



The Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG) has today published a new guide on urban trees for all those involved in making or influencing the decisions that shape our neighbourhoods towns and cities.

With over 80% of the UK's population living in urban settings, trees in and around built-up areas – which many call the “urban forest” – have become a key component of the infrastructure that makes places work, look and feel better.

***Trees in the Townscape, a Guide for Decision Makers*** takes a 21<sup>st</sup> century approach to urban trees, one that keeps pace with and responds to the challenges of our times. It offers 12 action-oriented principles spanning the range of planning, design, works and management issues that must be addressed for maximum economic, social and environmental returns.

34 case studies provide real-life examples of the principles in action, giving insight into best practice from all over England including Birmingham, Bristol, Hackney, Islington, Leeds, Newcastle, Oxford, Plymouth, Torbay, and Sefton as well as from further afield including the US and Hong Kong!

In keeping with TDAG's ethos of raising awareness of the role of trees in the built environment by facilitating cross-sector and cross-disciplinary collaboration, the development of this new guide was based on over 40 interviews and extensive consultation with civil engineers, insurers, developers, designers, planners, tree officers, sustainability specialists, arboriculturists, tree nursery managers, ecologists, academics and not-for-profit organisations dedicated to community engagement and trees. This project also benefited from the generous financial support of an astoundingly diverse range of sponsors.

Such bottom-up and collaborative approach has already paid back: ***Trees in the Townscape, a Guide for Decision Makers*** promptly received endorsements from 11 organisations, including the Forestry Commission, Bristol City Council, Birmingham City Council, York City Council, Torbay Council, Newcastle City Council, the London Borough of Hackney, Westminster City Council, the Victoria Business Improvement District, Peabody, Tor Homes...and hopefully, this is only a start!

Martin Kelly, Chair of TDAG, said:

*“In the current challenging economic times, this guide provides timely advice on how to ensure that investment to solve one problem also delivers, where possible, solutions to others. Urban trees provide in this respect a fantastic resource.”*

Pam Warhurst, Chair of the Forestry Commission, said:

*“We have supported the TDAG right from the very beginning as a founding member. We are proud to have been so involved in this excellent guide to support crucial local decision-making. Our councillors, parish council members and communities involved in neighbourhood planning make important decisions that affect the quality of life for all of us. They can now use sound, practical advice on how to make space for trees in towns to ensure they grow to last a lifetime. Our urban forest - the population of trees across our towns - will be better protected, improved and expanded through this initiative.”*

***Trees in the Townscape, a Guide for Decision Makers*** was launched alongside two other groundbreaking resources: a report quantifying and valuing tree benefits by the Victoria Business Improvement District and a toolkit on tree management for social landlords by Neighbourhoods Green. Together, these three resources provide the basis for a new departure in the way urban trees are used and integrated as part of the infrastructure that make places work.

The full guide is available as a free PDF at <http://www.tdag.org.uk/trees-in-the-townscape.html>

## NOTES:

### **1. Who to contact for further information, images, interviews and contact details of sponsors and endorsers?**

- Sue James ([sue.james1@virgin.net](mailto:sue.james1@virgin.net) Tel. 07906 849 674)
- Anne Jaluzot ([annejaluzot@gmail.com](mailto:annejaluzot@gmail.com) Tel. 07503 343 8482)

### **2. What is the Trees and Design Action Group (TDAG)?**

The Trees and Design Action Group is a pioneering group of individuals, professionals and organisations from both the public and the private sectors who have come together to increase awareness of the role of trees in the built environment throughout the United Kingdom.

The group shares the collective vision that the location of trees, and all the benefits they bring, can be secured for future generations by influencing the planning, design, construction and management of our urban infrastructure and spaces.

Established in 2007, it is not-for-profit and a-political. Its membership, on-line publications and information are free. This approach enables TDAG to assimilate ideas and knowledge independently or organisational hierarchy, profit or commercial interests.

