

Winner of the London Tree Officers
Association Individual Commitment Award:
Al Smith, Camden Council

The award was given for an individual employed professional within London who has shown consistent dedication and commitment over a prolonged period.

The judges were impressed by Al's long term professional dedication to arboriculture and urban forestry in London, making Camden a beacon of urban forest management.



(from right to left): Al Smith of Camden Council receiving his award from Matthew Pencharz (Senior Environment Advisor to the Mayor), Jake Tibbetts (Chair of the London Tree Officers Association) and Ian Gambles (Forestry Commission England Director)

They were particularly impressed by his leading role in developing tree management systems, including use of innovative GIS and field based technology. Nominations highlighted the training and mentoring role that he has provided numerous tree officers coming through the Camden ranks, and his support for the LTOA over many years including office space has been highly valued.

Al Smith said "It is an honour to be given this award by fellow professionals and supported by the London Tree Officers Association (LTOA) Executive Committee."

Al Smith

Al's 39 years in arboriculture started in the Royal Parks; he then spent a few years with the Greater London Council and L.B. Lambeth as an arborist, and the past 31 years with L.B. Camden. Al was one of the first tree managers to implement a system of cyclical inspection and maintenance with the use of a GIS linked tree database during the mid 1990's.

Camden's Tree section rapidly expanded during the 1990's as all Council owned trees were surveyed and captured onto the database. Al established a tree section which comprised a number of young tree officers over the years, many of whom have progressed within the profession to senior positions. There are many ex Camden Tree officers working across the country, in Europe, Canada and North America.

Al has been involved in and supported the LTOA from its early days with Camden being the host authority for the organisation during the past 12 years.

Al has brought about a wide ranging comprehensive arboricultural service within Camden. This includes the delivery of a cyclical programme for all Council owned trees, the constant development of IT technology, decay detection equipment and a skilled team of Tree officers. Al is currently in the process of upgrading Camden's tree database and investing in new mobile software and hardware. A new database reporting module will also enhance management monitoring and decision making.

In recent years Al's main focus has been on a more detailed approach to tree risk management. This includes intensifying inspection and maintenance regimes but also ensuring that suitable trees are planted to provide a sustainable tree population. Camden has also benefited from involvement in the Mayor of London's street tree planting grant initiatives.

Further information

- The [RE:LEAF Partnership](#)
- The 2014 Awards were organised by the Forestry Commission and Mayor of London, with support from a range of RE:LEAF partners
- We are grateful to the following organisations who provided financial support for the 2014 awards:

