



Action notes of meeting held on
Tuesday 21st June 2022 (via Zoom)
Community Tree Planting

Attendees

Nathan Edwards	Chair of SSTP (NE) (part of the meeting)
Christine King	Street Tree Action Groups/Street Tree Warden (CK)
Paul Selby	Street Tree Action Groups/Street Tree Warden (PS)
Nikki Rees	Sheffield City Council (NRe) – (Chair – second part of the meeting)
Gillian Charters	Sheffield City Council (GC)
David Wain	Sheffield City Council (DW)
Amanda Preston	Sheffield City Council (AJP) (notes)
Nicky Rivers	Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust (NRi)
Liz Ballard	Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust (LB) (part of the meeting)
Sarah Shorley	The Woodland Trust (SS)
Carl Ellison	Amey (CK)

Apologies

Joe Shute	Abbeydale Street Trees (JS)
-----------	-----------------------------

		ACTION WHOM
1.0	<u>Welcome</u>	
	NE welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2.0	<u>Scene Setting – Celebrating the successes and acknowledging the challenges of the pilots</u>	
	It was noted that there were lots of challenges with the pilot schemes but despite the problems encountered we did successfully plant street trees. It was agreed that we need to make sure that there is a smoother process this year, which is the purpose of the meeting.	
3.0	<u>SCC Political sign off</u>	
	Gill explained that she would need to take a report to committee to outline how the Community Tree Planting scheme will operate. She wanted to make sure that everyone understands that so that there are no surprises. Output to be a policy that can be taken to committee.	GC to draft / All to agree wording

		ACTION WHOM
4.0	<u>Key agenda items that SSTP needs to reach a consensus on for 2022-23 and beyond</u>	
4a	<p>Scope and scale of project per electoral ward</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the short term there is a cap of 100 community trees per planting season (the cap only applies to community trees and does not apply to strategic planting or to replacement tree planting). • There will not be a cap on the number of trees planted per ward at the moment, as we will work with what we know we can deliver for this planting season. • The partnership does wish to establish a mechanism to ensure a wider distribution of additional trees in future planting seasons, with a focus on more tree planting in deprived communities which currently have a lower distribution of trees. • The partnership would explore how to increase planting capacity from the 100 trees noted above. CE noted that if trees were to be planted in verges where conflicts were less likely this would increase capacity. The capacity restriction is in part due to the resource required to identify suitable locations. • When capacity allows, more work needs to take place by the partnership to work up a programme of activity for strategic planting of additional trees and identify suitable planting sites. <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS suggested that we work with the LACs to help identify strategic planting opportunities. Noting that we already have connections with the East LAC. • LB would like to be involved in a pilot project of strategic planting of additional trees in the East LAC area. • NRi suggested a FAQ sheet was created to help community groups identify locations. <p><i>We have not yet agreed how to progress strategic planting/partnership led community planting or the mechanisms for increasing planting capacity - this requires further discussion by SSTP.</i></p>	
4b	<p>Process for engaging with residents</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will lead on the formal consultation with residents posting letters to residents; it is helpful for the letters to have the official branding of the Council/Streets Ahead. • Before the point of the formal consultation, the individual or community group funding the planting will carry out informal ('warm up') engagement with residents. • The formal consultation letter will be sent to residents 5 houses either side of the tree on each side of the road, to be consistent with Amey's approach when they consult on fells. 	

		ACTION WHOM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wording of the letter to residents will make clear that the tree is an additional tree funded by donations from the local community. • By the time that the formal consultation stage is reached, the choice between going ahead with the additional tree or not going ahead is binary; at this stage SCC/Amey would not engage in conversations about changing the location or the species based on the consultation outcome, at this stage the tree will either be agreed for planting or rejected. • In the eventuality that the proposal for the new tree meets significant resistance from those consulted, leading officers to consider rejecting planting the tree, this will prompt a conversation with the funder. • ‘Significant resistance’ will usually be defined as more than 50% of responses to the consultation being against the additional tree OR a notable level of resistance leading to concerns that the new tree will be vandalised. • In situations that are not clean-cut plant or don’t plant, all discussed the need to discuss with the partnership to seek consensus. <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘warm up’ engagement exercise will hopefully mean that any significant concerns from residents in relation to the planting of the new tree would be picked up early in the process, and therefore by the time the formal consultation is carried out, this is unlikely to result in a strong negative reaction from residents. 	
4c	<p>Costings</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full cost of the planting of the new tree will be passed to the funder; as all agree that Amey should not be out of pocket for facilitating the planting. • Each year a price list will be provided by Amey by the end of April stating the cost of planting per tree for the forthcoming planting season, based on individual species of tree (this is different to the pilot project where the cost was the same per tree, regardless of species). • There will be an annual uplift each year on the cost of tree planting, reflecting increasing costs. GC will discuss with Amey to agree whether the annual uplift will be linked to RPI or whether it will be based on a calculation of the expected costs for the upcoming planting season and will communicate the decision on this clearly to the Partnership as soon as possible. • As we are late with the process this year, due to delays evaluating the pilots, CE will produce the price list for the forthcoming planting season as soon as possible and will share this with the Partnership. <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A potential risk was flagged by NRi that providing the price list broken down by species could lead funders to choose the cheapest tree. • Amey were clear that if funders wished to select a species of tree that is unsuitable for the location then it would be rejected and a conversation would take place with the funder about selecting a more suitable species. 	<p style="text-align: center;">CE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GC</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CE</p>

