

The London iTree Eco Project



The London iTree project is the largest tree survey of its kind in the world.

We are also doing this in a ground-breaking way, using trained volunteers to carry out the field survey.

The field survey work was completed by volunteer teams in 2014 and the results of the survey will be published in Autumn 2015.

What is iTree?

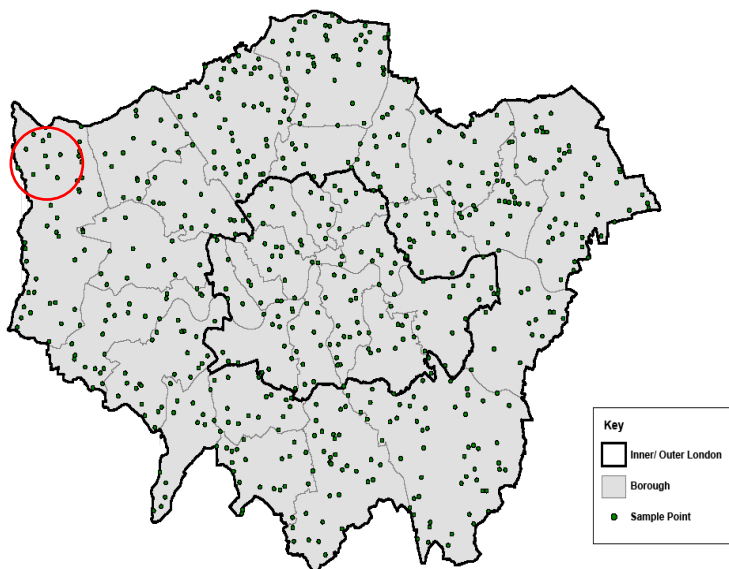
Whilst most people recognise the intrinsic beauty of London's trees, we often don't know or take for granted the other benefits that urban trees and woodland – which we collectively describe as the urban forest – provide to society. As a result they may be overlooked and not given the consideration or resources that they deserve.

iTree is a recognised method of valuing the ecosystem service benefits such as carbon sequestration and air pollutant removal that trees provide; it was devised in the US and has been used throughout the world. In Britain, places such as [Edinburgh](#) and [Torbay](#) have produced iTree reports, and at local level in London e.g. [Victoria Business Improvement District](#).

The aims of the project are to:

- promote London's urban forest and the benefits it provides
- provide a pan London picture of tree and woodland cover
- engage volunteers in trees and further opportunities to plant and manage them
- provide verifiable economic values to the benefits that the urban forest provides
- establish values that are a pre cursor to proper asset and risk management
- establish parity between the services that the urban forest provides with other recognised urban infrastructure such as street lighting and highways

What did the survey involve?



We couldn't field survey all of the trees in London so we randomly selected 725 plots across Greater London which provided a representative sample of the whole area. The plots could land anywhere in London - woodland, parks, buildings, gardens, factories, roads, rivers, zoos – including plots in the Thames and on top of buildings!

Each plot is circular with an 11.3m radius – this equates to just over 400 square metres, 0.1 acres or 0.04 hectares.

The survey teams took detailed records of trees that are within the plots including stem diameter, tree height, size of tree canopy and condition of the tree. In addition, the survey teams recorded the land use, amount of shrub cover and ground cover as these factors all affect the level of benefits that a tree can deliver.

Who did the survey, when and where?

Survey teams were allocated 10-12 plots that are clustered together, normally within a particular Borough.

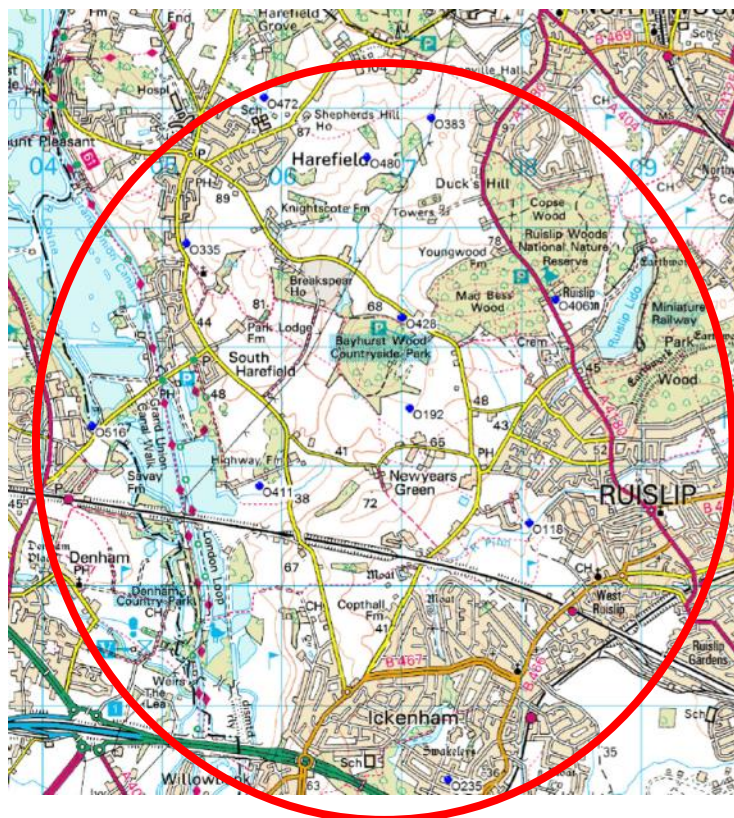
In this example, one team was allocated plots in the North West part of Hillingdon.

The plots - indicated by blue dots on the map to the right - fell on a variety of places including:

- agricultural land
- a nature reserve
- residential gardens

The survey teams are each made up of an experienced forester or arboriculturalist with 1-2 amateur volunteers.

All team members received iTree training to ensure the data collected is consistent across London, and the survey data sample checked for quality assurance purposes.



The survey was carried out during September and October 2014. Given the random nature of the sample plot selection, some of the survey was carried out on private land including residential gardens.

We are extremely grateful for the cooperation and support of landowners in allowing volunteers to access their land to carry out the survey.

The field data was quality checked and found to be of a high standard – a credit to the dedication of the surveyors and the specialist training provided.

How the information will be used

The information was sent to the US Forest Service to process and the initial results have been received. These will be analysed and interpreted and the full report of iTree London findings will be published in Autumn 2015. The nature of this particular method means it shouldn't be interpreted at a smaller scale such as Borough or plot, but it will provide valuable information at inner London, Outer London and pan London scale.

We expect the i-Tree information to be used in various ways to promote the benefits of London's urban forest and provide evidence that supports strategic programmes. The information will initiate a transformational change in attitudes towards urban trees to ensure London remains one of the greenest and most attractive cities in the world.

Project Partners

The project is a partnership project including the following organisations:

[Forestry Commission](#), [Greater London Authority](#), [London Tree Officers Association](#), [Trees for Cities](#), [The Tree Council](#), [Natural England](#) and [Treeconomics](#).