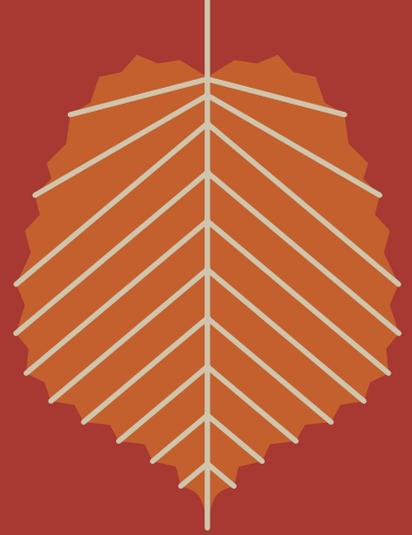
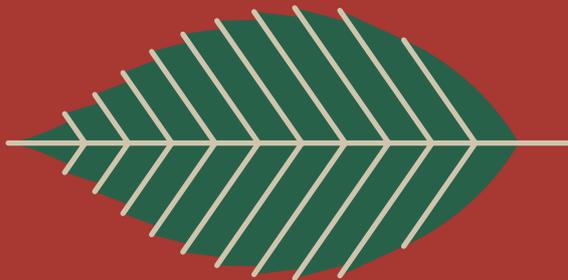
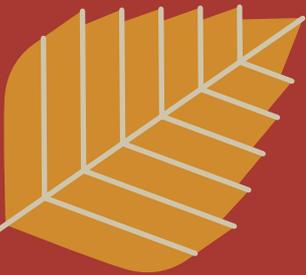
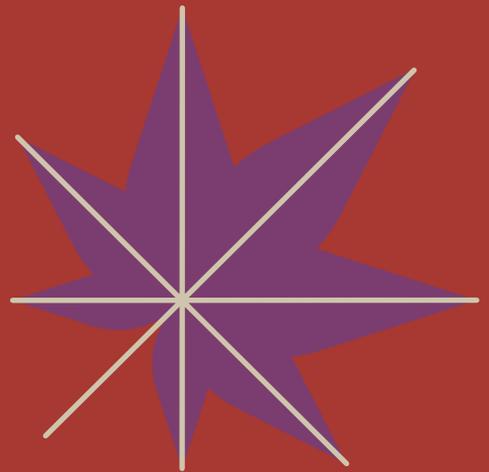
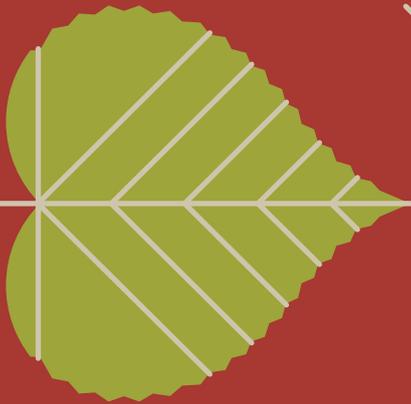
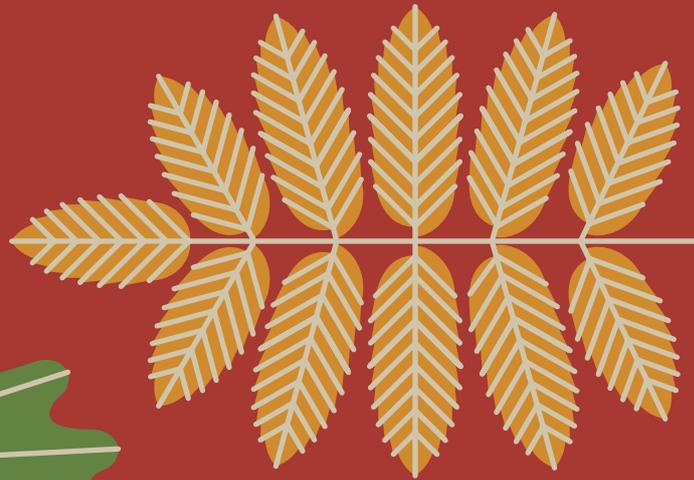




