

London Workplan for 2013-2014

1 Purpose

This plan provides an overview of Forestry Commission activity in London in 2013-2014, how it meets government objectives and how it is achieved.

2 Vision

To support the protection, improvement and expansion of woodlands and trees in London, so they deliver multiple benefits and people value them.

3 Key Objectives

The FC will also deliver, with partners, the objectives of the [London Trees and Woodland Framework](#), which closely matches the FC corporate plan.

[FC Corporate Plan](#) objectives of particular relevance to London are as follows, but couched in an urban forestry context - i.e. collectively considering all trees in the urban environment and the delivery of economic, social and environmental benefits. The Governments Policy Statement on Forestry (Jan 2013) set out the following prioritisation:

- Protection, including building resilience in the resource and the sector
- Increase in the quantity and quality of tree and woodland management
- Expansion of woodland and tree canopy cover increase

We also want to:

- Ensure trees and woodland are valued by society
- Increase the proportion of the population who have woodland access near to where they live
- Focus on delivering woodland/tree management and creation/planting through green economy and community involvement

Increasing the quality and quantity of tree cover also relates to the benefits that the urban forest offers. For example, it can assist economic regeneration, improve quality of life, reduce the 'urban heat island' and reduce air pollution.

4 London context

Aspects of the Forestry Commission's work in London differ from its core organisational activity:

- Only 306 hectares of woodland is owned by the public estate in Greater London, all within the Borough of Havering and linked to Thames Chase Community Forest (so no urban woodlands, only peri-urban)
- Whilst the FC does not intervene at individual tree level, the scope of our activity in London uses the concept of the Urban Forest – the collective function and benefits that all of London's trees deliver, including street trees, parks, gardens and woodland
- London has always, and will continue to be, more focussed on delivering through partnerships than more direct approaches such as grant support. There is a wide array of excellent partnerships across the sector in London
- Given a population of 8.13 million people within London, a key priority is connecting people with trees and woodland, from public access and enjoyment of trees to active involvement in planting and management
- London is seen by many as a leader in urban forestry, and other urban areas across the country can learn from what has/is being done in London
- In the current economic climate, activities that support economic growth, generate jobs or develop skills are a particular priority for government and the Mayor of London. London's trees make it one of the greenest cities in the world, which attracts economic investment

5 FC priorities for 2013/14

The key priorities for the FC in 13/14 are:

Controlling Oak Processionary Moth:

- Working with other stakeholders to deliver the OPM control plan
- Distributing £2M of OPM funds to help landowners control OPM effectively
- Coordinating OPM survey work, data collection and dissemination
- Using plant health regulations and other tools to control OPM

Tackling other tree health issues:

- Implementing the chalara management plan
- Building resource and sector resilience against threats

Increasing the area of woodland in management:

- Promoting sustainable woodland management; taking opportunities to link management to economic or productive activity
- Providing financial support to owners/managers
- Promoting management plans as the foundation of sustainable management

I-Tree London project, working with partners to:

- Confirm the sample plots and survey data requirements

- Coordinate the set up of teams that comprise volunteers and professionals
- Train survey teams on iTree data collection
- Prepare for Summer 2014 survey

Supporting cross sector working through the RE:LEAF partnership:

- Contributing to London Tree Week activities
- Organising the RE:LEAF Tree & Woodland Awards
- Influencing RE:LEAF priorities to fit with pan London strategies

Carrying out our statutory functions and other obligations:

- Implementing forestry act, environmental impact and plant health legislation
- Oversee delivery of the Mayors Street Tree Initiative and RE:LEAF Community Grant Scheme

6 Other work

The priorities above will be the focus of FC resources; the following work areas will be supported where the opportunity/need arises and there is capacity. Whilst each work area has been allocated under our key priorities - protection, improvement or expansion - in reality they are often cross cutting.

Protection & Resilience

1. Data, evidence and advocacy work – coordinate and provide information that advocates the benefits of the urban forest
2. Regional plans – input to pan London plans where appropriate
3. Urban forestry strategies – promoting their production and implementation
4. Influence other regulations such as the TPO regulation changes
5. Support partnerships – such as LEPs, LNPs, All London Green Grid that help deliver FC objectives
6. Planning & construction sector – help ensure trees are identified and protected as part of sustainable development
7. Work standards – influence the development and implementation of good practice
8. BTP Barriers to tree planting report – facilitate work that takes forward the report recommendations, such as research on subsidence damage and pruning work
9. Develop and promote the Right Tree for Climate Change, to help landowners choose trees that are suited to the site and can adapt to climate change

Improvement

10. Investigate alternative ways to assess positive woodland management to identify the true extent of management and focus effort on truly neglected woodland

11. Encourage innovative ways to manage urban woodlands such as community management groups and social enterprises
12. Support market pull mechanisms – that encourage the sustainable use of tree and woodland products e.g. Grown in Britain

Expansion

13. Financial incentives to encourage tree and woodland planting, notably:
 - EWGS for woodland planting
 - Big Tree Plant
14. Support woodland potential calculations and suitability models with partners such as All London Green Grid, Local Nature Partnerships and Local Enterprise Partnerships to identify the scope for tree and woodland expansion

7 Tools for delivering FC objectives in London

A wide range of 'tools' will be employed to deliver our objectives in London:

- a. FC staff time – not only London based staff but those around the country e.g. Forest Research, National Expertise team
- b. Partnerships and projects
- c. FC legislation, notably Forestry Act & EIA
- d. Influence other statutory legislation e.g. Tree Preservation Orders, Planning, Wildlife & Countryside Act, Water Framework Directive
- e. Government Policy e.g. UK Forestry Standard
- f. Influence other policies and standards e.g. British Standards
- g. Financial support e.g. grant schemes, project funding
- h. Outreach e.g. literature, website, representation, presentations
- i. Knowledge & expertise, including research

8 Monitoring and reporting of progress against this plan

We will review London performance against corporate indicators as contained in the [Performance and Woodland Indicators report](#).

Throughout the year the FC will monitor progress against the key actions, reporting internally at regularly intervals. We will report to the London Regional Advisory Committee at least twice a year on progress and publish the report on the FC London website.

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