Further details on current members and projects at [www.tdag.org.uk](http://www.tdag.org.uk)

### **3. Who has already endorsed *Trees in the Townscape*?**

- Cllr Simon Cook, Leader, Bristol City Council
- Cllr James McKay, Cabinet Member for a Green, Safe and Smart City, Birmingham City Council
- Cllr Nick Forbes, Leader, Newcastle City Council
- Cllr Philippa Roe, Leader, Westminster City Council
- Cllr Jeanette Richards, Executive Lead for Tourism and Environment, Torbay Council
- Cllr James Alexander, Leader, City of York
- Jules Pipe, Mayor, London Borough of Hackney
- Stephen Howlett, Chief Executive, Peabody
- Howard Toplis, Chief Executive, Tor Homes – part of the South Devon & Cornwall Housing Group
- Tom Foulkes, Chairman, Victoria Business Improvement District
- Pam Warhurst, Chair of the Forestry Commission

Endorsement statements can be found on TDAG's website at <http://www.tdag.org.uk/endorse-trees-in-the-townscape.html>

### **4. Who are the project sponsors?**

- Woodland Trust
- Forestry Commission
- Greater London Authority
- Capita Symonds
- Land Securities
- Victoria Business Improvement District
- Grosvenor Estate
- Barcham Trees
- English Heritage
- Horticultural Trades Association / Greening the UK
- The Mersey Forest
- Newlands
- Peel Land and Property
- Department for Business, Innovations and Skills
- Bennetts Associates
- Trees for Cities
- International Society of Arborists UK and Ireland Chapter
- Municipal Tree Officers Association
- University of Birmingham / Urban Futures
- Deep Root
- Peabody
- Subsidence Forum
- Aon
- Barrell Tree Consultancy
- Myerscough College

## 5. When and where was the launch, what happened there?

The launch event, titled '**Urban Trees, Sustainable Future**' took place at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore from 6-8.30 pm on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2012. It was jointly hosted by the Victoria Business Improvement District, Neighbourhoods Green and TDAG.

Speakers included:

- Rt. Hon. Norman Baker MP, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Transport on the radical shift underway in how trees are used and integrated to the infrastructure that sustains places that work (video talk)
- Jonathan Goring, Managing Director, Capita Symonds, introducing **Trees in the Townscape, a Guide for Decision Makers** and the emerging network of council leaders and other local champions embracing a strategic and collaborative approach to urban trees
- Peter Frackiewicz, Project Director, Land Securities, introducing **The Victoria Business Improvement District Green Benefits** report and highlighting new tools and opportunities for businesses to create stronger business environment by better using trees and other green assets
- Sue Forsyth, IMPROVE Project Manager, Peabody, introducing Neighbourhoods Green's online **Tree Management Tool-kit** and best practices from the social housing sector
- Ruth Duston, Chief Executive, Victoria BID, took questions and concluded

## 6. What were the two other resourced launched alongside **Trees in the Townscape** on June 26th?

- **The Victoria Business Improvement District Green Benefits** report quantifies and values the air pollution, amenity, carbon storage and sequestration benefits of trees as well as the storm water and surface temperature benefits of all existing green assets in the Victoria BID. This is complemented with estimates of the additional benefits that could be generated if the 5% canopy cover increase target set by the Mayor for London for Central London by 2025 and the potential green roofs and ground level green spaces investments identified by the BID are both realised. This assessment was conducted using the i-Tree Eco model as developed by the U.S. Forest Service, Northern Research Station, Capital Asset Valuation for Amenity Trees (CAVAT) and tools within the Green Infrastructure Valuation Toolkit. For further information contact Scott Nixon ([scott.nixon@victoriabid.co.uk](mailto:scott.nixon@victoriabid.co.uk) Tel. 020 3004 0787)
- Neighbourhoods Green's **Tree Management Tool-kit** is an online resource for social landlords on how to effectively manage their tree stock. This new resource offers a one-stop shop for housing providers seeking advice on how to manage risk and understand their legal responsibilities as well as providing practical tips on how to undertake a tree survey, develop a tree policy and involve residents in the care of trees. For further information contact: Nicola Wheeler ([Nicola.wheeler@housing.org.uk](mailto:Nicola.wheeler@housing.org.uk) Tel. 020 7067 1079)