carbon-Roadmap.pdf (nelincs.gov.uk)
d. 2021 NELC survey on climate change and environment Final-Redacted-Public-Climate-Change-and-Environment-Survey-2021.pdf (nelincs.gov.uk)
e. NELC Communities Scrutiny Panel 3 November 2022 Communities Scrutiny Panel | Democracy (nelincs.gov.uk)

14. CONTACT OFFICER(S)

Damien Jaines-White, Assistant Director, Regeneration, Tel 01472 324674

Andrew Hudson, Senior Arboriculturally Officer Equans, Tel 07919304536

COUNCILLOR STEWART SWINBURN
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

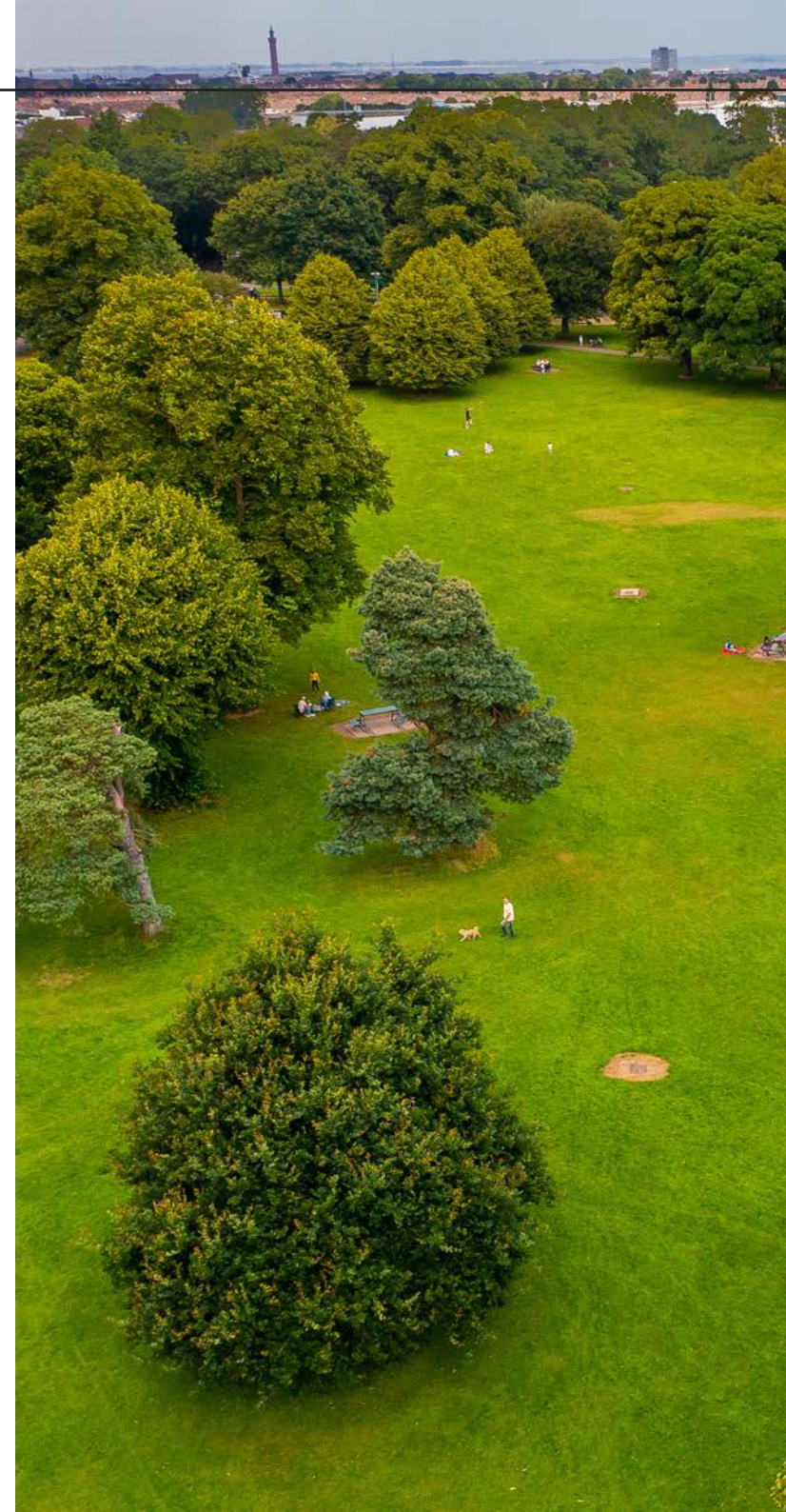# North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy
Part One

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part One

Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Benefits of trees

The benefits of trees, woodlands and hedges have long been acknowledged. Trees provide one of the most cost-effective ways to improve the environmental quality of a town, delivering physical, social and economic wellbeing as well as mitigating climate change, improving storm water management, air quality, biodiversity and visual amenity to name but a few. The council must work with all their partners to ensure that their tree canopy cover is not only maintained but increased to a level which allows them to mitigate the effects of climate change living within the built-up environment. Planning for the future is key to having resilient towns which are sustainable places to live in.

1.2 Why have a Tree Strategy?

A Tree Strategy provides a strategic framework for the management of the local tree population to achieve agreed aims and objectives. This Tree Strategy helps the council deliver its obligations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (S40: Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity), 2006 (S40: duty to conserve biodiversity), deliver aims contained in the Government's 25 year Environment Plan 2018 to leave our environment 'in a better state than we inherited it', and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework. Trees North East Lincolnshire proposes an integrated approach to tree management across the borough.

1.3 Status of this document

This will be North East Lincolnshire's first tree strategy. By adopting this tree strategy North East Lincolnshire Council demonstrates its commitment to caring for the trees under its management and increasing the number of trees in public places. The strategy will also be used as best practice to influence private landowners to look after their trees and encourage planting on their land.

1.4 Scope

The North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy aims to cover all trees and woodlands within the borough, both public and private. It is to be used as a framework for all stakeholders who have a role to play in protecting and increasing tree cover across the borough including all organisations and individual households that own trees. It addresses how the benefits trees give can be enhanced, and how challenges can be met, delivering a tree population that will benefit all people who visit, work and live here.

1.5 Document structure

The North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy has five parts:

• Part One - A Tree Policy which sets out the strategic objectives that guide and influence the decisions the council take.

• Part Two - Tree Management Guidelines - provides the detail around managing trees under the ownership and influence of the Council.

• Part Three - Tree Risk Management Plan - outlines processes the Council will use to manage the risks trees can cause.

• Part Four - Tree Planting Guidelines - provides the detail around sourcing, planting, and establishing trees under the ownership and influence of the Council.

• Part Five – Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines - will set out developers' responsibilities regarding existing and new trees within planning applications.

1.6 Guiding principles

The guiding principles of this strategy document are:

• Protect and care for North East Lincolnshire's trees.

• Plant more trees.

Achieving the UK national average by 2050 would be particularly challenging. The geography of the borough is a particular constraint, with a condensed urban population and large areas of land use given to agriculture and industry. Local context, geography and landscape can impact suitability for planting and therefore it may be a reasonable approach to look at what space is available to plant before committing to a set target.

There may be an aspirational target of 2.5%, increasing canopy cover to 13% by 2030. By the year 2030, there will be a better understanding of what is achievable locally given available resources and land availability. This approach addresses the challenges of baseline and plantable space and will give a certain confidence that a target should be attainable.

The overall objective is for the borough of North East Lincolnshire to have a sustainably managed and protected, healthy and diverse tree population with sufficient canopy cover to benefit and meet the needs of all who live, work and visit. The tree canopy cover will be reviewed every 5 years. The strategy itself will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure it keeps up to date with legislation, regulations and industry standards.

2.0 Background and context

2.1 Overview

The borough of North East Lincolnshire covers 192 square kilometres or 19165.9 hectares and of this, the council has a wide collection of parks, woodlands and biodiversity sites. There are 60 parks and open spaces ranging from small, grassed areas to a country park covering over 60.7 hectares. The borough also includes over 40 square kilometres of land in the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Also, the Lincolnshire Housing Partnership (LHP) manages nearly 12,500 affordable rental and shared ownership homes, with associated public open spaces, much of which is within the borough of North East Lincolnshire.

Many of North East Lincolnshire's trees were planted over one hundred years ago along streets and in parks. Some are remnant trees associated with historical estates and manor houses. Our parks and recreation grounds also have a long history, some being provided by our philanthropic predecessors as recreation space for the local community. Other parks have been created more recently, for example Cleethorpes Country Park. The council needs to protect and care for the legacy which has been passed to us and plant new trees to ensure that legacy continues. Healthy trees and woodlands should be protected, retained and managed to ensure healthy growth, development and species diversity. No tree will be felled or pruned without good reason as set out in the Tree Management Guidelines.

2.2 Public perceptions

Trees invoke strong emotions amongst residents. Nuisance such as leaf and sap drop or shade can cause a negative reaction, whereas people recognising the benefits trees can provide within our urban environment with a growing appreciation of the wider environmental benefits of our urban forest is a positive response.
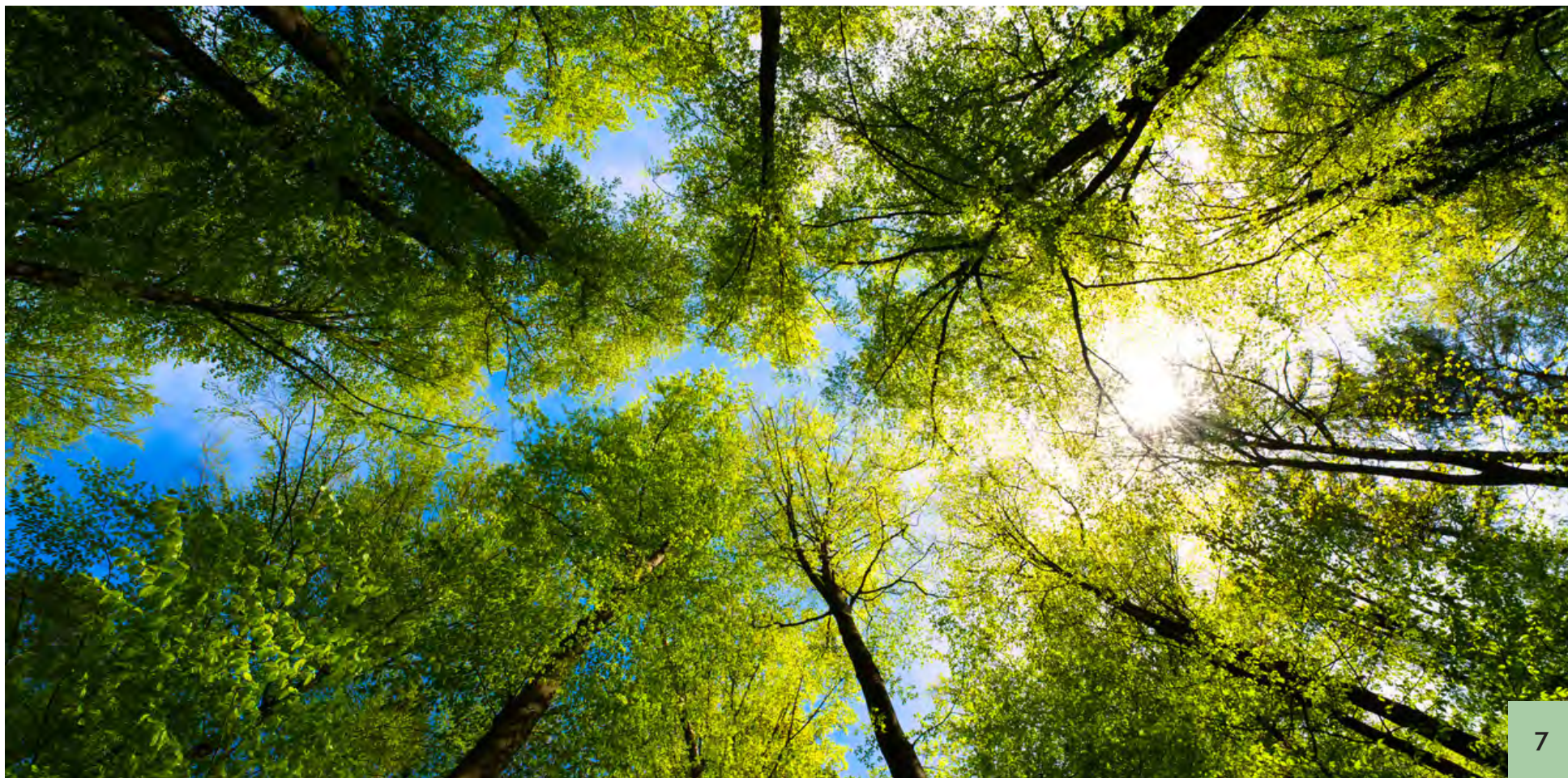
2.3 Benefits of trees

Trees provide many benefits within the borough, some of which are interlinked: The Forestry Commission for England has published 'Case for Trees' and the Trees for Cities website (treesforcities.org) is a useful source of further reading.

Trees help create a green environment and the presence of trees in the borough makes it feel more natural, improving its visual and physical quality.

Although tree population numbers are a useful measure of the tree cover, it is the healthy leaf area which delivers a tree's benefits. For this reason, it is also important to remember that there is a 20-to-100-year lag between planting a tree and the delivery of its full range of benefits, making planning for the future key to achieving the aims of this strategy.

The Tree Strategy aims to support water management and green infrastructure to address future changes in climate, land use, water management and social-economic activity while contributing to the attractiveness of the borough.

2.3.1 Why urban trees are so important

There is a growing body of evidence that trees in the urban environment bring a wide range of benefits.

Economic benefits of urban trees:

Trees can increase property values by 7-15 per cent

As trees grow larger, the lift they give to property values grows proportionately

They can improve the environmental performance of buildings by reducing heating and cooling costs, thereby cutting bills

Mature landscapes with trees can be worth more as development sites

Trees can enhance the prospect of securing planning permission

Urban trees improve the health of local populations, reducing healthcare costs

Trees create a positive perception of a place for potential property buyers

Social benefits of urban trees:

They have a positive impact on crime reduction.

Trees help create a sense of place and local identity

They have a positive impact on people's physical and mental health

They create focal points and landmarks

They benefit communities by increasing pride in the local area

Environmental benefits of urban trees:

Urban trees reduce the 'urban heat island effect' of localised temperature extremes

They capture and store carbon from the atmosphere

They provide shade, making streets and buildings cooler in summer

They help remove dust and particulates from the air

They help to reduce traffic noise by absorbing and deflecting sound

They help improve the quality of polluted ground

They help to reduce wind speeds

They help increase biodiversity by providing food and shelter for wildlife

They reduce the effects of flash flooding by slowing the rate at which rainfall reaches the ground

They can be incorporated into a Sustainable Urban Design System (SuDs).

2.3.2 Mitigation of climate change

Policy – North East Lincolnshire Council Natural Assets Plan 2021:

The Environment Act 2021 Government Bill and the push by the Government to achieve carbon goals is slowly increasing public awareness. Urban blue and green infrastructure, like trees, can provide significant heat reduction benefits through shading, make a significant contribution to carbon sequestration and storage, and reduce the impact of sudden rainfall. For these reasons more tree planting alongside the protection of our existing tree population will make a positive contribution to reaching net zero carbon emissions. Trees mitigate climate change in many ways, including removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Trees are the ultimate carbon capture and storage machines. Like great carbon sinks, trees absorb atmospheric carbon and lock it up for centuries. The Natural Assets Plan and Net Zero Carbon Road Map polices sets out the council's aims and objectives.

Policy - North East Lincolnshire Council Net Zero Carbon Road Map 2021:

It is estimated that the current tree cover in NEL sequesters 6,570 tCO2 annually, as well as 2.16 tonnes of carbon monoxide and 11.76 tonnes of nitrogen dioxide. Next steps NELC should agree incremental tree planting targets to increase tree cover year-on-year, with a high-level tree planting plan for the next 5 years. Additional tree planting opportunities could also be explored through engagement with private landowners in the region. This could be achieved through engaging with businesses on aligning contributions via their corporate social responsibility activities. Schools and community groups are also key stakeholders that can be engaged around potential schemes. It is also possible to engage with all these groups around volunteering.

This Tree Strategy helps deliver these aims.

2.3.3 Mitigation of airborne pollution

In the UK it is estimated that trees remove four million tonnes of carbon from the atmosphere each year. Within the right context (right tree species, right planting layout) trees and can decrease air pollution by trapping dust and absorbing air pollutants such as ozone. The council's Natural Assets Plan 2021 makes reference to trees in the context of air quality.

> **Policy – North East Lincolnshire Council Natural Assets Plan 2021:**
>
> **Nature based solutions, such as planting trees, can be an effective way of improving air quality by removing harmful particulate matter**

Species type and density are important considerations.

2.3.4 Trees and flooding

As well as protecting and enhancing the urban environment, trees and green infrastructure can provide complimentary benefits to surface water management. These are mainly through:

• Transpiration – water evaporated by trees into the air.

• Interception – reducing the amount of water that reaches the ground.

• Increased infiltration and attenuation of water – roots and the soil in the planting pits increase the capacity of the ground to hold water by keeping the soil structure open. The retained water can be used by the tree or will infiltrate into the surrounding ground.

• Phytoremediation – turning harmful chemicals into less harmful substances

A variety of engineering techniques are available to manage surface water, but planting with a range of tree pits and planters can collect and slow down the flow of water in heavy storm events. New tree planting and existing trees can be incorporated into

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Future maintenance is also an important issue that needs to be considered to ensure trees remain healthy and continue to deliver surface water management benefits. Trees can also assist in managing erosion along slopes adjacent to rivers or roads.

> **Policy – North East Lincolnshire Council Natural Assets Plan 2021:**
>
> **Nature based solutions, such as planting trees, can be an effective way of improving air quality by removing harmful particulate matter**

2.3.5 Improving health and wellbeing

International studies and research have identified that urban trees provide 'breathing spaces' within the built-up environment, decrease respiratory problems, encourage walking and cycling, reduce traffic speeds and generally help to reduce stress. The Nature Conservancy report 'Funding Trees for Health' demonstrates these benefits, showing them to have economic value by decreasing health budget spend. Trees improve the urban environment. Trees and urban greening have been shown to reduce stress levels and so increase feelings of well-being.

2.3.6 Biodiversity

Trees play a vital role in the urban ecosystem, providing many benefits for wildlife. Birds, mammals and invertebrates use trees, scrub and hedgerows as roosts, breeding sites and feeding areas, while deadwood associated with these habitats is valuable for a variety of organisms such as bacteria, lichens and fungi which help decompose the deadwood. Native woodland, scrub and hedgerows are considered priority habitats.

North East Lincolnshire aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment to protect these natural resources and leave a legacy for future generations. Tree planting is a great way of increasing biodiversity. They are a major element in creating urban green links and wildlife corridors, as part of green infrastructure.

Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and the Environment Act:

Government Bill - Environment Act 2021

The Environment Bill received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021, meaning it is now an Act of Parliament: World-leading Environment Act becomes law - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Mandatory biodiversity net gain as set out in the Environment Act applies in England only by amending the Town & Country Planning Act (TCPA) and is likely to become law in 2023.

The Act sets out the following key components to mandatory BNG:

- Minimum 10% gain required calculated using Biodiversity Metric & approval of net gain plan

- Habitat secured for at least 30 years via obligations or conservation covenants

- Habitat can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity credits

- There will be a national register for net gain delivery sites

- The mitigation hierarchy still applies of avoidance, mitigation and compensation for biodiversity loss

- Will also apply to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs)

- Does not apply to marine development

- Does not change existing legal environmental and wildlife protections

2.3.7 Ancient semi-natural woodland and ancient / veteran trees

Ancient woods, those continuously wooded since 1600, are home to more threatened species than any other habitat in the UK. A closely-knit network of plants and animals, some of which are rare and vulnerable, has developed and are dependent on the stable conditions which these ancient woodlands provide. Therefore, if tree species change, they may become threatened and vulnerable to climate change. It is the closest the UK has to natural woodland and is an irreplaceable part of our heritage. Many have been left to develop naturally but most have been altered in some way with additional planting. Ancient semi-natural woodland covers only approximately 2.4% of the UK's land area.

North East Lincolnshire Council are fortunate enough to own and manage Bradley and Dixon Woods, a collective area of 41.77-hectares. Classified as a local nature reserve, it is composed of ancient woodland, meadows, ponds and bird feeding sites. This historic woodland is considered one of North East Lincolnshire's most important sites.

This ancient woodland is over 1000 years old, and was mentioned in the Domesday Book, and has remained largely unchanged ever since. Grimsby's coat of arms, the three boars' heads, are believed to have links to Henry VIII, who is said to have hunted in the woods while staying at nearby Thornton Abbey in 1540.

Ancient Trees:

An ancient tree is one that has passed beyond maturity and is old, or aged, in comparison with other trees of the same species. Its canopy may be small. It will probably have a very wide trunk relative to other trees of the same species and it is very likely that it will be hollow. The older the tree, the more valuable it becomes. Dying ancient trees may endure for many decades and by still being present in the landscape continue the biological, historical or cultural connection, as well as providing very valuable habitat for wildlife.

Veteran Trees:

Veteran is a term describing a tree with habitat features such as wounds or decay. It is important to know the differences between an ancient tree and a veteran tree. A veteran tree is a survivor that has developed some of the features found on an ancient tree, not necessarily as a consequence of time, but of its life or environment. Ancient veterans are ancient trees, not all veterans are old enough to be ancient. A veteran may be a young tree with a relatively small girth in contrast to an ancient tree but bearing the 'scars' of age such as decay in the trunk, branches or roots, fungal fruiting bodies, or dead wood. These veteran features will still provide wildlife habitat and have exceptional cultural, landscape and nature conservation value.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the following definition:

Ancient or veteran tree: A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Ancient woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

Policy – North East Lincolnshire Council Natural Assets Plan 2021:

Local Nature Reserves are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally and can offer opportunities to learn about and enjoy nature. In our area our Local Nature Reserves are Cleethorpes Sand Dunes, Bradley and Dixon Woods, Weelsby Woods and Cleethorpes Country Park.

North East Lincolnshire Council will support the objectives of the Woodland Trust to help monitor the threats to the UK's ancient, veteran, historic or 'interesting' trees and where appropriate, help populate their ancient tree inventory.

2.3.8 Trees as part of our landscape and heritage

Landscape value and features are important to our towns and cities, with trees and hedgerows adding to this value by providing physical features such as historical boundaries, drives and woodlands. North East Lincolnshire's Landscape Character Assessment cite trees as being important.

Trees have an architectural and place-making role. On a local level they can improve the quality of our environment by screening, enhancing the sense of scale, reducing glare from buildings and hard surfaces, directing pedestrians, and slowing vehicular traffic. They bring colour and character to our urban and rural areas.

2.3.9 Economic and Social benefits of trees

Urban trees can provide a range of different by-products, from small amounts of timber and wood fuel to mulch and fruit. These benefits can contribute significantly to local economies.

There are many ways in which trees can indirectly contribute to local economies. Research has shown that people prefer to live, work and play in green leafy environments, which can lead to economic benefits including property value increases. The positive impact of trees can lead to increases in property value ranging from 5% to 18%. The larger the trees, the greater their proportional value.

Industrial areas and employment sites with access to natural greenspace can have more productive employees and those employees tend to have greater job satisfaction. Retail areas with trees perform better than shopping centres without trees, as customers are found to spend both more time and money.

The tourist attraction of wooded areas is widely acknowledged with many local economies benefiting significantly. As a consequence of these contributions, commercial and urban areas with good tree cover tend to attract higher levels of inward investment. Good levels of tree cover within our green spaces are proven to be less costly to manage than open grassed areas. Trees can create and sustain community wealth.

Research conducted in the Netherlands has shown that neighbourhoods with good tree cover are, statistically significantly healthier than less green areas. The presence of trees encourages people to be more active, thereby reducing the incidence of heart attacks and type 2 diabetes. Trees absorb considerable quantities of airborne pollutants and the resulting cleaner air cuts asthma levels. A woodland environment is known to calm people, relieve stress and provide a spiritual value that supports improved mental health and wellbeing. Neighbourhoods with good tree cover strengthen and improve people's lives.

Policy – North East Lincolnshire Council Natural Assets Plan 2021:

The coronavirus pandemic has created a greater need for public access to open space and has raised awareness of the benefits of having access to open space and how nature influences public health. Environment is incredibly important for health and is inextricably linked to it. Many studies have evidenced the positive impacts that nature can have on wellbeing. We have also learned that there are so many activities that we can enjoy outdoors; alongside the more traditional organised sports and walking/cycling we are now seeing more cultural activities, community gardening, green gyms, guided exercise routes, and naturebased volunteering.

2.3.10 Problems trees can cause

Although trees have many benefits, they do in some cases cause conflict with our way of life. Trees can sometimes cause an ongoing and increasing inconvenience to residents, such as dominance, debris, interference, and damage.

In a community context, it is generally accepted that trees provide a significant benefit to society, and it is reasonable for individuals to tolerate some level of inconvenience from their presence. There will always be a balancing of the benefit to community, weighed against the inconvenience suffered by an individual. What is acceptable, tolerable or reasonable is often a matter of judgement for each specific situation, tempered by experience and common sense.

Due to the conflict's trees can cause, it is important to have clear guidance on what action can be taken in any specific circumstance and the need to balance inconvenience against benefits. Guidance on how a decision will be reached is presented in our Tree Management Guidelines.

3.0 Issues affecting our tree resource

3.1 Challenges

Our trees face challenges from the day they are planted, through their establishment to growth and maturity. Many factors threaten not only the tree's survival but its ability to reach its full potential and deliver its many benefits.

To achieve the aims of this strategy the current and future distribution, health and suitability of our tree stock will be considered and managed. The following section discusses threats on both council and private land.

3.2 Climate change

Climate change will impact our trees and woodlands due to increases in extreme weather such as high winds, heavy rainfall and drought. These effects will probably be seen in a declining health in some species or an increased difficulty establishing newly planted trees.

As climate change progresses, some mature trees will be lost through both direct causes, such as windthrow due to high wind events, or indirectly as weather conditions make them more stressed, decreasing their tolerance to pests and diseases. Other factors such as increased rainfall may lead to water logging, which can affect tree roots and stability.

If our woodlands are affected, this has a knock-on effect upon the ecosystem.

3.3 Pests and diseases

Climate change is changing and extending the range of pests and diseases that trees are exposed to, and new pests and diseases will become common in the UK.

In the 1970's Dutch elm disease was introduced into the UK and is one of the most well-known examples of a 'new' pathogen dramatically changing the landscape character of our urban forest. The importation of trees, along with their associated soil and packaging materials, from across Europe and elsewhere continues to bring threats and these imported pests and diseases are already having an effect on the tree population of North East Lincolnshire.

The following are some of those currently present or which could pose a threat in the future: ash dieback (present in NE Lincs); horse chestnut bleeding canker (present in NE Lincs), Dutch elm disease (present in NE Lincs), horse chestnut leaf miner (present in NE Lincs), acute oak decline (in the Midlands at the time of writing), sweet chestnut blight (most in southern England but outbreaks elsewhere), Asian longhorn beetle (southern England), Gypsy moth (southern England), plane wilt, emerald ash borer (not in the UK at the time of writing).

North East Lincolnshire Council will only purchase new trees for planting from nurseries which work in accordance with strict biosecurity polices and will use, wherever possible, trees raised entirely in the UK.

3.4 Poor species diversity

There are two relevant factors to species diversity; the number of different species present within the borough and the genetic diversity of the trees. Increasing both factors will reduce the impact of threats such as pest and disease as well as climate change.

Surveying trees provides vital information about the diversity of local stock, which will guide the council's approach to tree planting on both council land and within landscape plans for new development. It will also inform advice given to private individuals or developers on species choice.

3.5 Loss or damage through development

Demolition and construction can damage trees in a variety of ways. This may be through direct loss to make way for the development, a reduction in space for retained trees' future growth and spread, direct damage due to compaction of soil, severing roots or branches or from spill of chemicals or the use of fire. Infrastructure and service installation can also be damaging due to open trenching.

For new trees, the presence of pre-existing or new utility provision must be carefully considered if future conflict is to be avoided. The Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines will give guidance to developers regarding tree retention, protection and planting.

The council will use its powers to prevent unnecessary damage to trees within all construction/development in accordance with the current version of BS 5837 and pursue enforcement action where appropriate if trees are damaged or destroyed.

The council is committed to preserving the landscape character of North East Lincolnshire. In order to conserve the benefits that trees provide, in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012, the Local Planning Authority has the power to make Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

3.6 Permitted Development Rights

Where a planning application is needed, there is the opportunity for trees to be considered and protection sought if necessary. If development is 'permitted' this means that no planning application is needed and there is no third party to assess the removal of, or potential damage to, trees. Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 sets out when planning permission is not required. Probably most relevant to our urban trees is maintenance and improvement of the highway, repairs to services by utility companies and small extensions or alteration to dwellings or commercial buildings. Local authorities also have permitted development rights for work on their own land.

3.7 Work associated with installation and repair of utility services

Street trees are very vulnerable to damage which can cause at best, loss in vigour, and at worst, death, both of which may take several years to become evident. It also poses a health and safety risk if trees are structurally compromised with the severing of major roots, from which work is just covered over. The National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) has clear guidelines for the planning, installation, and maintenance of utility apparatus in proximity to trees.

3.8 Specification, planting, and maintenance

Unless a tree reaches maturity and is healthy, it cannot deliver its full benefits. Many of the trees in North East Lincolnshire are merely 'surviving, not thriving' wasting the time and finance invested in their purchase and planting.

To ensure planted trees reach their full potential they need to be correctly sourced, planted, established and then maintained. Poor planting (trees planted too deep, in tree pits with inappropriate surfacing or small soil volumes) either kills or stunts the trees. Poor establishment maintenance (particularly insufficient watering), tree guards, stakes and grilles left in place (which is damaging to bark and stems) and a lack of woodland management also reduces the value tree stock. As mentioned above (3.4) a limited palette of trees species reduces species diversity as well as the landscape value. Correct species choice for the final setting of the mature tree is essential at the initial design stage.

3.9 Damage and vandalism

Damage to trees, either deliberate, through neglect or through ignorance, is common.

• Criminal damage includes cutting down or lopping/ topping, snapping saplings, setting fires beneath trees and various other attempts to kill council trees.

• Damage through ignorance includes failing to maintain trees, leaving them on stakes or tied to metal grilles etc.

• Damage through neglect is often resulting from indirect operations, such as grass cutting and strimming, whereby there is a lack of care for trees within this setting.

• Highway use and maintenance can also cause damage to trees, for example branches can be torn by high-sided vehicles, rooting areas can become compacted, driveway installation can cut across verges and the salt in grit or hydrocarbons can cause contamination.

Enforcement action will be taken against anyone who damages council trees.

3.10 The Helliwell system (Visual Amenity Valuation of Trees and Woodlands)

The Helliwell system is an internationally recognised method for the visual amenity valuation of trees and woodland. The basic approach of the Helliwell system is to allocate point scores under a number of different factors such as tree size, life expectancy, suitability to setting etc. These scores are then combined to give an overall comparative score for a tree or woodland. As a further step, it is then possible to attach a value to this point score by use of a monetary conversion factor.

Six factors are identified for trees. For each of these factors a score is given. The scores for all six factors are then multiplied together. For example, a tree which is large, long- lived, prominent, and suitable for its setting will have a high score. On the other hand, a tree that is very small, so defective as to have little further useful life expectancy, or is totally unsuited to its setting, it will score very low.

North East Lincolnshire Council's current scoring threshold is set at "3". Trees that score below this threshold are lacking the values necessary to determine high amenity value. Trees that score 3 or above are considered to have high amenity value.

This scoring matrix is a guideline for assessing the amenity value of trees.

Scoring Matrix

Helliwell System Score	NELC Score
0-50	1
50-100	2
100-150	3
150-200	4
200-250	5
250-300	6
300-350	7
350-400	8
400-450	9
450-500	10

The above chart and threshold will be subject to periodic review to ensure effective protection of the borough's important amenity trees.

The resulting amenity score is used as a guide when deciding whether to protect a tree using a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) but is not the only consideration. Other factors may also be considered, which may counter-balance the amenity provided by the tree, as the council is required to consider whether it is expedient to make a TPO. In some situations, it may therefore be the case that trees scoring 3 or more are not considered appropriate for inclusion in a TPO and, less commonly, trees scoring less than 3 could still be considered appropriate for protection.

North East Lincolnshire Council will protect trees and woodlands that are of important amenity value where there is a discernible threat, by making Tree Preservation Orders. The council will use the 'Helliwell system' to assess the amenity value of trees and woodland. Primarily this system will be used when assessing the suitability of trees for protection by new Tree Preservation Orders. However, in many cases it is also of use when considering tree works applications under existing TPOs and in other situations where the council may need to demonstrate the value of trees and woodland.

4.0 The future of North East Lincolnshire's trees

4.1 Understanding our tree population

Before considering the future of the local tree stock, it is important to know what is currently in place. Consequently, there is a continual regime of inspections that keeps a large number of the council's tree inventory updated. To supplement this inventory data, an iTree Canopy survey was undertaken in 2020. This study shows the canopy cover for the borough as a whole as well as on a ward-by-ward basis. Where feasible it shows relationships between canopy cover and information gathered from the Office of National Statistics such as health, mortality rates, deprivation. The study highlights areas of high and low tree cover to give a baseline which informs an integrated plan for maintaining the existing tree stock and increasing it for the benefit of future generations.

The council will investigate opportunities to commission a full iTree Eco survey. This will give a fiscal value to the ecosystem benefits North East Lincolnshire's trees provide for:

• Storm water attenuation and assess their current value.

• Annual carbon storage and value

• Annual amount to carbon sequestered and value

• Amount of pollution removed annually and value

• Energy savings attributed to trees in relation to buildings.

This type of study will highlight areas of good and poor tree cover and identify areas for future tree planting allowing assessment of the required level of investment to deliver improvements to the borough's environment and the health of its residents. This type of study will provide the council with information policy makers can use to take full account of trees in future decision making.

4.2 Canopy cover targets

Results from the iTree Canopy study completed in 2020 indicate that North East Lincolnshire has a canopy cover estimated at 10.5%, which puts it below the national average of 15.8% estimated from 320 towns and cities surveyed across the UK.
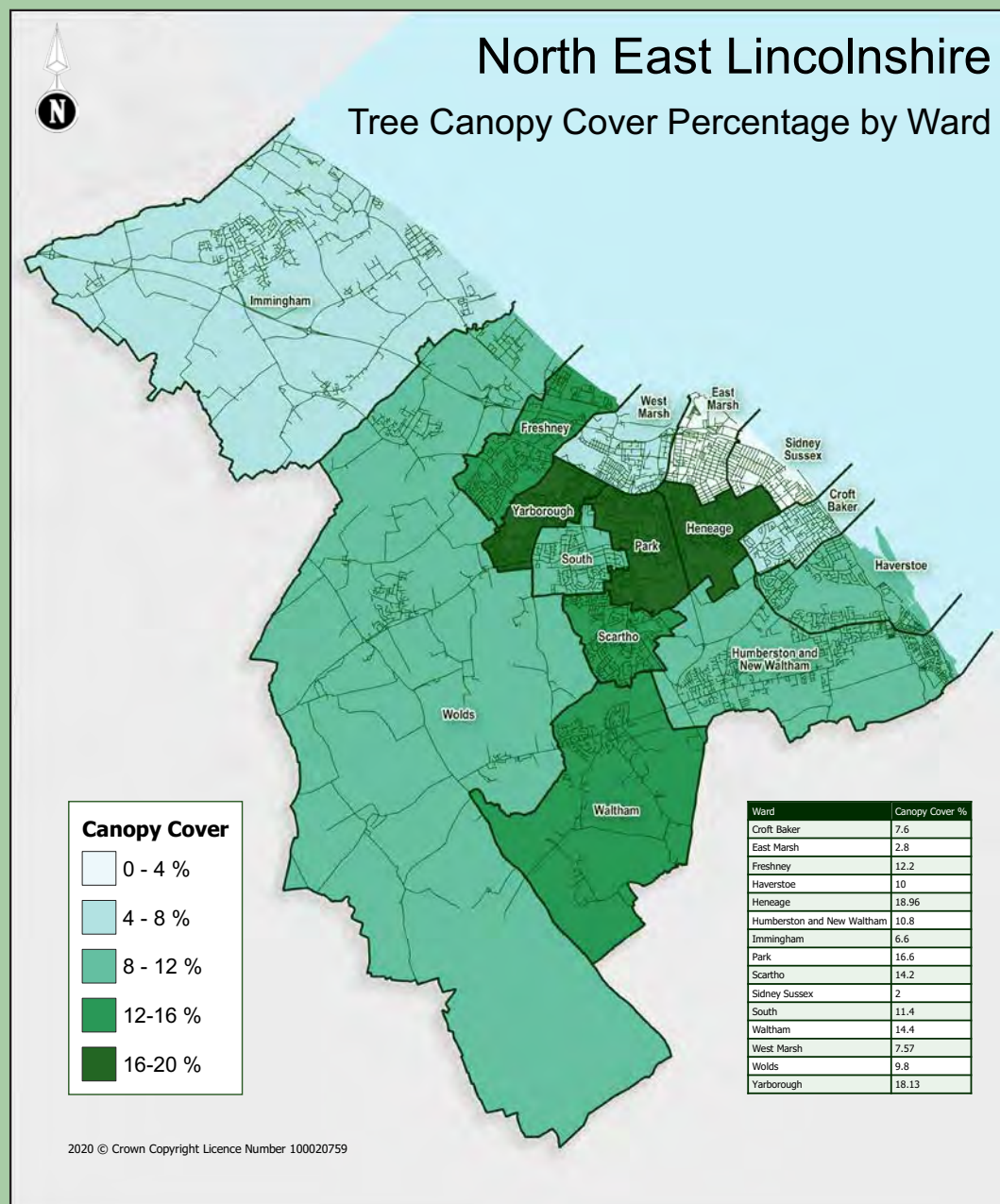
To increase canopy coverage to at least the national average by the year 2050 will be challenging. The number of new trees that can be planted is governed by a number of factors including availability of planting land, funding etc. Any target number of trees to be planted will need to allow for losses over the same time period and therefore the target number of new trees will need to be higher.

4.3 How canopy cover will be increased

The iTree Canopy study will allow for the identification of sites where new tree planting is both possible and most beneficial to improve canopy cover, air quality, flood prevention and habitat quality. It will not be possible to deliver target canopy cover on council owned land alone, so other ways will need to be investigated.

These include, although are not limited to:

- Use of planning conditions and obligations in Development Management
- Working with community partners on funding bids
- Using opportunities within the design of council schemes to increase tree planting
- Working with agencies such as the Woodland Trust and Forestry Commission
- Giving advice, encouragement and raising awareness
- Developing a NE Lincs Trees website.

North East Lincolnshire

Tree Canopy Cover Percentage by Ward

Canopy Cover

	0 - 4 %
	4 - 8 %
	8 - 12 %
	12-16 %
	16-20 %

Ward	Canopy Cover %
Croft Baker	7.6
East Marsh	2.8
Freshney	12.2
Haverstoe	10
Heneage	18.96
Humberston and New Waltham	10.8
Immingham	6.6
Park	16.6
Scartho	14.2
Sidney Sussex	2
South	11.4
Waltham	14.4
West Marsh	7.57
Wolds	9.8
Yarborough	18.13

2020 © Crown Copyright Licence Number 100020759

4.4 Tree planting – what we will do

There are many factors which need to be considered when planting urban trees involving both species selection and the actual growing and living conditions for the trees in the future. If trees merely survive, rather than thrive, then they will not provide the many benefits they offer, such as their ecosystem benefits and aesthetic qualities. The Tree Management Guidance and Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines will set out the detail covering the following:

4.4.1 Guidance

There is a wealth of information available to assist experienced designers in making the right choice of tree, including 'Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers' published by Trees & Design Action Group (TDAG). Local guidance will also refer to BS 8545 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations and CIRIA's (Construction Industry Research and Information Association) guidance, 'The benefits of large species trees in urban landscapes: a costing, design and management guide (C712).

Issues to be considered include:

- Where trees are planted in relation to highway, property, and outlook

- Species choice to give an appropriate mature size and shape

- Species diversity including non-native genera and species and those from different latitudes to account for climate change and provide resilience to pests and disease

- Planting size to reduce maintenance requirements and improve establishment.

4.4.2 Species diversity selection

Rather than specify a small group of 'reliable performers' which make up the majority of planting schemes, consideration of a wider range of commercially available genera and species will be encouraged.

A town needs large and mature trees to deliver the widest possible range of environmental benefits in urban areas. However, there must also be trees in varying age classes to replace the mature trees as they decline and die. It is also important to allow for loss

Image: People's Park Grimsby

within the younger age classes due to damage, poor maintenance, or disease so that the planting programs deliver the target tree canopy levels.

North East Lincolnshire's trees are split between those owned and/or managed by the council and those in private ownership. The Tree Management Guidelines which form part of this strategy set out how decisions regarding tree stock will be made. However, the urban environment is not always conducive to successful tree cultivation and therefore the choice of tree species must be appropriate to ensure it maximises the overall benefits. Trees lost or made vulnerable through climate change may need to be replaced with more resilient species.

4.4.3 Trees in hard landscapes

It is often necessary to plant trees in areas within hard surfacing such as car parks, streets and pedestrianised areas. It is better to design in open planting areas, but where this is not possible, special planting techniques and methods are available which ensure adequate soil volumes to ensure the trees reach their full potential.

The publication by TDAG, 'Trees in hard landscapes - a guide for delivery' considers practical challenges and solutions to allow integration of trees in our streets, civic spaces and surface car parks. These areas are the most challenging urban environments for growing trees but are also the areas that benefit most from their inclusion.

North East Lincolnshire Council will encourage the use of modern planting methods and techniques which have been researched and developed to enable successful tree establishment and growth in these areas.

4.4.4 Community Woodland

North East Lincolnshire Council supports the principle of community owned and managed woodlands. It recognises the potential benefits, such as increased community cohesion and building 'natural capital' through the creation or management of woods, that a community woodland can bring to a neighbourhood or area.

The council also recognises that there are some risks and challenges in creating community woodland and will therefore work with organisations including the Woodland Trust to ensure a successful and sustainable outcome. The council welcomes approach from community groups who wish to discuss potential opportunities for establishing community woodlands.

4.5 Consultation and Engagement

In order to achieve the Strategy's objectives, especially achieving the increased canopy cover, requires not only the commitment of the Council but also engagement and involvement of other large landowners, businesses, schools, volunteer groups and the public to achieve buy in and active participation. There will need to be a collaborative approach with private residents and community organisations. There is already co-operation between community, volunteer groups and the Council. With a history of successful community engagement on other issues there will be an opportunity to connect with volunteers and community organisations and support and encourage the delivery of community-led and focused tree projects.

We will involve and consult with the public as much as we can in order to build a sense of ownership. There will be times when this consultation is not appropriate, for example due to the low-key nature of the work or its urgency in relation to public safety but we will commit to keep the public informed as much as possible.

For consultation and engagement the Council will also be guided by Part 6, Section 115 of the Environment Act 2021 and Part 2, Section 12 of the The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012.

The Council's website will need to be one of the main points of contact for community engagement and will require improvement to fulfil this purpose. There should be a single location, where information on trees, including this Strategy, are set out in a clear, easy to access format. This will enable the Council to produce information for residents or landowners on important aspects of planting and maintenance. Subject to resources, the Council will also need to consider targeted distribution of information that can help us meet the objectives for trees.

5.0 Management of Council Trees

5.1 Application

The Strategy will be applied to trees on all council land, including council run schools, cemeteries and green spaces. North East Lincolnshire Council has an in-house Tree Team that carries out works to the council's tree stock. The council has access to Trees and Woodland Officers that provide specialist arboricultural advice across the council. The Council's Operations Services manage Public Open Spaces as well as the tree stock within the Adopted Highway. The Tree Officers inspect the Council's highway tree stock and trees within public open spaces. The Tree Officers provide recommendations and guidance to the council's Operation Services, as per the Tree Management Guidelines.

5.2 Tree pruning and removals

The council receives a high volume of requests from the public and other sources relating to trees each year. These range from requests to remove trees completely to minor pruning. No such work to trees will be carried out without arboricultural justification.

The council will consider consultation on the removal of trees with significant amenity value. The Tree Management Guidelines set out the circumstances within which work, and consultation will be carried out.

All management and maintenance work will be undertaken in accordance with the current version of BS 3998 Tree work - Recommendations, as detailed in the Tree Management Guidance.

5.3 Replacement trees

Except in the case of woodland or plantation thinning for reasons of good management, replacement planting is essential to ensure continuity of the tree stock. A single young tree will take many years to achieve the size and scale of a large mature one. One for one replacement does not give the same benefit, nor does it give the increase in canopy cover that is needed.

When it is necessary to remove trees, the council will ensure that appropriate replacement takes place in order to not only maintain the existing canopy cover but also to help achieve the 2050 tree canopy cover target and Carbon Neutral Roadmap as well as the Natural Assets Plan. Replacement trees do not have to be in the same spot as the felled tree: a nearby location within the Ward may

be more practical and appropriate. The Tree Planting Guidelines will detail the standards for tree replacement which will be aligned to those in the Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines.

5.4 Permitted Development on council land

Local Authorities have some Permitted Development Rights and the policies referenced within North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy ensure tree retention, protection and replacement is given due consideration and is in accordance with the procedures within the current version of BS 5837. These standards are detailed in the Tree Management Guidelines.

In summary, they include the need for a pre-development tree survey, an arboricultural implications assessment (prior to design of the scheme), an arboricultural method statement and arboricultural supervision for any work within the root protection area (RPA) of a retained tree and a tree protection plan. If there is work within the RPA no-dig construction will be used.

The Tree Management Guidelines set this out in detail, and this will be mirrored in the Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines.

5.5 Existing trees in the highway

Trees add considerably to our streetscape and parking areas, however urban streets offer a very unnatural environment for trees, and this influences the tree's morphology and longevity as well as their reaction to pests and diseases.

Highway trees are not only located within the carriageway and footways but also within verges and small areas of green space. These areas need to be retained; their importance fully understood as they provide a better environment for healthy root growth than fully hard surfaced areas.

In residential areas verges are often resurfaced with tarmac and used for parking; this will have a detrimental impact on the existing tree's. Where tree roots could previously access adjacent gardens, these have now, in many places, been paved and often with non-porous surfacing. Opportunities should be taken wherever possible to reinstate soft landscaping. If reinstating soft landscaping is not practical, then improving the porosity of the hard surfaces around the base of trees needs to be carried out. Due to the difficulty establishing replacement trees in the existing highway, the removal of street trees will only be considered as a last resort where all other solutions have been considered.

The local street tree population are of mixed age classes. Many are coming to the end of their natural lives and will, over time, need to be removed. When this occurs, they will be replaced as per the council tree replacement guidance, as close as possible to their original position. It is not always possible or desirable to replace trees on a like for like basis in the same location, however the replacement trees will be positioned within the same Ward as the original trees.

Major development or redevelopment offers the best opportunity for planting new street trees, and this must be utilised whenever possible. Locations for new street trees need to be chosen with great care, concentrating on streets that still have verges and new road schemes where tree planting can be planned at the outset. Guidance will be produced with reference to street trees including species choice, establishment and maintenance.

5.6 Establishing new and replacement trees in the highway

The value of trees within the streetscape has been detailed throughout this document and as such, every opportunity should be taken to include street trees within highway renewal and new highway schemes. When considering the use of street trees, underground constraints such as services and soil condition will be addressed via tree pit design. Guidance for highway tree design is included in the Tree Management Guidance, which in turn will refence the latest 'Manual for Streets'.

5.7 Trees in green space

There are many different types of green space across North East Lincolnshire; parks, recreation grounds, allotments and countryside sites. They will be managed in accordance with the policy contained in this document and in the Tree Management Guidance. North East Lincolnshire's green spaces provide excellent space for existing trees and offer potential sites for additional planting. In line with both the Carbon Neutral Roadmap and the Natural Assets Plan, tree planting will take place to maintain the current tree cover and where possible to increase the canopy cover.

5.8 Strategic Property (NELC Property Estate)

The NELC property estate has several sites that contain a tree stock of varied age class. These sites are spread over Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham. Many of these sites are leased and the terms of the existing leases tend to protect the council's tree resource. Any new leases will be required to consider this tree strategy and ensure similar protection as well as undertaking to implement the policies and the Tree Management Guidance herein.

5.9 Sale of Council land

Where council land is sold or leased there may be an increased risk of existing trees being removed and a risk that little new planting will occur. The use of Tree Preservation Orders will be used so that important valuable trees are retained when council land is sold. When land is leased out, lease holders will be required to work within the guidelines of the Tree Strategy.

5.10 Tree related damage claims

The council's Insurance Section, supported by the Trees and Woodland Officers, currently manage all claims relating to council-owned trees. Where a council tree is implicated as having caused damage to property, the onus is on the claimant to provide comprehensive evidence that the tree is the cause. Where trees are of high visual amenity value and where they would be worthy of protection by a TPO, the council will require the submitted evidence and information to be in line with what would be expected for a TPO tree. The Tree Management Guidance sets out our requirements.

5.11 Tree management plans

Management plans are a valuable tool for not only maintaining existing trees and woodlands but also introducing and managing new trees and woodlands. On both council land and private land, the use of long-term management plans will be encouraged and supported. This will be done through funding applications, working with communities, partner landholders and land managers and, within developments, through planning conditions and obligations as set out in our Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines. Regarding adopted highways and parks and open spaces, newly planted tree will be covered by the 'Tree Planting Guidance'.

5.12 Staff skills and training

Arboricultural inspections and works will be carried out to the relevant British Standards and following current industry best practice guidance. All staff dealing with trees whether in a planning, landscape, design, highway, safety or operational context will hold the relevant skills, experience and qualifications to undertake their particular roles.

5.13 Risk Management

The issue of risk to property and people is one that is taken seriously by NELC and therefore a Risk Management Plan has been produced. This sets out our approach to prioritising inspection based on the level of impacts and potential risks posed to people and property. Areas with mature large trees, which may present the highest potential impacts such as high-volume roads and heavily used public spaces, will be prioritised before lesser used areas or those with young trees. The frequency of inspection is also guided by these criteria and helps us comply with best practice guidance and our duty of care responsibilities.

Planting the 'right tree in the right place' can prevent future problems and although NELC want to plant large canopied long lived tree species, this may not always be the best choice and each situation must be considered on its own merits. Veteran and trees of special character or interest will be identified in the course of ongoing tree inspections and assessed as to their future merits and controls required at that time as set out in our Tree Risk Management Plan and in accordance with Natural England's Veteran Trees Guide to Good Management.

6.0 Trees on private land

6.1 Overview

Most tree owners appreciate the contribution the trees make to their own land value, as well as the wider benefits associated with trees. The majority of the land within North East Lincolnshire is in private ownership. It is the aim of this Tree Strategy to support private landowners in the management of trees as well as the planting of new trees and woodlands, in accordance with the council's Carbon Neutral Road Map and the Natural Assets Plan as well as central government policy and guidance.

- Using powers available under the Town and Country Planning Act, related legislation and/or lease clauses, North East Lincolnshire Council will, in the interests of amenity, protect trees and woodlands that are of acknowledged value where they are visible to the public, are in reasonable health and condition and where there is a threat

- Where council land containing trees is to be sold, the trees will be assessed to determine whether protection via a TPO or restrictive clause in a lease is appropriate to ensure retention for the benefit of the wider population

- The council will engage with partners, the public and other landowners to raise awareness of tree protection, maintenance, planting and establishment best practice.

6.2 Trees and development

Trees on streets, open spaces and private land can be at risk from the pressures of development. Where development is proposed it is essential that both existing and proposed trees are considered from the very early stages of the design process.

The current version of BS 5837 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations is the foundation document that will inform all developments in relation to existing trees. The effect of proposed development on trees is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

There is a presumption that trees on development sites with a BS 5837 categorisation A or B will be retained unless there are exceptional circumstances to justify their removal. In the event of trees needing to be removed, irrespective of category grading, an emphasis will be placed on a landscaping scheme which supports the council's Carbon Neutral Roadmap and the Natural Assets plan as set out in the Tree Planting Guidelines and Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines.

The use of BS 5837 in conjunction with planning conditions will enable the council to limit potential detrimental damage to trees through soil compaction, direct damage to roots or branches or by leaving them with little room to grow and develop so preventing the long-term contribution they can make to North East Lincolnshire. The retention of trees and how they contribute to the council's Carbon Neutral Roadmap and Natural Assets Plan as well as Biodiversity Net Gain as set out in the Environment Act will be considered. The council will also consider how the landscape proposal fits into the wider system of habitat corridors and ecology.

Although new tree planting can replace poorer quality trees lost through development and also enhance the development and the local area, sufficient space for the trees to mature needs to be considered. North East Lincolnshire's Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines will set out what is expected from development regarding tree protection, mitigation for loss and enhancement. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national policy and so guides local policies which are translated into local plans.

The NPPF pursues development but with specific reference to the need to protect local character and environmental quality as well as to include trees.

Developing a green infrastructure network, conserving and enhancing biodiversity, landscape character and healthy green spaces are all key components of the North East Lincolnshire Local Plan. Existing trees and new tree planting are integral to achieving the aims and objectives of the council's Local Plan.

This Tree Strategy document will be a material consideration within the determination of planning applications.

6.3 Protected trees

Trees are protected under planning law by the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012. This allows the council to protect trees on private land with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) if they have 'good visual amenity value', meaning that they can be seen by the public in general and add to the quality of the local area. Not all high value trees need to be protected, only those which are under threat. The wording from the legislation is:

TPOs can be used to protect trees if the Local Planning Authority believes there is a risk of trees being felled, pruned or damaged in ways which would have a significant impact on the amenity of the area. It is not necessary for there to be immediate risk for there to be a need to protect trees. Extracts from Government guidance of when a TPO may be expedient are:

- 'Local planning authorities can make a Tree Preservation Order if it appears to them to be 'expedient in the interests of amenity to make provision for the preservation of trees or woodlands in their area'.

- '...the authority may believe that certain trees are at risk as a result of development pressures.'

- '...consider other sources of risks to trees for example, changes in property ownership.'

- 'Intentions to fell trees are not always known in advance, so it may sometimes be appropriate to proactively make Orders as a precaution.'

Once a tree has a TPO, permission is required from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before any work takes place to the tree including work to roots.

In a Conservation Area the legislation gives blanket protection to all trees with a stem diameter greater than 75mm above ground level. A section 211 Notice is required, this is 6 weeks written notification, to the LPA, of any planned works to trees that fulfil the above criteria. If the council assesses that the works will be detrimental to the visual amenity value or health of the tree it can make a TPO to prevent this occurring.

6.4 Implementation of planning conditions

On the granting of planning permission for those sites that have a detailed landscaping scheme, this will be subject to standard condition requiring a 5-year management regime. However, for those sites that have extensive woodland and/or individual tree planting within public open space, a 20-year management plan may be secured via a planning condition.

On the granting of planning permission for those sites that have a detailed landscaping scheme and that include areas of public open space, this may be subject to a planning condition requiring the approved landscape scheme to be implemented prior to the occupation of the first dwelling. This will be particularly relevant to large areas of public open space and woodland. This will ensure the early establishment of new tree planting. Where required and appropriate, the use of a Section 106 planning obligation will be used. The LPA will monitor major development sites and where appropriate seek to use the enforcement powers available to it, to enforce breaches of planning conditions.

6.5 Influencing landowners

The council has a role to encourage landowners to manage their trees responsibly and work in collaboration with the council to reach local tree canopy targets. The council will engage with landowners and other stakeholders, led by example, and encourage organisations to develop their own tree management plans.

6.6 Unsafe trees on private land

Owners and occupiers have a 'duty of care' to others with regard to the safety of the trees on their land under the Occupiers Liability Act.

If trees are dangerous, local authorities have limited powers granted under the Miscellaneous Provisions Act to require an owner to make safe a tree which is deemed to be an immediate threat to people or property. In the absence of the landowner, the council can also act directly in the interests of public safety and recover any reasonable costs associated with the works. Miscellaneous Provisions Act does not place a duty on the local authority to act. Any other dispute between neighbours is a private matter which should be resolved between the affected parties. Further guidance and the processes that the council will follow in regard to the Miscellaneous Provisions Act can be found within the Tree Risk Management Plan.

Where private trees are considered a threat to users of the highway or public footpaths, the Local Highway Authority has powers under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 and can require the owner to make the trees safe. If trees and hedges are causing an obstruction to the highway the council will issue a letter requesting works to be carried out to remove the obstruction within 28 days. If the works are not carried out in this time a formal notice will be issued giving a further 14 days to have the works carried out. If the works are still not carried out after this time legal proceedings may be instigated. Even if the trees are protected, emergency work can be carried out if specified by an arborist. Owners are advised to contact the Tree Officer to discuss the extent of the works and any additional work to the crown which may be required.

7.0 Tree Policies

7.1 Tree Strategy Policies

The following policies which form this Tree Strategy aim to allow North East Lincolnshire Council to retain healthy trees, increase canopy cover and ensure species and age diversity across the borough. This will be done through the use of legislation, through the good practice contained in our Tree Management Guidance, Tree Planting Guidance, Tree Risk Management Plan and Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines in addition to working in partnership with landowners and developers to encourage good practice.

Tree Policy Detail

- **TP1** Healthy trees and woodlands will be protected, retained and managed to ensure healthy growth, development and species diversity. No tree will be felled or pruned without good reason as set out in our Tree Management Guidelines.

- **TP2** North East Lincolnshire's tree stock and canopy cover will be increased to give greater species and age diversity to ensure a healthy, balanced, tree population.

- **TP3** The council will use its powers to prevent unnecessary damage to trees within all construction/development in accordance with the current version of BS5837 and pursue enforcement action where appropriate if trees are damaged or destroyed.

- **TP4** Using powers available under the Town and Country Planning Act, related legislation and/or lease clauses, the council will, in the interests of amenity, protect trees and woodlands that are of recognised value where they are visible to the public, are in reasonable health and condition and where there is a threat.

- **TP5** Where council land containing trees is to be sold, the trees will be assessed to determine whether protection via a TPO or restrictive clause in a lease is appropriate to ensure retention for the benefit of the wider population.

- **TP6** The council will engage with partners, the public and other landowners to raise awareness of tree protection, maintenance, planting and establishment best practice.

- **TP7** The council will seek compensation from any external organisation responsible for significant damage to or removal of any council owned tree(s) to the value as calculated by the Helliwell system.

- **TP8** In conjunction with the Tree Team, land holding departments and teams will ensure appropriate management of their trees. Requests for work to trees on council land will be assessed in accordance with legislation and the Tree Management Guidelines.

8.0 Delivery, Monitoring and Review

8.1 Reporting

The Tree Strategy will be monitored and reviewed by the nominated Tree Officer and Tree Team and with the cooperation of the council's Operations Service annually to ensure its aims are being met and progress is being made on the actions identified. The outcome of the review will form an annual report which will be published on the North East Lincolnshire Council website. The following areas will be covered in the report

1. To ensure the number of trees and level of canopy cover is being maintained and increased the report will include:

   a. A comparison of the felling rate against replacement tree planting rate

   b. A summary of new planting included in both public and private development schemes (including highways)

2. To ensure our own trees are properly looked after and the quantity and species variation is improved the report will include

   a. The level of tree loss among trees planted over the year

   b. A table outlining the number and type of trees planted

   c. A summary of the inspection and surveying work undertaken over the year

3. To assess how private landowners have been encouraged to manage their trees in accordance with the strategy and tree protection legislation the report will include:

   a. An assessment of changes in the tree canopy cover over a 5-year period

   b. The number of applications to fell TPO'd trees approved over the year

   c. A summary of enforcement actions taken following reported contraventions

At an appropriate time, to allow for new tree planting to establish a visible canopy structure, the canopy cover within North East Lincolnshire will be assessed through an i-Tree study using the data from the 2020 study as a comparator.

For council owned highway trees, the Ezytreev tree management software will be used to record numbers, species and positions of trees planted, removed and replaced as well as the condition of our current tree stock.

For the council's parks and open spaces, in cooperation with the council's Operations Service, new tree planting can be recorded, with data including numbers, species and positions of newly planted trees. For both public and private development schemes new tree planting will be recorded using the relevant approved landscape schemes, with data including numbers, species and positions of trees in accordance with the approved plans.

8.2 Risk Management

The council will use the National Tree Safety Group's (NTSG) guidance 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees' to achieve the right balance between public safety and amenity.

The NTSG position is underpinned by a set of five key principles:

1. Trees provide a wide variety of benefits to society;

2. Trees are living organisms and naturally lose branches or fall;

3. The risk to human safety is extremely low;

4. Tree owners have a legal duty of care;

5. Tree owners should take a balanced and proportionate approach to tree safety management.

National Tree Safety Group link: https://ntsgroup.org.uk/

The council will prioritise its legal obligations over all other aspects of the service. The council's Tree Officers will operate a system of proactive and reactive tree inspections and maintain a record of trees and inspections.

8.3 Emergencies

If an assessment by a Tree Officer confirms a council tree to be dangerous then the council will implement its emergency procedures. In the first instance, a tree that poses an immediate risk to public and/or property will be 'made safe'. Only the minimum works required in order to remove the risk may be carried out. Subsequent remedial works may be required following the removal of risk.

Dangers posed by privately owned trees are the responsibility of the tree owner and are a matter to be resolved by the tree owner. Before contacting the council, any concerns about potentially dangerous privately owned trees needs to be raised with the owner. If a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached, then as a last resort, in limited circumstances the council may be able to help, using their discretionary powers under the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976. The tree must be shown to be imminently dangerous to persons or property and that it has not been possible to resolve the situation as a civil matter. Any costs reasonably incurred by the council may be recovered from the person(s) in default. Further guidance and the processes that the council will follow in regard to the Miscellaneous Provision Act can be found within the Tree Risk Management Plan.

For privately owned trees there is a legal responsibility under the Highway Act 1980 s154 to ensure the highway or public footpath is not endangered. If a privately owned tree is considered a 'risk' to the highway or public footpath and the owner does not take action within a reasonable time the council will issue a formal notice for the work to be undertaken. If this formal notice is ignored and action is not taken, the council will organise the undertaking of the necessary work to remove the 'risk' and seek to recover the costs from the owner.

8.3.1 Tree Related Damage

The council's Insurance Section, supported by the Tree Officers, currently manages all claims relating to council owned trees.

A claimant must contact the council's Insurance Section to report the claim. The onus is on the claimant to provide the evidence to support their claim that a council tree is the cause. Trees will not necessarily be felled because of a subsidence claim. Remedial action will be considered with felling being the last resort. The council will manage all claims directed at its trees and challenge unwarranted claims based on poorly investigated or inaccurate evidence.

9.0 Other tree related issues

9.1 Fruit/berries/nuts

To help manage public health and safety risks associated with fallen fruit/berries/nuts, the council will clear fallen leaves and associated fruits/ berries/nuts from paths in the autumn. The council will not prune or fell trees to remove or reduce the nuisance of fruit/berries or nuts or remove such fallen fruit from private property. However, where fallen fruit is leading to significant anti-social behaviour problems it will consider measures to reduce the problem.

9.2 Trees too big or too tall

A tree is not dangerous just because it may be considered too big for its surroundings. The council will not prune or fell a council owned tree simply because it is considered 'too big' or 'too tall'.

9.3 Light

In law there is no general right to light either in buildings, gardens or other open space. If natural light is being blocked by the growth of an evergreen/semi-evergreen hedge then action may be taken to reduce the problem under high hedges legislation, Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The council will not prune or remove trees in cases where they cause a reduced amount of light to fall on a property. In exceptional circumstances the council may consider measures to reduce the problem.

9.4 Bird droppings

The nuisance of bird droppings is not considered to be a sufficient reason to prune or remove trees. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and other related wildlife law). The council will not prune or fell its trees to remove or reduce bird droppings from trees or remove bird droppings from private property.

9.5 Sap/honeydew

Honeydew is caused by greenfly (Aphids) feeding on the tree, which excrete a sugary sap. Often the honeydew is colonised by a mould, which causes it to go black. Unfortunately, there is little that can be done to remove the aphid which causes the problem and pruning the tree may only offer temporary relief. The council will not prune or fell its trees to remove or reduce honeydew or other sticky residue from trees.

9.6 Pollen

It is not feasible to prune trees to remove pollen sources. The council will not prune or fell its trees to remove or reduce the release of pollen.

9.7 Telephone Wires

It is the telephone service providers responsibility to maintain your service. The council will generally not prune or fell a council owned tree to remove or reduce interference with telephone wires.

9.8 TV/satellite reception

The responsibility for receiving a satellite television signal is with the company that erects the satellite dish or aerial. The company should erect their equipment in a location that receives a clear signal. The council will not prune or fell a council owned tree to prevent perceived interference with TV/ satellite installation/ reception.

9.9 Trees and solar panels

Whilst the need to provide renewable energy resources is appreciated, trees have an important role in maintaining and improving local amenity, in addition to contributing to local and national targets in tackling climate change. The presence of trees must be fully appreciated when considering a suitable location for solar panels or the placement of solar panels. The council will not prune or fell its trees to improve natural light to a solar panel/s.

9.10 Wild animal/insect pests

Bees, some animals, and many birds are protected species and advice should be taken before considering their removal. The council will not prune or fell its trees to remove or reduce incidence of perceived pests such as bees, wasps, or wild animals.

9.11 Trees overhanging property

Householders have a 'Common Law' right to prune overhanging branches back to their boundary. However, this is bad practice as it may not enable the principles of good pruning to be applied, can further damage the tree to allow disease in and can unbalance the tree making it more of a risk. It is better to get agreement from the owner to prune the tree in accordance with best practice. If the tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order planning consent will be required. If a tree is within a Conservation Area, formal notification to the local planning authority will be required. The council will not prune or fell its trees to alleviate the nuisance of overhanging branches. In exceptional circumstances the council may consider measures to reduce an ongoing and increasing inconvenience.

9.12 Trees obstructing view

There is no legal right to a 'view'. The council will not prune or fell its trees to improve the view from a private property.

9.13 Personal medical complaints

The council will not normally prune or fell a tree because of a personal medical complaint unless it can be established that the presence of a tree is causing a detriment to the health of a resident. Further consideration will be given to the management approach of trees especially where elderly, infirm or disabled persons who spend a significant amount of time within their home are affected. This consideration will also consider the quality and importance of the tree in question, as well as the benefits to the wider community. The council will not prune or fell its trees because of a personal medical condition other than in exceptional circumstances.

9.14 Exceptional circumstances

It is recognised that in some exceptional circumstances the problems caused by a tree are so great that the council may consider undertaking remedial works. Where these problems, and likely future maintenance costs, are excessive the tree may be removed and replaced with a more suitable species. Where multiple tree removals from an area are involved, this may be done in a phased manner. Exceptional circumstances will be assessed individually on their merits and tree works will only be undertaken if there are sufficient funds available after all safety works have been concluded.

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy
Part One

EQUANS

Working in partnership

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part Two - Tree Management Guidelines

June 2023

EQUANS

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

Working in partnership

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part Two - Tree Management Guidelines

Contents

1.0 Introduction

These guidelines are intended as a supplementary note to accompany Part One of the Tree Strategy. They outline our approach to tree management work and describe in broad terms situations where we are likely to consider pruning, felling or other forms of tree management work for council owned trees. They also describe the types of tree work that are normally accepted as good practice, but each tree will be assessed on its own merits. All work to our trees will normally be carried out by our in-house specialist arboricultural team and will be in accordance with current legislation, guidance, British Standards and codes of practice. Although this guidance will inform decisions, they should not be considered prescriptive as situations do vary. Where there is a clear and foreseeable threat to the safety of people or property that is directly related to the condition of a tree, action will be taken to reduce that risk. No single approach should be considered in isolation, but all relevant guidance and policies should be considered when reaching a decision.

2.0 Specific tree management issues

2.1 Footpaths – trip hazards

Isolated roots can be pruned if these do not affect the stability of the tree, e.g.

- Root pruning of non-structural surface roots to accommodate the laying of new paving, tarmac inserts or rubber crumb surfacing.

- Root pruning of non-structural roots to accommodate relaying of kerb edging.

Dependant on the quality and value of the subject tree, and only when all engineering and maintenance solutions have been explored, will removal be considered. The removal of a tree is the last resort, however, should this happen, a tree must be replaced either in the same position or within the 'Ward' locality.

The council will make safe any unacceptable trip hazard in streets, roads or the public highway caused by the growth of a council owned tree.

2.2 Installation of a new access onto the highway

If the introduction of a new access/drop kerb onto a public highway is likely to adversely affect a council owned tree, this will be considered by an arboricultural officer before permission is granted or refused. It would be sensible for the applicant to arrange a pre-application discussion prior to submitting a formal planning application. The removal of a tree, considered by the arboricultural officer to be of high importance, would not be supported during the process of a planning consultation.

In a circumstance where removal of a tree is accepted, the cost of removal and a replacement will be met by the applicant.

The council is not legally required to agree the felling or pruning of the roots of a council owned tree to allow the introduction of a new access onto a public highway.

2.3 Protection of trees during construction/trenching on council land

We will protect all trees affected by construction and development sites. Protection measures on these sites must be in accordance with the current version of BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations.

The council will ensure that all construction and development on its own land including temporary installations and placement of movable equipment, near trees, follows the current version of BS 5837 and any subsequent updates.

5

2.4 Crime and anti-social behaviour

If evidence confirms trees are contributing to crime and/or anti-social behaviour, these will be pruned or removed if necessary.

Where a council owned tree is associated with criminal activity and/or anti-social behaviour, measures to alleviate the problem will be implemented in consultation with the police and the community.

2.5 Vandalism

Incidents of vandalism to council owned trees will be reported to the police. We will try to correct any damage as soon as possible if incidents of vandalism occur.

The council will investigate reports of vandalism to a council owned tree.

2.6 Nuisance - third party/private trees

The council do not provide a mediation service and will not get involved in any domestic disputes. You should try to resolve a dispute between yourself and your neighbour amicably or seek legal advice from a solicitor or Citizens Advice.

The council has no authority to intervene in a dispute between neighbours and will not do so.

3.0 When can trees be felled?

The council will not fell trees unless it is necessary. Each case will be carefully judged on its own merit and felling will only happen where there is clear justification to do so. The following points describe circumstances where felling is essential or advisable:

- A dead, diseased or dangerous tree that is a danger to public safety.

- A tree causing an obstruction to a public highway, public right of way, access to property or footpath, where the obstruction cannot be overcome by pruning the tree or other reasonable measures.

- A tree causing a legal nuisance to an adjoining property, where pruning would not address the problem. Examples of a legal nuisance include soil subsidence or physical damage to another owner's property.

- A tree which is shown to be a major contributor to soil shrinkage and serious structural damage to buildings, where pruning alone would not provide a solution. Private owners will be expected to provide an appropriate level of evidence to demonstrate that the subject tree(s) is an influencing cause of damage to the property. Without an appropriate level of evidence, it is unlikely that the council will be able to adequately consider any proposed works for an appropriate solution.

- Trees which are of a size and species inappropriate to their situation.

- Situations where pruning has been carried out to rectify a severe problem and has not been successful.

- Thinning out young and developing trees in accordance with a Management Plan.

- Removal for wildlife habitat improvement.

- Removal to allow authorised development, re-development or regeneration/public realm.

The council will not remove trees without good reason. When felling work is carried out, the reasons for the work will be documented and recorded.

Where the council considers that tree removal is likely to have a significant negative impact on the local environment and its enjoyment by the public, formal consultation with Ward Councillors will take place. In addition to this, site notices will inform the local community of the planned works allowing at least 20 working days for public engagement.

In accordance with Part 6, Section 115 of the Environment Act 2021, the council will consult members of the public before felling a street tree, unless it is exempt under legislation. The duty to consult does not apply in certain situations. Refer to Section 115 (3) of the Environment Act 2021 (legislation.gov.uk).

Subject to funding availability, available locations and consultation, the following guidance will be used for replacing felled trees (see Table 1).

Table 1. Recommended guidance for number of replacement trees per tree felled by size

Trunk diameter of tree felled (cm)	No. of replacement trees
<15	1
15 - 19.9	2
20 - 29.9	3
30 – 39.9	4
40 – 49.9	5
50 – 59.9	6
60 – 69.9	7
70 – 79.9	8
80+	9

4.0 When can trees be pruned?

Pruning trees will only be carried out where necessary, as cutting can weaken the tree and allow decay causing organisms (fungi and bacteria) to enter exposed and vulnerable tissue. Tree pruning will not be permitted where there is no justification for the work. Work will be resisted if the tree has been pruned within the last 2 years, unless agreed by an arboricultural officer. Each case will be carefully judged on its own merit.

Pruning is likely to be acceptable when:

A tree is causing an obstruction to or grows low over a public highway, public right of way, footpath or access to property, over gardens or open spaces where the public have access. While no specific guidance is given in the Highways Act 1980, it is generally accepted that the minimum clearance should be 2.4m over a footpath and 5.05m over a road (measured from the centre line). As a guide, these minimum clearances should be sufficient to allow a 2m person with an umbrella up to walk unimpeded along a footpath and a double-decker bus to travel along a road without hitting any overhanging branches.

- A tree is causing a legal nuisance to an adjoining property.

- A tree is contributing to soil shrinkage and structural damage to adjacent buildings or other built features.

- A tree restricts repairs and maintenance of property, or authorised construction work.

- A tree blocks daylight from habitable rooms to a severe and unreasonable degree.

- A tree gives rise to justifiable fears about the risk of crime or have provided access and/or cover for criminal acts, vandalism and harassment to residents.

- A tree has contact with buildings and roofs.

- A tree prevents the reasonable enjoyment of a private home and garden.

- A tree is likely to obstruct or interfere with street lighting, road signs and other services equipment.

- A tree obscures sightlines at road junctions and access points.

13

- A tree obstructs CCTV surveillance cameras if cameras cannot be moved.

- A tree needs formative pruning to shape or train them during the early years.

- To remove dead or diseased material or to remedy storm damage, to make the tree safe, or to shape and balance the crown.

- Brashing, coppicing or similar woodland operations are needed to maintain or develop woodland in accordance with an agreed management plan.

- The council will undertake work to its trees:

- to maintain clear sightlines where reasonably practicable at junctions and access points associated with a street, road or highway.

- to ensure they do not unduly obstruct traffic signals or street signs.

- to clear obstructions affecting streets, roads or the public highway caused by its trees.

- to maintain a minimum 2.4m height clearance over a footpath and 2.75m over a cycle path, associated with a street, road or highway.

- to ensure that they do not unduly obstruct a streetlight.

- in the event that a council tree is touching a building, remedial works will be undertaken.

5.0 Acceptable types of pruning for trees

Pruning should not remove more than 20% of the canopy at any one time.

Acceptable types of pruning:

- Crown Thinning - to reduce the density of the crown without changing the tree's overall structure. Thinning should not exceed 30% of the leaf-bearing twigs, and finishing cuts back to the main stem should be avoided. This type of pruning is often appropriate to manage light and shade.

- Crown Lifting – pruning to achieve clearance above ground level or other surface. Pruning should involve branch shortening or the removal of secondary branches to achieve the desired clearance (refer to Figure 1). Cutting back to the main stem should be avoided. If, under the specific circumstances of achieving the required clearance cutting back to the main stem cannot be avoided then no more than 15% of the live crown height should be removed. This type of pruning is often appropriate to prevent interference with the highway infrastructure and grounds maintenance operations, such as grass cutting. It may also be appropriate to manage light and shade.
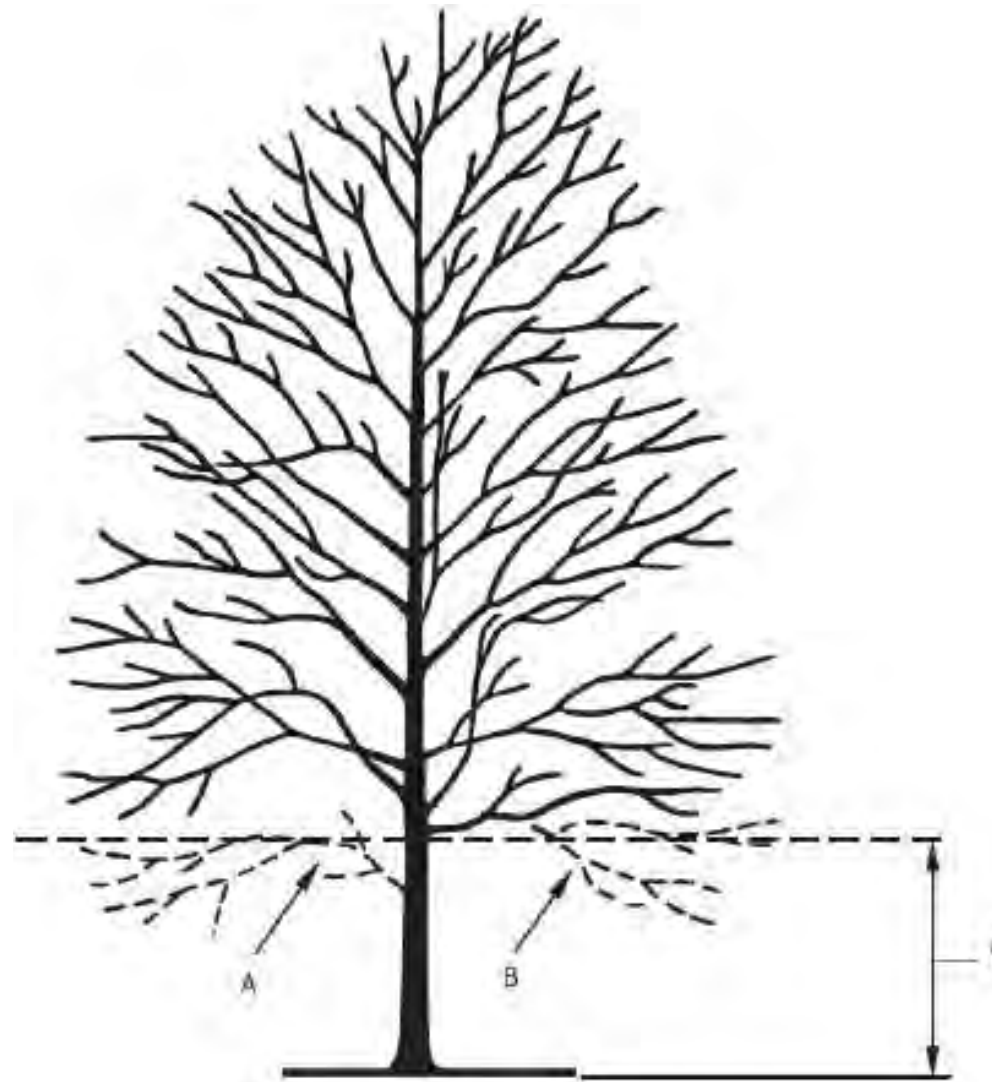
*Figure 1 **Crown lifting** © BSI 2010*

Key: 1 – Clearance to be specified by the removal of either main branches (A) or secondary branches (B).

• Crown Reduction – pruning to achieve an overall reduction in tree size, although maintaining a strong framework of healthy small-diameter branches and twigs (refer to Figure 2). Any crown reduction will be specific to the end result, specified by tree height and branch spread. Annotated photos will be used where considered appropriate under the specific circumstances, to clearly represent the desired end result. This type of pruning is often appropriate to maintain health and longevity, protect people or property, prevent interference with infrastructure and to manage light and shade.
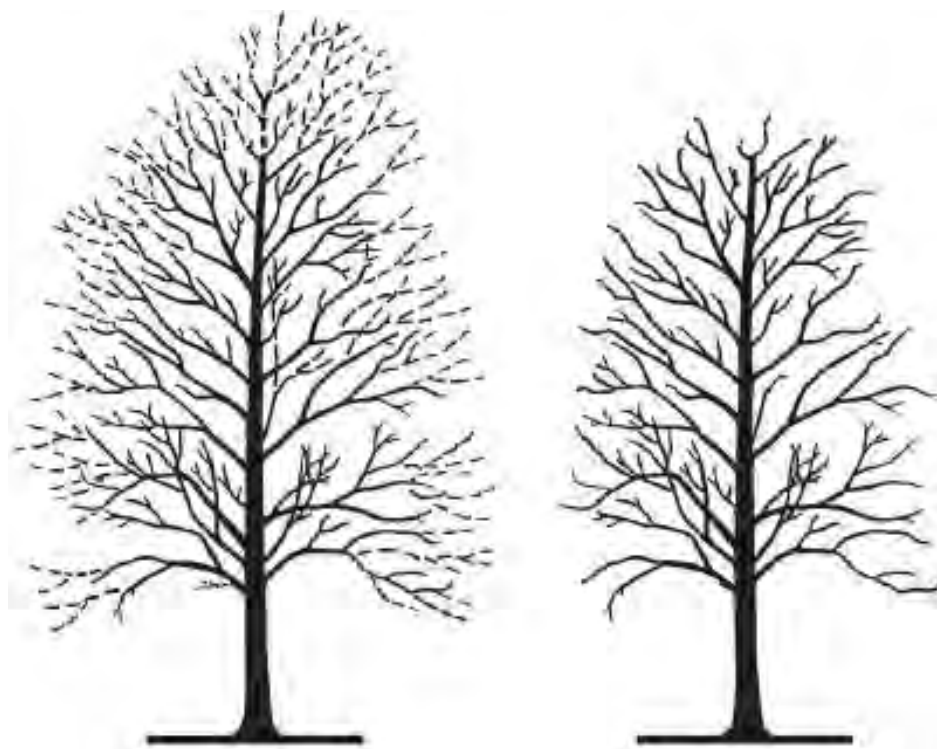
All pruning work to council trees will usually be carried out by the in-house operations service tree team. Arrangements will be made for a reputable third-party organisation to carry out any pruning operations that are considered to be outside the capabilities of the council's tree team. All pruning works shall be carried out in accordance with the current BS 3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations and any subsequent updates.

*Figure 2 **Crown Reduction** © BSI 2010*

Before and after crown reduction, showing material removed.

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy

Part Two - Tree Management Guidelines

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

This document is available as large text only if required

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy

Part Three - Tree Risk Management Plan

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part Three - Tree Risk Management Plan

Contents

2

1.0 Introduction

North East Lincolnshire Council is a large tree owner with a significant number of trees growing in its woodlands, parks and open spaces and alongside its network of public highways and footpaths. These trees provide many benefits to our lives.

They help to:

- Adapt to climate change by filtering airborne pollutants by absorbing carbon dioxide and water.

- Improve our environment by reducing noise levels in urban environments, providing shade and encouraging habitats that help increase our bird and wildlife population.

- Relieve stress, encourage outdoor activity and improve health and general wellbeing.

Trees enhance our communities, can add value to our homes and businesses and create places where people want to live. In short, trees are a huge asset to be encouraged and appreciated. However, trees also pose risks and therefore, while it is important to maximise their benefits, we must also ensure that we have processes in place to manage these risks within reasonable limits. The overriding motivations for managing trees include sustaining tree cover for environmental and public benefit balanced against the risks that trees can present if they fail.

Age can cause decline, roots can be damaged, infections can set in, and the effects of extreme weather can weaken or cause failure of branches or even whole trees. Urban trees need more assessment and management than those in more rural type settings due to the difference in environmental and physical stresses upon the trees and the different impacts that could occur if the trees fail. Tree size, age, species, condition and location are the main factors used to gauge the likelihood of failure and scale of harm that could be caused. It is therefore important to recognise that risk management can be undertaken only by understanding trees and their value to people in the context within which they grow. This needs to be undertaken in a planned way by people with the competence to understand both the value of trees and their potential risks.

1.1 Policy and Legal Context

The key principle of this plan is that it follows a risk-based management approach that enables compliance with legal responsibilities as well as delivery of the strategic objectives to:

1. Care for trees and maximise the benefits they can produce.

2. Focus inspections on highest use and highest risk areas

3. Ensure cost effective tree management.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance states:

Employers and persons carrying out undertakings or in control of premises all have duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 1974. In particular, there is the duty to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that people are not exposed to risk to their health and safety. To help comply with this guidance the HSE has a 'Tolerability of Risk Framework' from which this 'Tree Risk Management Plan' takes guidance to ensure that risks are reduced as low as reasonably practicable. In addition to the responsibility placed by the HSWA, tree stocks must also be managed in a way that protects from litigation in civil law.

For example to:

- Reduce the risk of property damage from subsidence.

- Maintain tree stocks to preserve their amenity, conservation and environmental value .

- Prevent personal injury through trips and falls on footways disturbed by tree roots.

- Prevent vehicle damage and personal injury from obscured sightlines on the highway.

1.2 Approach to Risk Management

This plan sets out North East Lincolnshire Council's prioritised risk management approach for all the trees they own as well as privately owned trees which may impact on public space. The Forestry Commission recommends that landowners who have large numbers of trees use a system of tree zoning as a cost-effective approach to tree inspection, focusing resources where most needed. The council has therefore adopted the principles of Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) for the management of trees. This system is licensed and requires users to have attended and passed a training course and regular training updates.

The QTRA system evaluates risk in terms of:

- Targets: People or property and their location in relation to the tree, thus allowing the inspector to determine the level of survey required.

- Impact potential (size): Where necessary the tree or part thereof considered most likely to fail is then considered in terms of its size and potential to cause harm.

- Probability of failure: The assessment of the likelihood of the tree or branch failing based on technical knowledge and experience of the inspector.

The values from the assessment of these three parts are then combined to calculate the probability of significant harm occurring.

1.3 Inspection Zoning

North East Lincolnshire Council's inspection regime is based on zoning trees into designated categories determined by levels of risk (see Table 1).

Table 1. Table detailing zones and their examples of usage

Usage Zones	Usage Criteria	Examples
HIGH	High volumes of traffic. High likelihood of public access.	Areas close to dual carriageways, railway lines, trunk roads, A roads and busy B roads. Areas which contain large, mature tree species and are close to private dwellings, schools, busy car parks, busy play areas. Areas next to high use footways.
MODERATE	Moderate volumes of traffic. Moderate likelihood of public access.	Areas close to B roads and busy C roads. Areas close to moderate use parks, playgrounds, footpaths and picnic areas. Main footpaths within woodlands.
LOW	Low volumes of traffic. Low likelihood of public access.	Areas next to high targets which contain small tree species and/or trees in a good condition with a low probability of failure. Trees that are managed as regular pollards.

1.4 Inspection Regime

Individual inspections will be made using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) method and will take the form of one of the following:

- Informal observation: This may be done by walking by a group of trees when in full leaf and only recording defects if obvious to the trained eye.

- Formal observation: 5-10 mins per tree using a monocular/binoculars and measuring equipment to record defects and recommended actions.

- Detailed observation: This may include the use of decay detection equipment and/or Mobile Elevating Work Platform (MEWP) to undertake aerial survey or taking samples.

Table 2. Frequency of inspections including the recommended method

Usage Zones	Usage Criteria	Examples
HIGH	18 Monthly	Formal observation Detailed observation (only when considered necessary)
MODERATE	3 Yearly	Formal observation Detailed observation (only when considered necessary)
LOW	5 Yearly	Formal observation Detailed observation (only when considered necessary)
ALL ZONES	After report/s of damage	Formal observation Detailed observation (only when considered necessary

Informal observations may be carried out by a competent person who is qualified to at least the basic level of tree surveys. Formal and detailed observations are undertaken by the council's experienced Arboricultural Officers.

Any seasonal survey or inspection, for example to see fruiting bodies of fungi in autumn, insect activity in summer or the structural detail of a tree in winter can also be included in scheduled inspections.

The details of all inspections including any resulting action is recorded and used to update the inventory. In addition, details from surveys commissioned through external sources are added where possible. This information informs and shapes the tree maintenance programme. Staff in relevant service areas, for example grounds maintenance, who have the relevant competency and experience, may help to undertake basic surveys and report any issues of concern to more experienced/trained members of staff.

In order to manage and record the council's tree stock in terms of 'risk' our Ezytreev tree management software will be used. This system can store both current and historic data relating to trees, inspections and works, including photos, documents and enquiries, helping managers to work in accordance with the highest levels of governance of arboricultural practice.

1.5 Responsive works

The council's priority is to use the inspection regime to update the tree inventory, identify issues in order of risk priority and have operational resource appropriately allocated to respond to those issues.

At the same time, the council provides a prioritised response to day-to-day enquiries and requests from the public and local businesses as well as responding to tree-related issues that occur during high winds and other extreme weather events. Priorities must change according to the circumstances.

At all times a proportionate response will be provided and the probability of harm from trees will be assessed before intervention decisions are made.

Ezytreev, the tree management software package used by those inspecting trees, combines elements of the responsive and scheduled inspections and updates records accordingly.
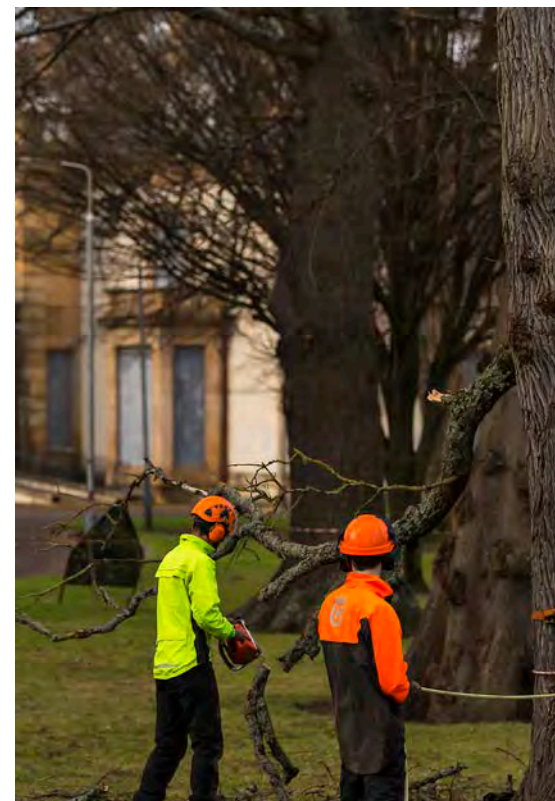
Table 3. Timescales and prioritisation for carrying out essential remedial works

Funding	Work Category	Details	Target Response Times
Operational Services Budget Doughty Road Depot	**Emergency**	Response to trees that are perceived as imminently dangerous.	On site within 1 hour (or barrier off until resources available).
	Immediate Action	Works to trees which have been identified through inspections as requiring works to manage 'risks' that would not ordinarily be accepted.	Up to 3 months (unless specified otherwise).
	High Priority	Works to trees which have been identified through inspections as requiring works to control a 'risk'.	Within 6 months.
	Medium Priority	Works to trees which have been identified through inspections as requiring works to reduce 'risks' to as low as reasonably possible.	Within 12 months (1 year).
	Low Priority	Works to trees which have a broadly acceptable level of 'risk', where 'risks' are already as low as reasonably possible.	Within 3 years.
	General Management (budget constraints)	Improvement works / nuisance works	Within 60 months (5 years) of inspection and/ or when funds become available (budget constraints).

Appendix I
Advice Note - Dangerous Trees (Private)
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

Introduction

1. This advice note sets out the powers and use of powers to deal with dangerous trees under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

2. Under Section 23 of the Act the council has discretionary powers to deal with dangerous trees:

    a) that are on the complainant's land and where there is imminent danger of them causing damage to persons or property or;

    b) that are on land not owned by the complainant but threatening the complainant or their property.

    c) that are on land not owned by the council and in such a condition that they are imminently likely to cause damage to persons or property on other land in that area which is owned or occupied by the council.

3. Under Section 24 the council has the power to authorise in writing a person or persons to enter land to ascertain the condition of the tree or to make it safe.

4. The council, as Highway Authority, also has powers to deal with dangerous trees under the Highways Act 1980. This Advice Note does not cover procedures under this act. To report trees that endanger the public highway please contact the Planning Enforcement.

Advice

Requests for the council to act in relation to trees which stand within, and affect, primarily private residential property:

- Such issues are civil matters between the complainant and the tree owner, and the council would not normally become involved in any way. The tree owner has a duty of care and should manage the trees appropriately.

- It is therefore suggested that you approach the tree owner to discuss your concerns and enquire whether a tree safety inspection has been recently undertaken. If verbal communication is not fruitful, it is suggested that you put your concerns in a letter. It is advised (in the interest of good neighbourly relations) that all communication be calm, polite and respectful. You may also wish to take your own legal advice.

- If you are unable to find out who owns the tree through local enquiries a search with the Land Registry is advised.

- You may also wish to engage a suitably qualified arborist /arboricultural consultant to assess the trees condition on your behalf and recommend works necessary to maintain an acceptable level of risk. The surveyor must seek permission to enter your neighbour's property. Information regarding contractors/consultants can be obtained from the Arboricultural Association (www.trees.org.uk).

- There is no duty upon the council to assess the trees or intervene in these matters. There are not sufficient resources available for North East Lincolnshire Council officers to advise on the management of privately owned trees or to act as an intermediary in these situations.

- Should the matter remain unresolved, and the trees are assessed to pose a significant risk of harm, you may wish to seek help from the council under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. However, the council would only act as a matter of last resort or in an emergency. Under these powers the council can only undertake tree work that is necessary to reduce the risk of harm to an acceptable level (make safe). The council would normally seek to recover costs from the landowner or place a charge on the land.

- The council is unlikely to act where physical damage to property is occurring but does not pose a significant risk of imminent harm to individuals that cannot be reasonably controlled by the complainant.

Formal Process

Request for action under the Miscellaneous Provisions Act

If you feel, having read the advice above, that it is appropriate for the council to become involved please contact:

In an emergency

North East Lincolnshire Council

Operational Services

01472 32630010 (option 4)

In all other cases

Write to:

Development Management Services - Planning

North East Lincolnshire Council

New Oxford House

2 George Street

Grimsby

North East Lincolnshire

DN31 1HB

E: planning@nelincs.gov.uk

T: 01472 326289 (option 1)

You are advised to provide evidence that all efforts have been made to resolve the matter including:

- Dates of conversations, phone calls and copies of correspondence.

- Evidence that the tree/s pose a significant risk of harm including an arboricultural report or detailed evidence of your concerns.

- In cases where the landowner cannot be traced, details of avenues explored including copies of land registry searches.

- Photographs of the tree/s that demonstrate your concerns may also assist.

The council will assess the evidence provided and decide whether the case warrants further investigation. An officer may contact you to gain further information but failure to provide sufficient evidence at the outset may result in your request being rejected with no further investigation.

Where further investigation is considered appropriate, the council will arrange for the tree to be inspected to assess its condition and whether enforcement action is appropriate. The council will contact the tree owner where possible and advise what action it deems necessary.

You will be informed in writing of the results of the investigation.

Depending upon the severity of the situation, the council may arrange for immediate works to manage the risks.

Where the necessary actions are not undertaken by the landowner by agreement, a formal notice under the Act may be served requiring the tree to be made safe.

Failure to comply with the notice may lead to the council undertaking the work and recovering its costs.

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy

Part Three - Tree Risk Management Plan

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

This document is available as large text only if required

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy

Part Four - Tree Planting Guidelines

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part Four - Tree Planting Guidelines

Contents

1.0 Introduction

These guidelines are intended as a supplementary note to accompany the Tree Strategy. They outline the council's approach to tree planting and describe in broad terms the best practice for planting their own trees. They also describe the various planting situations that may arise and what planting techniques would normally be accepted as good practice. The planting of new tree stock will normally be carried out by the council's own grounds maintenance teams and will be in accordance with current legislation, guidance, British Standards and codes of practice.

1.1 Biosecurity

Biosecurity can be defined as a series of precautions designed to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. These include non-native tree pests and diseases. The importing of live plant and tree products is the most significant pathway for the introduction of tree pests and diseases: bacteria, fungi, spores, eggs, larvae and adults can be carried on the plants themselves or in the soil. The council will prioritise the sourcing of plants propagated and grown in the UK to reduce the risk of introducing tree pests and diseases into the local area. If, in exceptional circumstances, plants need to be sourced from outside the UK, then checks will be made to ensure that the supplier is fully responsible and effects the necessary quarantine period on arrival. Vigilance to the signs of plant and tree pests and diseases within the local area will be upheld and on delivery of new tree stock from suppliers.

1.2 On delivery of new tree stock

The council will prioritise the sourcing of new tree stock propagated and grown in the UK from a reputable supplier. At the point of delivery, trees are expected to be healthy and in good form. New trees, included tree roots where possible, will be checked at the point of delivery by an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff to ensure quality and form are to an acceptable standard. If a tree is deemed unsatisfactory due to substandard quality or form then delivery should be rejected and the tree will be left on the lorry for return to the supplier, with an instruction for a replacement, alternative or refund. If, following delivery, the council is still not completely satisfied with the health of the nursery tree stock, then the supplier will be notified (via email) within 3 days of receipt of the trees. No tree will be planted until the council is satisfied the quality and form of the tree fits the expected standards set by the supplier.

1.3 Right tree, right place

The council will follow a 'Right Tree, Right Place' policy by considering the constraints and opportunities of planting sites, the features of proposed trees and their habitat needs. Large trees in a town bring more benefits than smaller trees and these will be used wherever possible. The 'Right Tree, Right Place' approach is intended to allow any trees planted to reach full height and maturity without the need for regular pruning programmes. Having a diverse mix of species is important to safeguard against the risk of tree pests, diseases, or effects of climate change. When planting trees, the council will select species based on the principles of 'Right Tree, Right Place'. Where space permits, there will be a presumption in favour of large, long-lived, shade-producing trees with maximum opportunities to mitigate the effects of climate change.

1.4 Planting programmes

The council will follow a programme of works to increase the diversity of tree species and age class to give a net increase in canopy cover and tree numbers in line with the aims and objectives set within the Tree Strategy. When a council owned tree is removed, planting its replacement will be prioritised after consideration of whether it is appropriate to replant in the same place. Wherever possible the site will be considered as a whole, reflecting its history, character, available space, use and local interests. In some situations, replacement in the same place is significantly more expensive or difficult, therefore an alternative position will be found.

The council will endeavour to maintain its existing tree stock and increase current tree numbers by planting. The council will look to increase and improve its tree cover and species diversity with available resource as part of an annual tree planting programme, paying particular attention to street tree planting.

For replacing felled trees, subject to funding availability, available locations, and consultation, the following guidance in Table 1 will be used.

Table 1. Recommended guidance for number of replacement trees per tree felled by size

Trunk diameter of tree felled (cm)	No. of replacement trees
<15	1
15 - 19.9	2
20 - 29.9	3
30 – 39.9	4
40 – 49.9	5
50 – 59.9	6
60 – 69.9	7
70 – 79.9	8
80+	9

1.5 Woodland management plans

Woodland Management Plans are essential to ensure local woodlands are well managed and provide the wider benefits extensive areas of canopy cover give. North East Lincolnshire Council is committed to managing its woodland sustainably and will prepare woodland management plans for these sites and its areas of significant woodland.

1.6 Tree planting

It is essential to consider existing site conditions to ensure a newly planted tree reaches its full potential. The provision of enough quality soil for the tree roots is a critical factor in tree health and longevity. It is crucial that the target soil volume can be established to maximise a return on green investments and to ensure trees grow quickly into large healthy specimens. The council will seek to ensure trees are planted within an environment that has appropriate amounts of loose, moist, well aerated and uncompacted soil. These conditions enable the tree roots to obtain nutrients, oxygen and water – all essential for healthy tree growth. The council will explore opportunities for tree planting solutions within its built urban environment to secure the optimum conditions for healthy tree growth.

Planting methods and techniques are dependent on existing site conditions. The council will adopt proven tree planting methods and best practice techniques to ensure the successful establishment of its urban tree populations. The council will comply with the recommendations and guidance as set out within the current version of BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and any subsequent updates. This standard will assist in making balanced and informed tree planting decisions, providing recommendations for transplanting young trees successfully from the nursery, through to achieving their eventual independence in the landscape. When the council has decided on a planting location and tree species, the following fundamental principles shall be considered when designing the exact profile of tree pit:

- Available rooting area.
- Engineered requirements.
- Root management.
- Irrigation.
- Drainage.
- Aeration.
- Root-ball support.
- Above-ground protection.

The above factors account for over 90% of the reasons that urban trees fail. Considering and providing for these measures ensures that tree planting programmes are well on their way to successful and efficient establishment.

1.7 Establishment and aftercare

Post planting maintenance and management is essential to ensure trees reach their full potential and longevity within the landscape. A budgetary provision for post planting maintenance and management should be in place for all new tree planting and should be in place for at least 5 years. If woodland is to be planted, then there should be a budgetary provision for maintenance and management specific to woodland planting. For the establishment and aftercare of newly planted trees the council will comply with the recommendations and guidance as set out within the BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and any subsequent updates. To successfully achieve independence within the landscape the following fundamental principles of BS 8545 need to be applied:

- Irrigation.
- Formative pruning.
- Routine assessment and ongoing maintenance.

1.8 Trees and biodiversity

Urban trees provide benefits in terms of biodiversity that give wildlife shelter, food and movement corridors. They are unique in their ability to support a variety of wildlife in many of the most hostile environments within an urban setting. As such, the following principles will be applied:

- Where possible, and subject to public safety assessments, the council will retain standing dead trees in tree belts, local nature reserves and woodlands, preferring to prune rather than fell.

- Where possible, and subject to public safety assessments, the council will retain exposed root balls in tree belts, local nature reserves and woodlands.

- Where possible, and subject to public safety assessments, dead timber and felled trees will be left in situ to benefit habitat creation.

- Where possible, the council will retain mature ivy on trees. It will only be removed to aid tree safety inspections, reduce damage to the tree through windthrow or reduce shade to more valuable habitats beneath.

- The council will seek to create new woodland and look for opportunities to establish movement corridors between new woodland and sites that are considered to be ecologically important.

- The council will adhere to the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in relation to the protection of wildlife during all of its tree-related activities.

- The council will consider the implications of its tree maintenance and management on biodiversity.

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy

Part Four - Tree Planting Guidelines

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

This document is available as large text only if required

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part Five - Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy
Part Five Development & Our Green Infrastructure Guidelines

Contents

1.0 Introduction

These guidelines are intended as a supplementary note to accompany part one of the Tree Strategy. They provide guidance on how future developments should be designed to reflect a sites' local context; create new, attractive, and sustainable places for all to enjoy with landscaping and tree planting which enhance North East Lincolnshire's rich biodiversity value. Planning applications, masterplans and designs for developments which accompany planning applications will need to demonstrate how the principles contained in the Tree Strategy and this document have been incorporated in their design. By following the principles of the Tree Strategy and this document, developments will also contribute to achieving the council's ambitions to become net-zero carbon by 2030 and towards the aims to increase tree canopy cover across North East Lincolnshire.

1.1 Green infrastructure network corridors and opportunity areas

Green infrastructure (GI) is a network of multi-functional green and undeveloped land, both urban and rural in nature, which supports the activity, health and wellbeing of local people and wildlife. New developments should maintain, protect, enhance and extend the GI network across North East Lincolnshire. Development proposals that contribute to an attractive and connected environment, including creating and enhancing green corridors that link urban areas to countryside will be supported.

GI within developments will normally comprise of natural green areas with multifunctional purposes and include landscaping; tree planting, public open space (POS), biodiversity measures and sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS). The need for developments to address gaps in the GI network that currently limit wildlife movement or recreational access by people is a key priority. These enhancement measures can be provided by both physical and visual connection through features such as tree-lined routes, as well as by enhancing access to nature by improving the public rights of way network. The way in which developments seek to address gaps in the GI network and enhance its function will need to be clearly illustrated through an application's accompanying design and access statement and landscape masterplan.

Four steps are required to ensure well-designed landscaping is achieved in developments:

1) Assessment of site, surroundings, and existing features.

2) Development of a landscape strategy and site wide masterplan based on the analysis and evaluation.

3) Detailed landscape design.

4) Detailed long-term maintenance regime.

A site wide landscape strategy for the development will need to demonstrate how GI will be used to provide multifunctional benefit for the occupants of the development and connect to the wider GI network and surrounding area. This analysis will need to take account of potential cumulative impacts of any consented or proposed developments near to the site and area wide masterplan or development frameworks.

A landscape strategy will need to demonstrate how the proposed design has taken the opportunity to enhance the quality and character of the area, as well as providing multifunctional environmental benefits, including:

- Linking and enhancing GI network corridors.

- Incorporating landscape features to create SuDS to reduce or mitigate run-off, flood risk and improve water quality flowing from the site.

- Providing opportunities for a variety of activities and encouraging social interaction to promote health and wellbeing, social inclusion and places that feel safe, secure, and attractive to use for all.

- Acting to mitigate environmental impacts arising from development, such as introducing tree and hedgerow planting to reduce wind speeds close to tall buildings, improving air quality close to busy roads or introducing green walls and other features to reduce the impact of solar gain or an urban heat island (UHI) in an area.

1.2 Detailed landscape design

A detailed landscape design will be required to be submitted as part of the detailed planning application and will provide the final level of detail which will reflect the site wide landscape strategy. It must be in accordance with any previously approved plans and confirm when and how the agreed landscape features will be provided. It will also include details of any protection or special measures required to protect existing landscape features.

All elements of the landscape must be specified to the appropriate British Standard for:

- Proposed planting (including trees, shrubs, climbers, wildflowers and amenity grass) including supply size, planting density, planting season and root stock.

- Tree pits, which should be fully detailed and include available root volume.

- Top-soil depths and volumes, including importing, storage and cultivation.

- Watering maintenance regime.

- Hard surfacing, in terms of type, location, construction details.

- Proposed and existing site levels plus gradients where appropriate.

- Street furniture and lighting column location and specification and associated ducting routes.

- Sustainable drainage features, details inlets/outlet design, side slopes and planting.

- Arboricultural works to trees and landscape features on or close to the site in accordance with the agreed arboricultural impact assessment (AIA) and arboricultural method statement (AMS).

- Initial maintenance and defects liability period (generally minimum of 5 years) and long-term maintenance to be covered by a Landscape Management Plan for areas of public open space (POS).

1.3 Landscape Management Plan

If the development is granted permission, then the measures shown on the site wide landscape plan will be required to be implemented in accordance with an approved phasing plan and secured by means of planning conditions. This normally requires the landscape works to be implemented prior to first occupation of the development or such other timescale as agreed by the council. All landscape planting will then need to be maintained for a minimum of five years. The council will endeavour to carry out annual inspection of landscape planting associated with new developments to ensure it is maintained in accordance with the approved landscape plans.

North East Lincolnshire Council will not take responsibility for the management and maintenance of any newly created shared public spaces and individual landscape features outside of any adopted public highway boundaries. There must be a clear commitment to a long-term high standard of site management for all new public spaces and features through a long-term site management plan. The site wide landscape management plan will secure the long-term management and maintenance of the development for the lifespan of the development. It may also be used to secure biodiversity net gains required to be secured as part of a development.

The management plan will cover all SuDS areas, buffer planting, woodland planting, green roofs, green walls, trees, public realm spaces including both hard and soft landscaping and will need to include:

- A detailed maintenance schedule and methodology for all individual components and its inspection regime.

- Details of cleaning, maintenance and repairs of the open space areas including graffiti; stain and spillage removal; leaf and snow clearing; cleaning and repair of hard landscaped areas; maintenance of lighting, signage, street furniture and weed control.

- Maintenance of open space and soft landscaping areas including weeding, watering, fertiliser application, replacement of failures, trimming and pruning of trees and shrubs, grass cutting and maintenance of water features. All soft landscaping works should be maintained in accordance with the latest versions of BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and BS 4428:1989 Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces). Any trees or plants which die or become diseased are to be replaced in the first available planting season (usually from November through to March) with others of similar size and species, and any grassland/wildflowers that fails to establish will be re-established.

- Details of an annual report to cover above matters and to identify the parties responsible for maintenance and their contact details.

1.4 Trees, woodlands and hedgerows

This section identifies the information required to assess the impacts and effects of any development on trees, woodland, and hedgerows. It includes guidance on how existing trees and hedgerows should be retained and integrated into new developments and considerations that should inform new tree planting.

It is essential that trees and hedgerows are considered from the very beginning of the development planning process. Early engagement of a professional arboriculturist will help to identify those trees that should be retained and those which should be removed to achieve sustainable tree stock. The design will need to integrate trees, to avoid conflicting with their current and future growth. During the construction phase, retained trees and hedgerows will need to be protected to prevent accidental damage. Long-term management plans will be required to ensure that their value is retained for future generations.

1.5 Site survey requirements

Where there are trees within and directly adjacent to a development site, a tree and hedgerow survey will be required to be carried out by a suitably qualified arboriculturist.

To ensure that development proposals take full account of trees, hedgerows and woodlands, a tree and hedgerow survey will need to be undertaken in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations, or the latest version, as part of the initial site investigations. This survey should record all trees with a stem diameter of 150mm or greater at 1.5m above ground level along with an accurate location. The survey must include all trees within the site, as well as trees within influencing distance to the site. The survey should also include existing landscape features such as ditches, buildings and other structures, boundary features and means of enclosure, trenching scars near to trees, and overhead and underground utility apparatus, including drainage runs with manhole and invert levels. An accurately measured topographical survey should be undertaken showing all the relevant features.

Where trees are growing in groups or woodlands, it may be more appropriate to record these as single entities, mapping their outer crown spread and recording their age range, overall height and species mix in accordance with BS 5837 or the latest version. If a development is proposed within or on the edge of groups or woodlands, it will be necessary to record trees that might be affected as individuals. A similar method to surveying trees should be applied to hedgerows. Hedgerow surveys should include those within and around the site. Their position should be recorded, along with details of species composition, condition, height, width, and approximate age.

It may also be necessary to survey trees or hedgerows on adjacent land. If these cannot be accessed for measuring, an estimate should be made. Drawings must clearly state where estimates have been made. Any recommended work to trees shall be identified during the tree survey, considering the proposed use of the site. The tree survey will form the basis of a tree constraints plan (TCP) and clearly demonstrate the below-ground constraints, i.e. root protection area (RPA) associated with each tree, group, woodland or hedgerow. The tree constraints plan is a design tool to help inform feasibility studies and design options.

1.6 Trees and development

Trees and landscape features to be retained and planted as part of a development must be given sufficient space to develop. Space is required both above the ground, for future canopy growth without the need for overly burdensome pruning works, and below the ground, for root development and to prevent future conflict with people, structures or utilities. This will be informed by a site-specific Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA).

Development layouts will be required to be accompanied by an AIA which demonstrates how the design ensures all retained trees and new trees, woodlands and hedgerows are able to grow and mature in the space provided, both above and below ground. Trees and hedgerows will be protected for the duration of any demolition and construction work.

Developments should be planned to avoid any encroachment into a tree's root protection area (RPA). The default position should be that structures and hard surfaces are located outside the RPA of trees to be retained. Only where there is unavoidable conflict, and the developer has demonstrated that all other options have been exhausted, will the use of engineered design solutions and tree-tolerant methods of working be considered. These will have low impact within the RPA, such as no-dig permeable surfacing or placement of low impact foundations. Full justification will be required for any works within a RPA, and each case will be considered on an individual basis, weighing the importance of the tree(s) against the likelihood of tolerating the encroachment.

If trees are being removed or if there is development within the RPA of trees it will be necessary to provide an AIA. An AIA will evaluate the direct and indirect effects of the proposed design and where necessary recommend mitigation. Where trees are being removed, as a consequence of development, the AIA must include a Tree Retention and Removal Plan (TRRP). A scale plan of the final design layout, no less than 1:200 scale, should clearly show those trees being retained and those trees being removed.

Where the AIA identifies encroachment into a tree root protection area, working method statements and design drawings will be required with the application, to enable the council to fully appreciate how the trees can be protected.

Trees can be easily damaged during demolition and construction operations so it is necessary to prepare a tree protection scheme to demonstrate how the risk of damage will be minimised. A tree protection scheme will usually involve the preparation of an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP). This precautionary approach towards tree protection will demonstrate that the operations can be undertaken with minimal risk of adverse impact on trees to be retained.

The AMS will include any pre-development tree works that may be required to facilitate the development of the site. Once a final design layout for the development has been agreed, an arboriculturist should review the relationship of the development to the trees and should prepare a schedule of tree works listing all the trees that require work (by number), accompanied by a plan showing where each tree is located.

The schedule of works should include:

- Trees for removal to enable development.

- Remedial tree works, including those required to establish acceptable levels of risk and management in the context of the proposed land use.

- Access facilitation pruning.

- Pre-emptive root pruning.

The schedule of works should be accompanied by a detailed specification prepared in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Tree work – Recommendations, or the latest version.

North East Lincolnshire
Tree Strategy

**Part Five -
Development
& Our Green
Infrastructure
Guidelines**

June 2023

NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL
www.nelincs.gov.uk

EQUANS

Working in partnership

This document is available as large text only if required

NELC Tree Strategy Survey

Responses = 287

Contents

Introduction

Methodology

Key Findings

Survey Results

Survey questions

Demographics

Appendix

Introduction

In June 2023 approval was given by North East Lincolnshire Council to commence public consultation of the draft Tree Strategy. This survey forms part of the process in advance to further a report for the Tree Strategy to be formally adopted by the council.

This strategy demonstrates the council's commitment to caring for trees under its management and help respond to the challenges of climate change and the natural ecosystem. It will provide a strategic approach towards ensuring all communities experience the environmental and health benefits that trees afford.

1,758 people viewed the survey with 214 submitting a partial response and 287 completing the survey.

Methodology

The online survey was live from the 14th August to 11th October 2023. The survey was promoted by North East Lincolnshire Council in a number of locations like the NELC's Have your Say Consultations and Surveys webpage and across various local authority social media platforms.

The survey was emailed to members of the public who have signed up to our Consultations mailing list, as well as going out in NEL Sector Support Newsletter to reach voluntary-community sector organisations (VCSEs). It was also promoted by other organisations; these were not monitored.

Key Findings

- 72.5% found out about the service via an email from NELC, while 15.4% found out about it via social media.
- 93.4% responded to the survey as an individual.
- 72.7% of respondents said that the draft Tree Strategy was easy to understand, where 12.2% said it wasn't easy to understand, and 15.1% didn't know.
- The statements in Q4 relate to North East Lincolnshire Council's ambitions were strongly agreed with across all statements.
- Concerns were raised around the generalised tree canopy target by 2050 since we are specifically a coastal town. Concerns were also raised around the number of new buildings and homes being built, neglecting and creating threats to green heritage.
- 38.8% of respondents stated they had further objectives to include in the strategy, while 36.5% didn't and 24.7% didn't know.
- Of those that had objectives to provide, education was noted numerous times to provide advice and support to homeowners on the value and how-to care for trees etc. Some raised the point of increasing the number of trees specifically on private land. And also prioritising brownfield sites as opposed to green.
- The statements in Q6 that relate to aims to achieve the Tree Strategy standards were strongly agreed with across all statements.
- Respondent noted that there shouldn't be barriers to planting due to strict rules as to having the 'right tree in the right place for the right reason', fearing such language could be used as an excuse for removing, and not planting trees. Respondents were also concerned around the local authority having the appropriate staffing, resources,
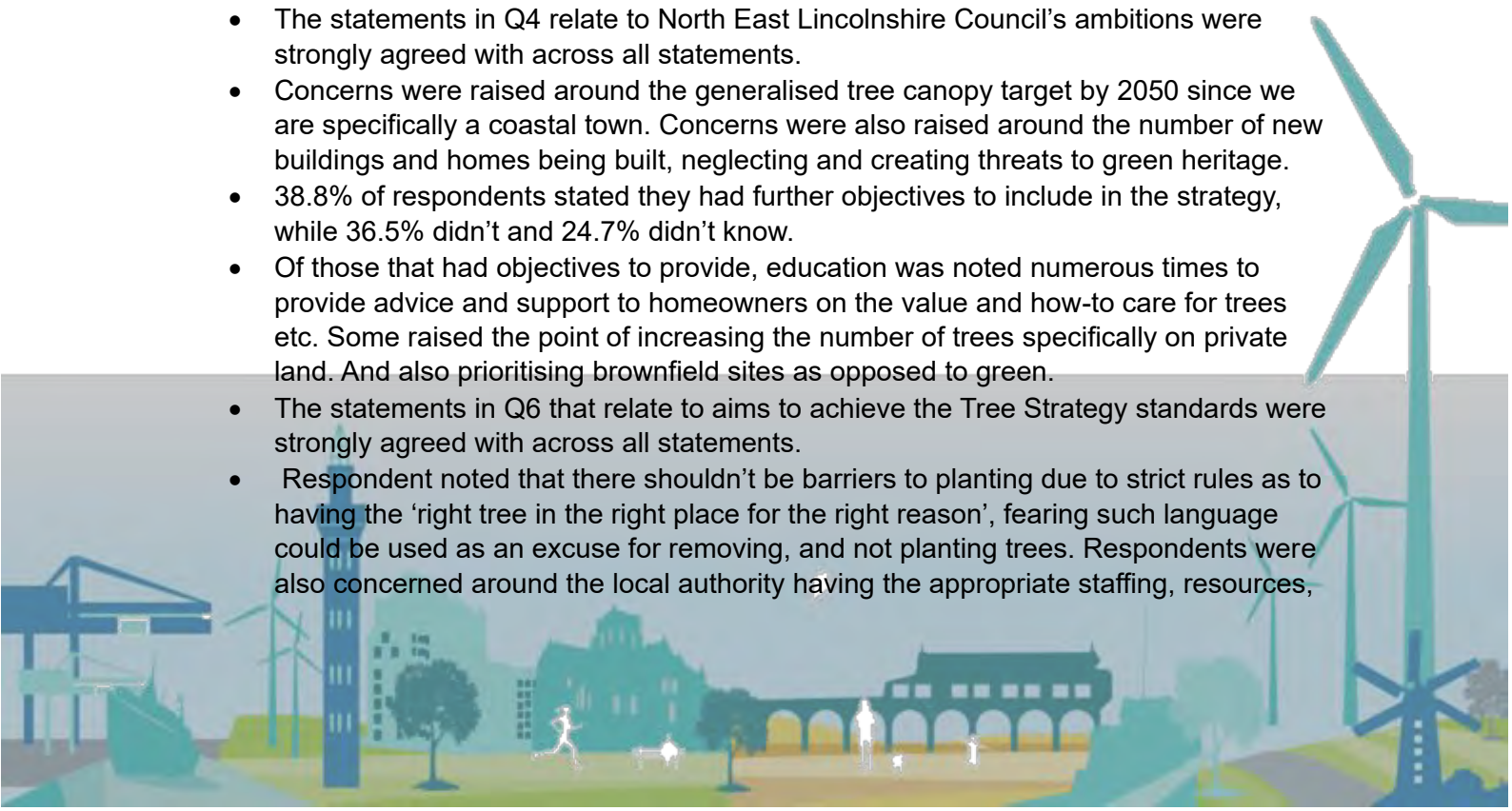
finances and knowledge to commit to the Tree Strategy, as well as post-planting maintenance and management too.

- 3.6% of respondents were very confident that North East Lincolnshire would reach a tree canopy cover of 16% by 2050, while 23.5% was largely confident, 50% had limited confidence, 15.5% had no confidence and 6.9% didn't know.

- Respondents voiced concerns over the amount of land being available to reach the target, especially due to new homes and buildings being built. Others said the target is too far away and should be reached sooner and should be less generalised; ad instead be specific to our coastal town and what we have to offer.


Survey Results

Survey Questions

Q1 How did you find out about this consultation?

| Communication Type	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
An email from NELC	329	72.47
An email from another organisation or contact	10	2.20
From a friend or relative	9	1.98
NELincs.gov.uk website	18	3.96
Poster displayed on a community notice board / Library / Park	0	0.00
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.)	70	15.42
Word of mouth	13	2.86
Other	5	1.10
Total	**454**	**100**

Q2 Are you responding on behalf of … ?

Statement	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Yourself as an individual	401	93.91
Yourself in your professional capacity	5	1.17
A Parish / Town / Borough / District Council in an official capacity	2	0.47
As a Parish / Town / Borough / District / County Councillor	1	0.23
A government organisation or agency	0	0.00
A nature-related charity or organisation	3	0.70
A landowner / farming related organisation or association	0	0.00
An educational establishment, such as a school or college	0	0.00
A charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS)	1	0.23
A representative of a local community group or residents' association	4	0.94
A health organisation	0	0.00
A local business	1	0.23
Other, please specify:	2	0.47
If you are responding in a professional capacity, please tell us what it is:	0	0.00
If you are responding on behalf of an organisation (business, community group, residents' association, council or any other organisations), please tell us the name of your organisation:	7	1.64
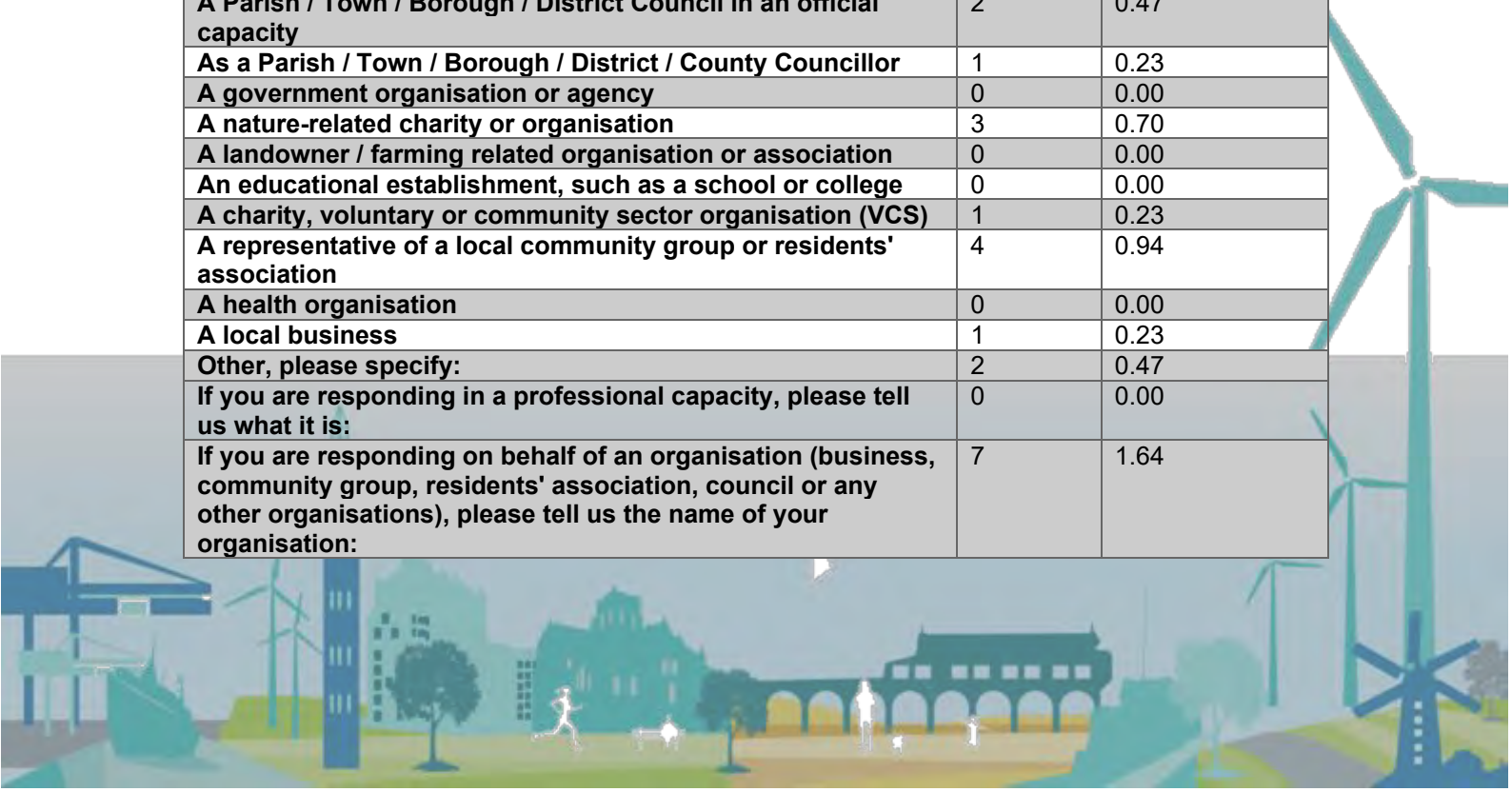
Q3 Is the draft North East Lincolnshire Council Tree Strategy easy to understand?