		ACTION WHOM
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community tree planting will need to be monitored over time to ensure that there are no unintended consequences in terms of species of trees being planted. At a future point in time when the Partnership makes progress on the 'planting palette' for individual suburbs, this will help to inform conversations with potential donors about suitability of species; donors will be asked to select a species of tree from the agreed palette. 	
4d	<p>Process for selecting/agreeing a location</p> <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wherever possible donors will be asked to suggest 2-3 locations for their tree; this will mean that if one or more locations are rejected, there should still be at least one location that is both suitable from Amey's perspective and acceptable to the donor. If Amey reject a location, their decision is final. In this situation, Amey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - will clearly explain the reason(s) why the site has been rejected and will engage in conversations to find another location (this will be made easier by funders suggesting 2-3 locations at the outset of the process, as per above) - will not spend time and resource negotiating about individual locations that they have already said are not suitable <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCC are in the process of creating the 'dos and don'ts' guide for community tree planting and this will help to guide funders to select appropriate locations. 	
4e	<p>Rejected sites:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Process for where a crowd funder has paid but their desired location is found to be not viable (before the stage of the pit being dug) <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In this scenario the donation will be returned to the donor. <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the future when we have set up the city-wide fund for additional tree planting we could ask the donor if they would like their donation to be used philanthropically, to fund an additional tree in another part of the city, however we are not at that stage of maturity with the project yet and we do not yet have a fund established to facilitate this. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How to account for the costs of rejected dug pits 	

		ACTION WHOM
	<p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>ideal solution</i> would be for an additional small amount of money to be charged to each tree donor to create a pot of money which would be used to cover the costs incurred for rejected dug pits - this would spread the risk across all donors and would ensure that Amey are not asked to foot the bill for these costs themselves. However, Gill stated clearly that any changes to the way that the donations are received by SCC would need to be discussed with SCC Legal to ensure that there are no legal concerns. Nicky Rivers would investigate whether it is possible for SRWT to manage the fund. Gill Charters will work with NRI to ensure that any proposal regarding funding does not compromise the process that has been agreed with SCC Legal for receiving the community donations. <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All efforts will always be made to avoid the scenario of rejected dug pits occurring, however there are occasions when this does and will happen - this is usually due to inaccurate utility drawings. <p><i>We have not yet agreed how the costs of rejected dug pits will be accounted for this season and this requires further discussion by SSTP.</i></p>	NRI/GC
4f	<p>Timelines and key deadlines within the annual cycle – expectation management</p> <p>It was agreed that the timescales for <i>this planting season</i> would be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE will seek information about stock availability from the supplier asap and will share this with PS CE will make a judgement about reserving stock from the supplier during July, based on conversations with PS about likely scenarios PS will submit information on all proposed donations/sites for this season's planting by the end of July Sites will be assessed for suitability during August, with clear communication to PS in the event of any sites being rejected (refer to points agreed above) Formal consultation will take place during September (refer to points agreed above) Stock will be ordered by Amey after the consultation outcomes are known, in line with when Amey can fit the planting into their schedule <p>It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The only community planting scheme going ahead this season is PS's - he is expecting there to be between 40 and 55 trees. Amey was very clear that its own contractual obligations for planting would take precedence over community tree planting. <p><i>Timelines and key deadlines for future planting seasons have not yet been agreed, although it is noted that timescales will be earlier than those outlined for this season.</i></p>	CE CE PS CE/DW DW CE

		ACTION WHOM
5.0	<u>Any other urgent issues to raise and confirmation of further items requiring discussion by SSTP in relation to Community Tree Planting</u>	
	<p>Due to a lack of time there was no opportunity to raise any other issues.</p> <p>It was agreed that the following items would need to be discussed and agreed by SSTP in the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to progress strategic planting/partnership-led community planting • The mechanisms for increasing community planting capacity • How the costs of rejected dug pits will be accounted for this season (assuming that the longer-term solution suggested above will not be ready in time for this season) • Timelines and key deadlines for future planting seasons • Allowance of Rosaceae for community planting schemes • Maintenance arrangements • Support for potential donors, including a) Update on community briefing note about identifying appropriate locations & b) Hand holding/capacity to do this • Lead for Gift Aid 	