Understanding	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	256	72.73
No	43	12.22
Don't know	53	15.06
Total	352	100
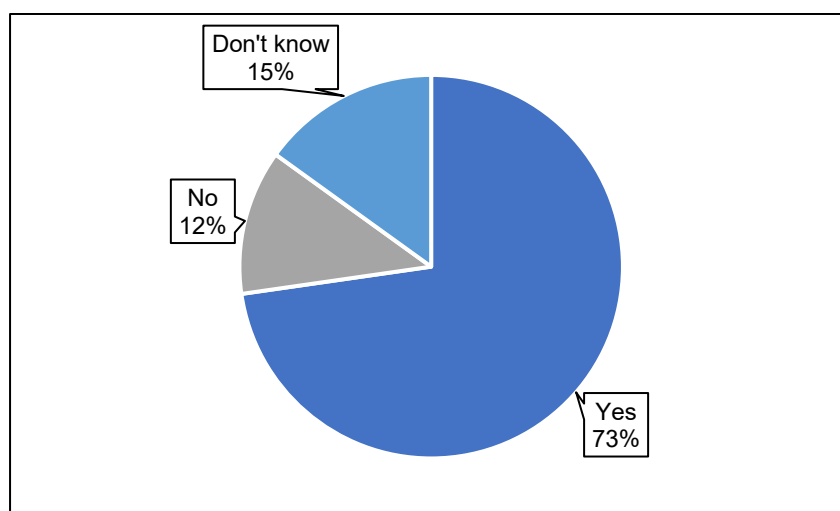
Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following… North East Lincolnshire Council should:

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Overall
Work towards reaching the national average tree canopy cover of 16% by 2050	21 6.69%	9 2.87%	15 4.78%	58 18.47%	209 66.56%	2 0.64%	314 100.00%
Preserve and enhance the green infrastructure	11 3.59%	3 0.98%	11 3.59%	45 14.71%	236 77.12%	0 0.00%	306 100.00%
Address the decline of trees in our urban environment	10 3.21%	4 1.28%	4 1.28%	43 13.78%	251 80.45%	0 0.00%	312 100.00%
Tackle the multiple threats to our tree population	11 3.54%	2 0.64%	9 2.89%	51 16.40%	237 76.21%	1 0.32%	311 100.00%
Increase our knowledge and provide better protection	8 2.58%	5 1.61%	6 1.94%	65 20.97%	225 72.58%	1 0.32%	310 100.00%
Contribute towards North East Lincolnshire Council's net zero targets	13 4.22%	4 1.30%	27 8.77%	74 24.03%	183 59.42%	7 2.27%	308 100.00%
Provide enhanced and improved recreation and amenity	7 2.28%	5 1.63%	16 5.21%	89 28.99%	188 61.24%	2 0.65%	307 100.00%
Realise the multiple benefits trees provide: economic, social and environmental	9 2.92%	3 0.97%	9 2.92%	63 20.45%	223 72.40%	1 0.32%	308 100.00%
Deliver sustainable solutions to some of the borough's challenges	9 2.96%	3 0.99%	17 5.59%	82 26.97%	190 62.50%	3 0.99%	304 100.00%

See below a summary of what was provided by respondents for each statement (see Appendix A for numerated, qualitative responses).

Work towards reaching the national average tree canopy cover of 16% by 2050

Responses believed the target should be higher than that current set target of 16%, and instead should be 20-25%. Concerns were raised over developments such as schools and housing being built, and the notion that we would be more specific in our target, being NEL is a coastal town.

Preserve and enhance the green infrastructure

Concerns were raised over poor planning and maintenance of trees and shrubs, and responses noted the large amounts of unused fields and waste grounds available to use.

*Address the decline of trees within our urban environment*

Responses stated consent should be gained before addressing declines of trees in our urban environment, and the awareness that seeing this decline may drive visitors and tourists away.

Tackle the multiple threats to our tree population

Responses stated of the importance to remove diseased trees, and to not neglect green heritage for in the way of housing sites being built.

Q5 Are there any objectives not included in the strategy that you think should be included?

| Response	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	115	38.85
No	108	36.49
Don't know	73	24.66
Total	296	100
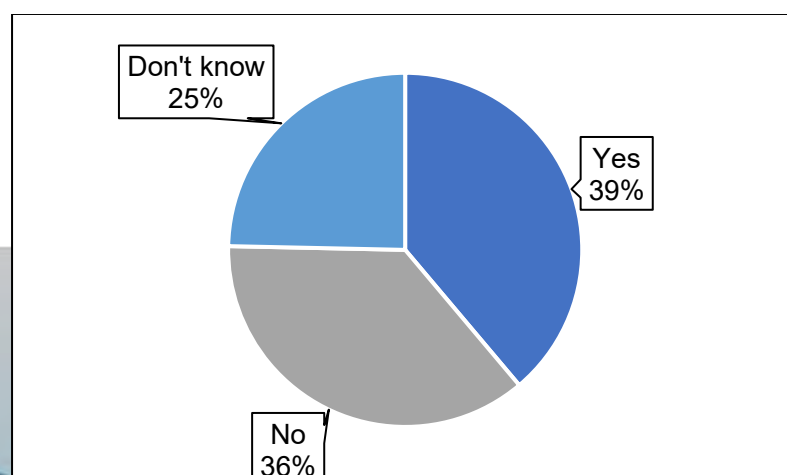
The following ideas were put forward as proposed objectives or areas of interest for the strategy:

- More enforcement of trees by rogue developments; make larger gardens compulsory to new building applications
- Increase and protect hedgerows so to fill in gaps on semi-rural roads to encourage wildlife
- More enforcement to ensure residents care for hedgerows so not to cause safety issues on paths and roads
- Grow native trees and mix planting wherever possible to diversify habitats and to reduce monocultures
- Increase the number of trees on private land
- Guidance on how tree planting can help flood management
- Prioritise brownfield sites and not green
- Reduce the number of trees being cut down in places such as parks to include police visibility [Sussex Rec]; so to stop trees being cut down without good reason
- Plant more trees on streets where patches of grass are
- Accessible advice and support for homeowners on how to correctly and safely maintain their trees and other greenery; more guidance on preventing root erosion; highlight via education the value of trees in feeding/roosting/nesting habitats for wildlife; general education on the average person's understanding of trees and the value they have in the environment and wellbeing; educate housing associations to know they place a part in caring for trees too
- Integrate trees and greening more into sports, culture and leisure, utilising woodlands and natural materials more in comparison to spending a lot of money of new play equipment
- Plant more fruit trees to provide free sources of valuable, healthy fruit to our local community
- Provide trees or individuals to plant and nurture them on private or public land themselves, enforcing personal responsibility
- Consider tree content on private land more
- Better consideration of planting trees at the right time of year so they don't simply die from incorrect or no aftercare
- Don't cut down trees at the first sign of disease because it's easier and cheaper
- A set number of trees being planted each year to be identified and not just a percentage by year 2050
- The Local Nature Recovery strategy to be considered side-by-side when undertaking the planning/removal of trees

Q6 The Strategy has two guiding principles:

- **Protect and care for North East Lincolnshire's trees.**
- **Plant more trees.**

Our two guiding principles aim to achieve the overall objective of a sustainably managed and protected, healthy and diverse tree population with sufficient canopy cover to benefit and meet the needs of all who live, work and visit North East Lincolnshire.
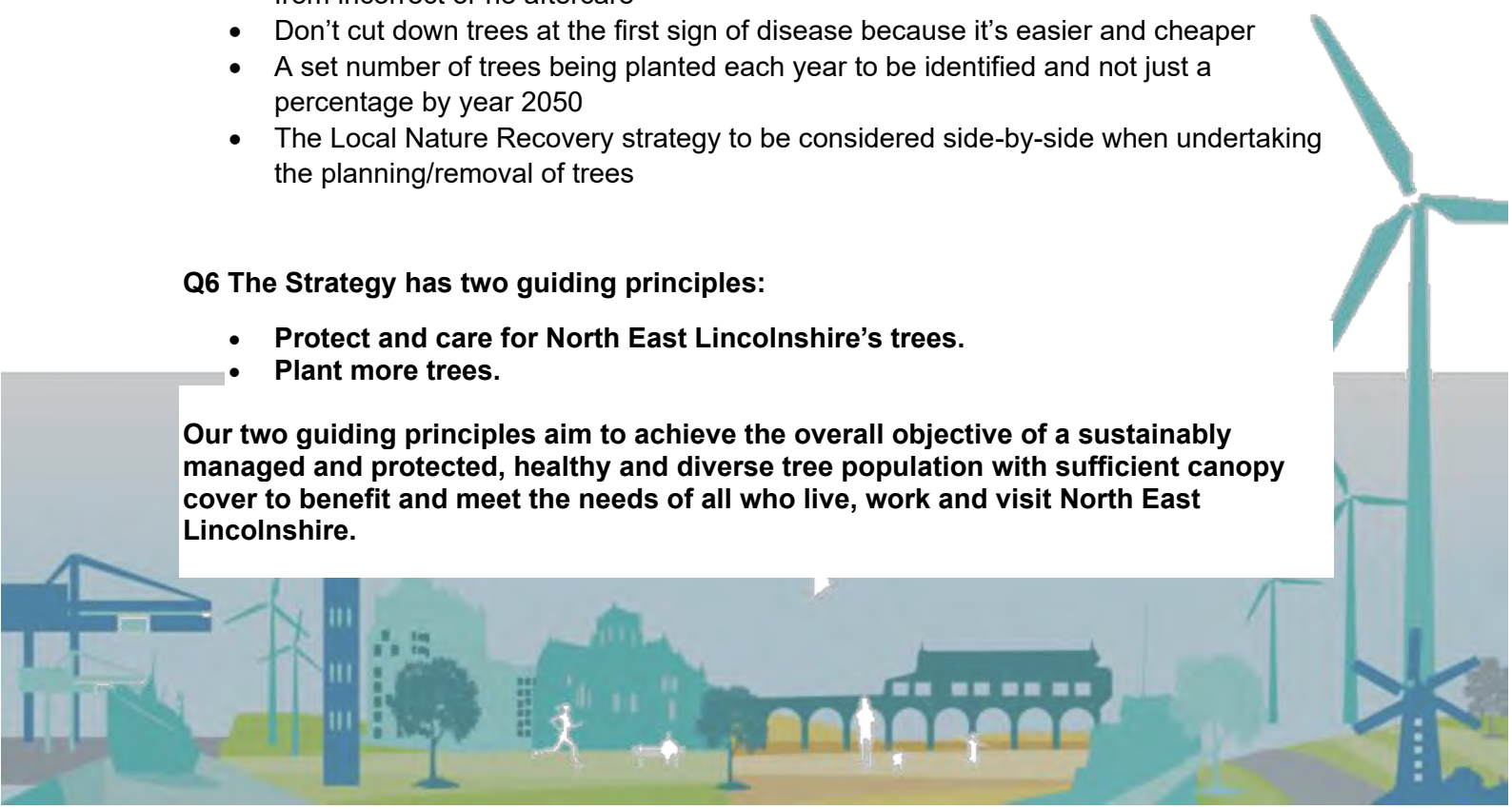
In order to deliver on the standards of the Tree Strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree that:

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Overall
There will be better management and protection of our existing tree stock	8	6	32	94	126	12	278
	2.88%	2.16%	11.51%	33.81%	45.32%	4.32%	100.00%
Careful consideration should be given to the right tree, in the right place, for the right reason, with the right management	8	2	8	64	190	3	275
	2.91%	0.73%	2.91%	23.27%	69.09%	1.09%	100.00%
New tree planting will deliver multiple benefits	5	1	8	50	211	0	275
	1.82%	0.36%	2.91%	18.18%	76.73%	0.00%	100.00%
We should ensure biosecurity of new tree stock through the application of strict standards	5	4	13	70	180	4	276
	1.81%	1.45%	4.71%	25.36%	65.22%	1.45%	100.00%
There will be better post planting maintenance and management	7	5	24	76	153	11	276
	2.54%	1.81%	8.70%	27.54%	55.43%	3.99%	100.00%

There will be better management and protection of our existing tree stock

Responses stated for this statement to be met correct identification of early fungal problems of trees should be acted upon to prevent further damage. Concerns were raised over funding for maintenance costs against annual saving pressures.

Careful consideration should be given to the right tree, in the right place, for the right reason, with the right management

Responses didn't want this statement to be a barrier for planting trees, and concerns were raised over Equan's history of failing to take action in allowing developers to destroy trees where appropriate planning conditions were not in place.

*New tree planting will deliver multiple benefits*

This statement was received well but responses stated consideration should be given to the location, and to ensure the planting is suitable for both the local authority and the public, dependent on management and funding.

*We should ensure biosecurity of new tree stock through the application of strict standards **

Responses stated strict standards would generally be useful, but they should not become bureaucratic and political. Concerns were raised over this becoming a barrier towards people wanting to plant on their land.

There will be better post planting maintenance and management

Concerns were raised over the local authority having the appropriate resources, including staffing, finances and knowledge for not just the tree planting process, but the post-planting maintenance.
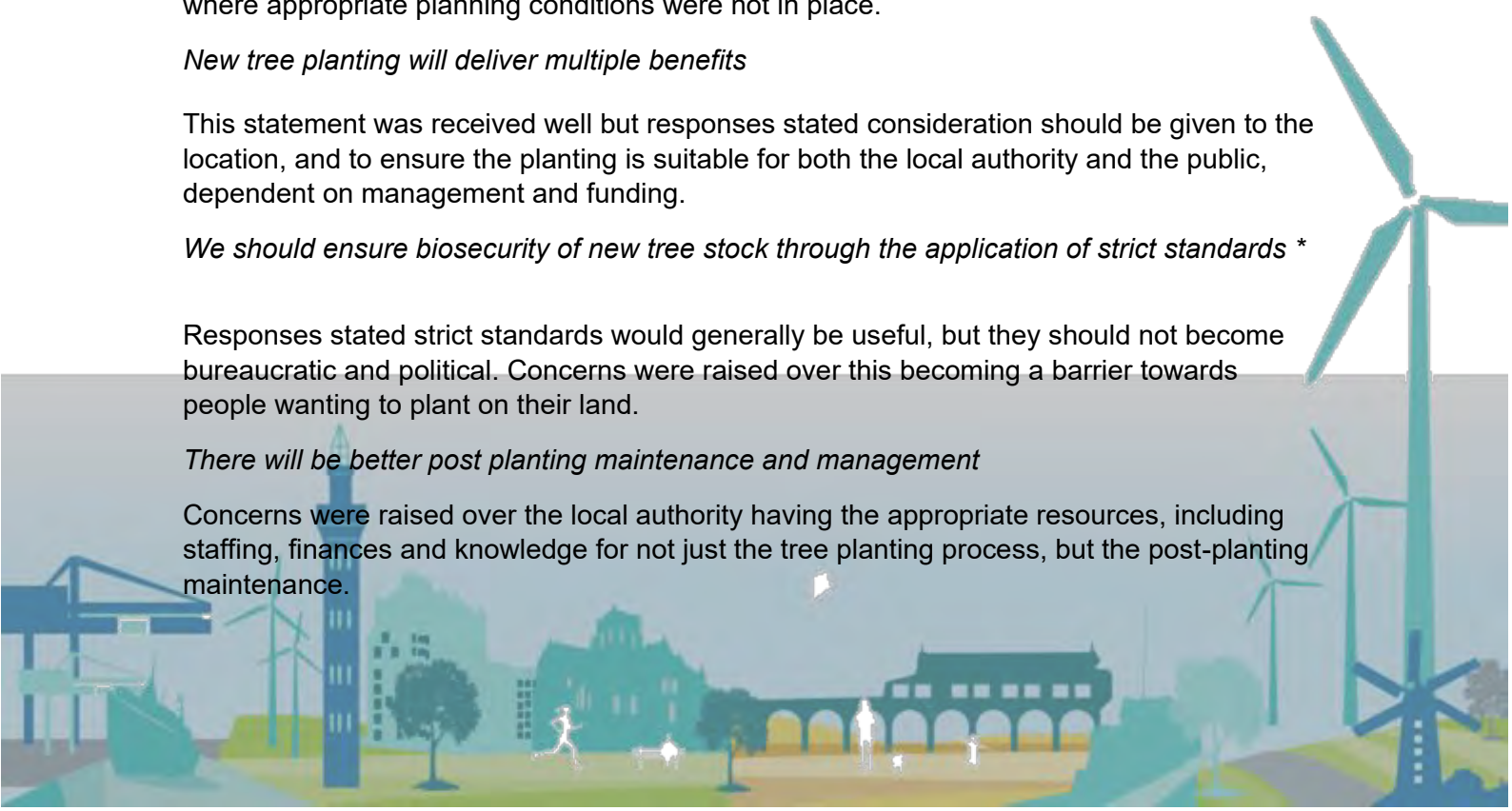
Q7 Based on the aims and objectives set out within the tree strategy, to what extent are you confident that the strategy will deliver on reaching the average tree canopy cover target of 16% in North East Lincolnshire by 2050.

Confidence	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Very confident	10	3.61
Largely confident	65	23.47
Limited confidence	140	50.54
No confidence	43	15.52
Don't know	19	6.86
Total	**277**	**100**
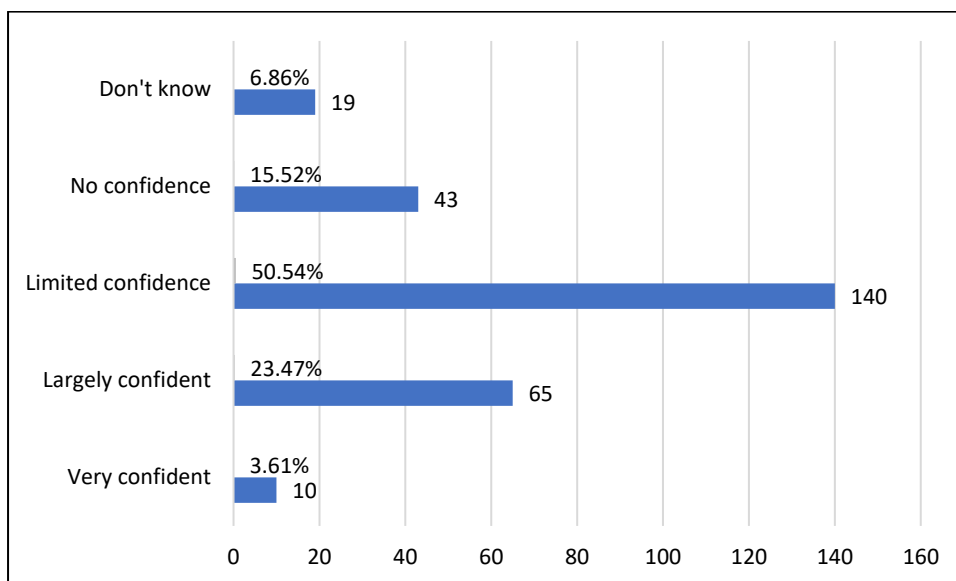
Numerous respondents who had limited or no confidence voiced concerns over the amount of land available to reach this target may be a problem, given a lot of homes are being built too. Concerns were also raised around having the appropriate resources, time, money and workforce to commit to the target, with few saying priorities are elsewhere in our local authority which may slow down the target process where other targets can take precedence respectively.

It was raised the current target seems 'too far away', and states no specifics to where the trees will be planted, when they will be, which species etc. Respondents also stated at times trees get removed then conversely trees get planting, further defeating the object and slowing the target down.

One respondent noted the idea of allowing the public to have the opportunity to suggest planting locations, providing a more personalised approach. Lastly, concerns were raised around the target due to respondents having previously been 'let down' in other means by local authority targets, reducing confidence in the current
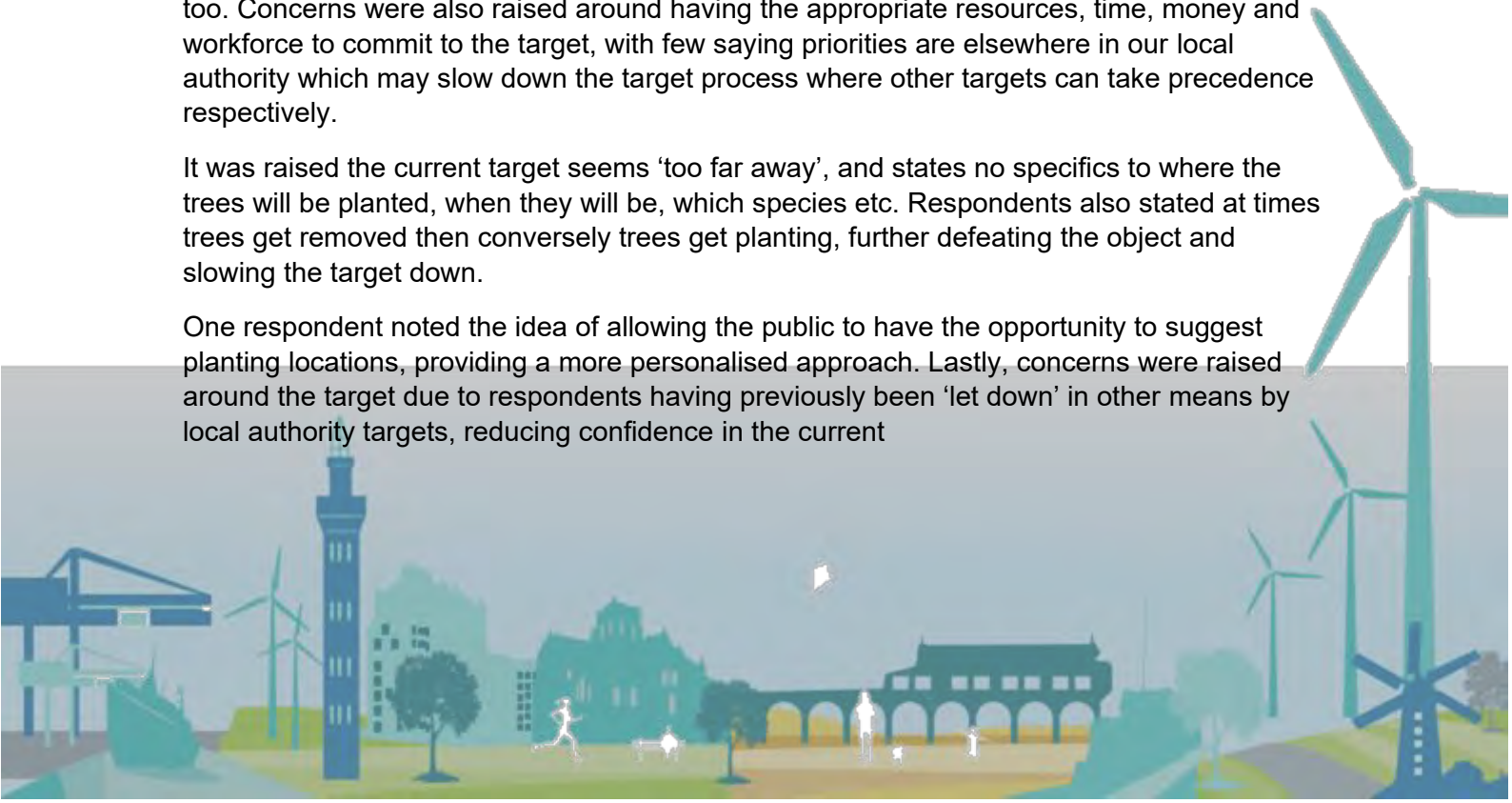
Demographics

Ward	Count (n)
Sidney Sussex	13
Croft Baker	21
Haverstoe	24
Heneage	11
East Marsh	5
Park	19
Scartho	25
Humberston and New Waltham	15
Wolds	16
Waltham	10
Freshney	18
Yarborough	22
Immingham	18
South	4
Out of area	4
West Marsh	13
Total	244

Age	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Under 18	1	0.38
18-24	2	0.76
25-34	12	4.55
35-49	46	17.42
50-64	85	32.20
65-79	98	37.12
80+	4	1.52
I prefer not to say	16	6.06
Total	264	100

Gender	Count(n)	Percentage (%)
Woman	138	53.49
Man	100	38.76
Non-binary	0	0.00
I prefer not to say	18	6.98
Total	258	100

Transgender	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	2	0.77
No	232	89.58
I prefer not to say	25	9.65
Total	259	100

Sexuality	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Straight	209	80.38
Lesbian	1	0.38
Bisexual	5	1.92
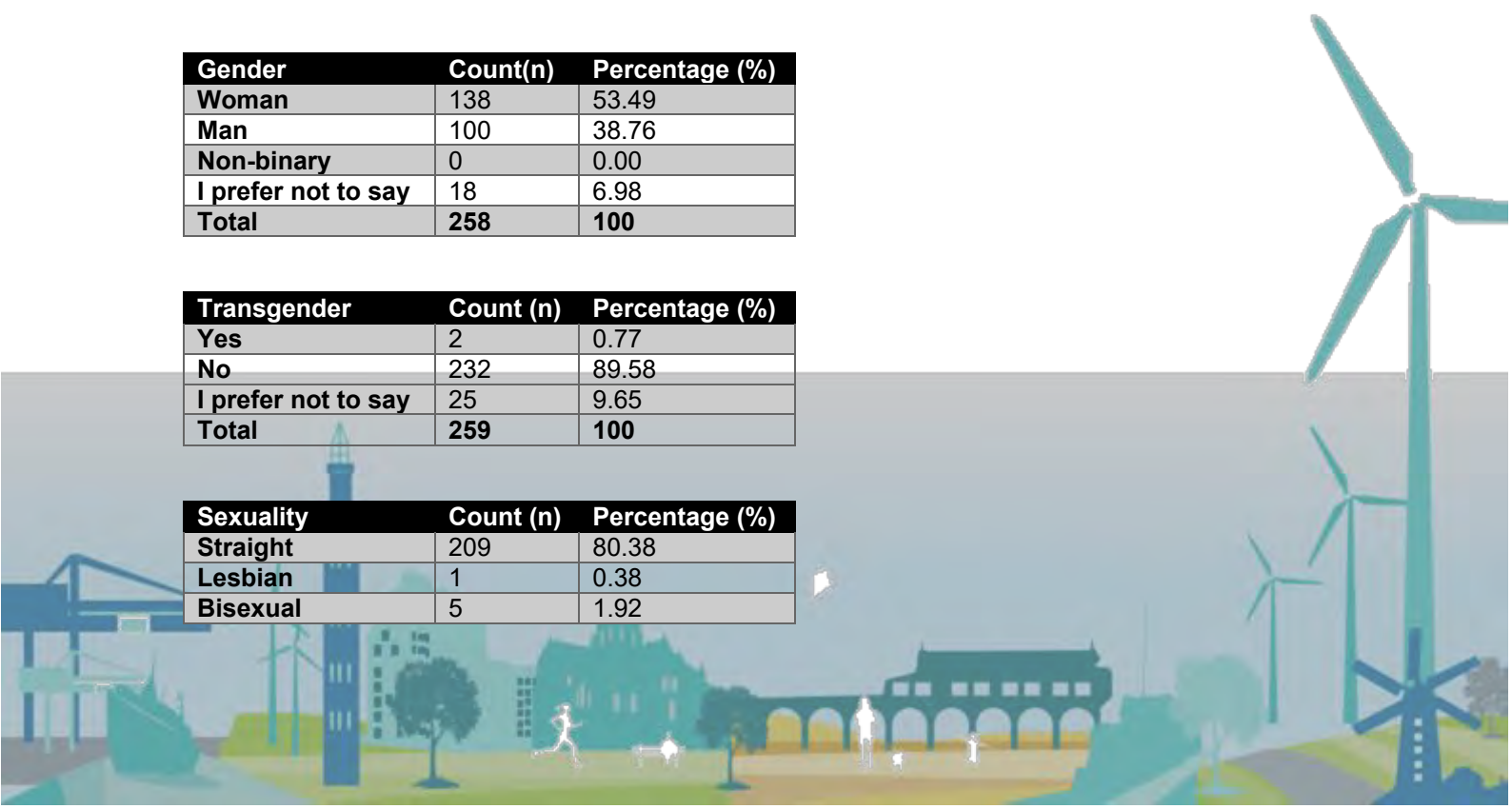
Gay	4	1.54
I prefer not to say	37	14.23
In another way	4	1.54
Total	260	100

Relationship Status	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Single	20	7.69
Married	136	52.31
Civil Partnership	2	0.77
In a relationship (living together)	27	10.38
In a relationship (not living together)	10	3.85
Widowed	15	5.77
Divorced	16	6.15
I prefer not to say	33	12.69
Total	260	100

Disability	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
No disability	158	53.92
Physical impairment such as difficulty moving your arms or mobility issues	28	9.56
Wheelchair user	1	0.34
Sensory impairment such as being blind or having a visual impairment	6	2.05
Sensory impairment such as being deaf or having a hearing impairment	18	6.14
Mental health condition such as depression, dementia or schizophrenia	14	4.78
Long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy	30	10.24
Learning disability or difficulty (such as Down's syndrome or dyslexia) or cognitive impairment (such as autistic spectrum disorder)	4	1.37
I prefer not to say	29	9.90
Other	5	1.71
Total	293	100

Religion or belief	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
Christian	107	41.15
Muslim	0	0.00
Buddhist	2	0.77
Sikh	0	0.00
Jewish	0	0.00
Hindu	1	0.38
No religion	93	35.77
I prefer not to say	46	17.69
Other religion	11	4.23
Total	260	100

Ethnicity	Count (n)	Percentage (%)
White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	222	89.16
White - Irish	1	0.40
White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1	0.40
White - Any other White background	3	1.20
Mixed - White and Asian	1	0.40
Mixed - Any other Mixed background	1	0.40
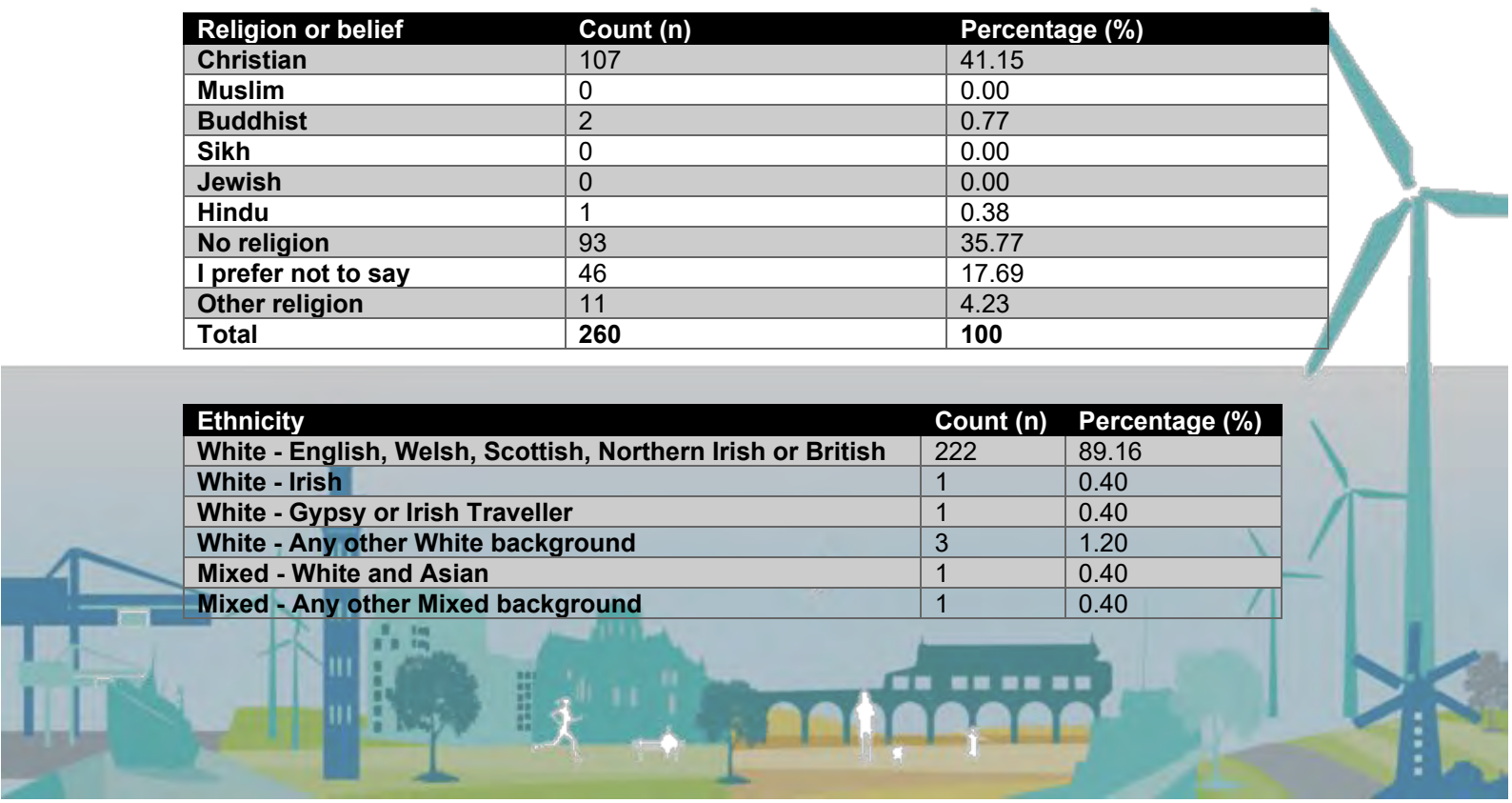
Mixed - Asian or Asian British-Indian	1	0.40
I prefer not to say	17	6.83
Any other ethnic group	2	0.80
Total	**249**	**100**

Appendix

Appendix A – Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following… North East Lincolnshire Council should: Numerated Qualitative Responses

Work towards reaching the national average tree canopy cover of 16% by 2050

10 respondents think the target should be higher than that of 16%, and should be 20-25% since we should strive to be above the national average, not a target; five respondents think the current target should be achieved sooner than 2050.

Two respondents voiced concerns over schools and housing being built, reducing the number of existing trees on the proposed land. Two respondents noted the importance of instead of aiming to achieve a generalised, national target, the target should be specific to the borough, taking into account appropriate consideration of habits and water management, especially since we are a coastal environment. It was also mentioned to plant trees dependent on type and purpose e.g. to encourage olive, walnut, pecan consumption in preference to high carbohydrate foods, for their proven chronic health benefits.

Preserve and enhance the green infrastructure

Two noted the current poor planning and maintenance of tree canopy coverage and shrubs, with one stating trees require adequate re-evaluation. Two respondents mentioned the importance of making use of unused fields and waste grounds to produce more green infrastructure, for example unused land in our town centre area.

Address the decline of trees within our urban environment

One noted the importance of where it is possible, to gain people's consent for addressing relevant declines of trees – and for this to only occur if it can be afforded. Another respondent noted how when you see declining areas green spaces in urban towns, it can drive visitors and tourists away.

Tackle the multiple threats to our tree population

It was noted the importance to remove diseased trees if they cannot be saved, and regular checks to be made on the tree population. It was also noted the recent neglect of green heritage in the way for new build housing being built.

Appendix B - Q6 In order to deliver on the standards of the Tree Strategy, to what extent do you agree or disagree that: Numerated Qualitative Responses

There will be better management and protection of our existing tree stock

Respondents stated that management should dependent on the type of Tree Protection Order (TPO) being used. It was also noticed people should be more able to identify and diagnose tree fungal problems quicker and more accurately as trees are falling and causing damage because of this.

The strategy should be matched appropriately to funding as maintenance costs are subject to annual saving pressures. It was also noted there should be more focus on fruit and nut-bearing trees. Few respondents required more detail to answer this question. Some respondents noted this standard wouldn't be achieved due to trees being planted and then 'forgotten' about, and the fact weedkiller is still being used around the base of trees and pathways are regularly damaged by these roots searching for water, as they have been tarmacked over.

Careful consideration should be given to the right tree, in the right place, for the right reason, with the right management

Respondents recognised that the statement should not be used as a barrier for planting and to not be a broad-ranging excuse to remove trees from streetscape. It was noted that previously Equans has failed to take appropriate action in allowing developers to destroy trees, and appropriate planning conditions have not been in place.

Instead, the strategy should deliver a commitment to recognise mature tree specimens which will expectantly cost more in paved areas but should be reflected upon in amenity and conservation value.

*New tree planting will deliver multiple benefits*

Generally, this standard was received well; but of respondents who did not agree with the statement, it was noted careful consideration has to be given to the types of trees and the location, and to ensure the tree planting is suitable for both the local authority and the public, dependent on effective management and funding.

One respondent stated the benefits need to be communicated better to residents.

We should ensure biosecurity of new tree stock through the application of strict standards *

One respondent stated the application of strict standards would be helpful, but only if it does not become bureaucratic, making the original task more difficult. Others were concerned this would create a barrier for people wanting to plant on their own land by taking away personal agency to create environments which work for the person on an individual basis. Concerns were also raised as the statement infers an excuse to defer planting due to lack of stock availability due to the excessively strict standing, which can thus reduce the eligible stock, or conversely increase the procurement cost.

One noted a level of calculated risk should be used in this instance to encourage community participation.
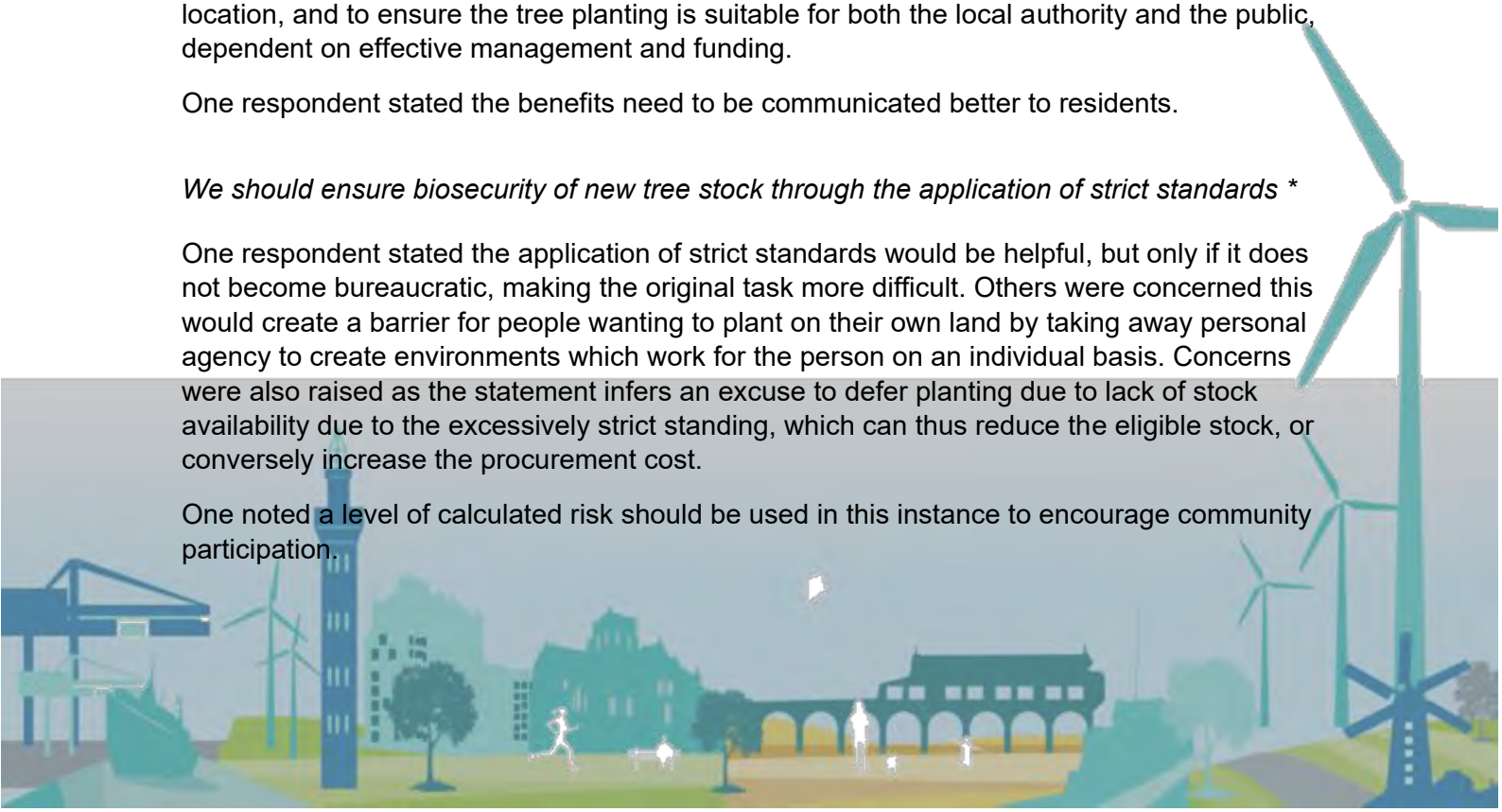
There will be better post planting maintenance and management

Numerous respondents voiced worries over the local authority having the appropriate staffing, resources, finances and knowledge to commit to better post-planting maintenance and management, with the worry stemming from a previous lack of resources.

For example, one respondent noted during the previous mitigation for the Suggits Lane Bridge, trees planted there have not been protected. Another stated a beating-up programme would be useful in regard to the statement, replacing successive lost trees over seasons on a regular basis.