Sheffield Street Tree
Partnership



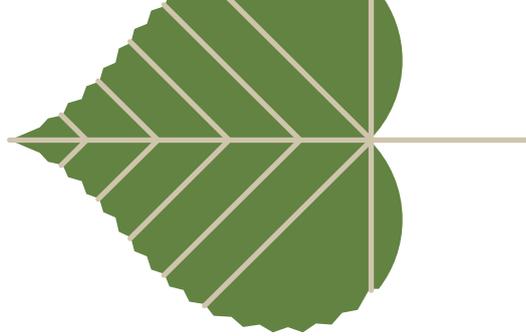
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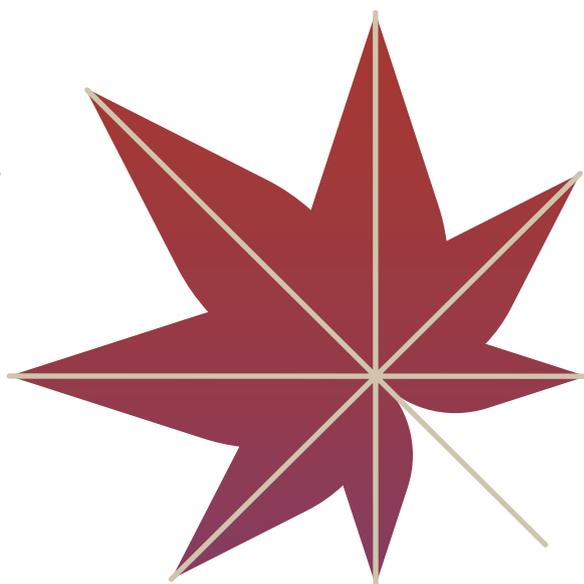
Sheffield &
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Wildlife Trust







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Introduction

For 2024/25, this period reflected a palpable step up in the level of challenges that the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership has chosen to take on, reflecting the maturing nature of the relationship, the trust that has been rebuilt along the way and the spirit of a collaborative approach which has become embedded as business as usual between Partners.

This has involved navigating a period of transition in leadership, personnel and Partnership members across many organisations, whilst working through more complex and interdependent challenges compared to previous years. Changes in leadership and membership across partner organisations present a risk to continuity and institutional memory. We are formalising succession planning and knowledge transfer processes to ensure the Partnership remains resilient.

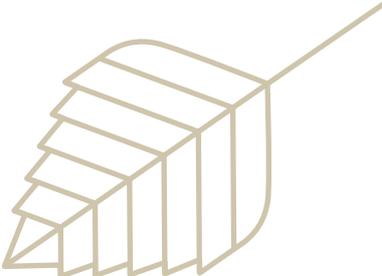
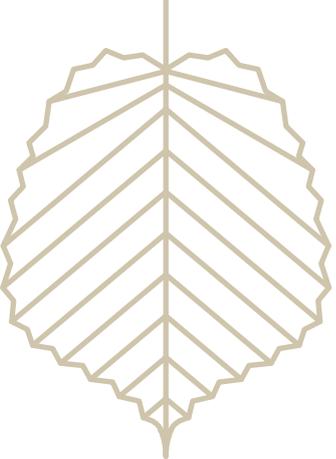
While earlier stages of the strategy were marked by quick wins and visible progress, the last 12 months have required a more measured, thoughtful approach as we worked together to tackle deep-rooted challenges that spanned across multiple sectors, including urban planning, community engagement, and tree equity.

The delivery of key initiatives has therefore been slower than anticipated. Significant amounts of time and energy have been invested by many partners to achieve the collaborative progress made on the Core Investment Streets (CIP) project. The Partnership recognises that the pace of delivery has slowed due to the increasing complexity of projects and changes in partnership support. To mitigate this, we have delegated key tasks to focused working groups and will undertake a strategy review in 2025 to streamline processes and maintain momentum. Whilst this has absorbed considerable resources and attention, achieving the milestone of having all outstanding streets designed by the March 2024 deadline and followed through to construction and completion of eight streets reflects a major achievement for the Partnership and has delivered long awaited refurbishment and rehabilitation of the roads for residents in these communities.

We also recognise that much of the work of the Partnership, once started, needs resources to continue. Examples such as Sheffield’s Tree Cities of the World status need re-application annually. Support for the City’s Street Tree Wardens, the organisation of an annual celebration event, the monitoring and input into consultation processes, and evaluation of complex technical data for third party fells, etc, all need ongoing and sustained input.

Given that many of the Members of the Partnership volunteer their time, knowledge and expertise over and above their day-to-day roles, delivering complex, ongoing and large-scale pieces of work and projects can be time consuming and can limit our capacity as volunteers to deliver more widely against other objectives.

To ensure that we can refocus and streamline our efforts moving forward, the Partnership has decided to delegate the work related to the remaining CIP streets to a dedicated task and finish group. It is noted that Partnership members contribute on a voluntary basis, which limits our capacity to deliver large-scale or ongoing projects. We are exploring options to increase paid support and secure additional resources to ensure continuity and reduce the risk of volunteer burnout.



This decision paves the way for us to adopt a more project-focused delivery model, one that prioritises items such as strategic planning, tree equity and focuses on the long-term sustainability of our urban forest. Despite the fact that the Partnership has seen some changes in personnel across partner organisations, we remain deeply appreciative of the hard work and dedication of all those involved, especially those who have contributed and since moved on. Their efforts continue to shape the path ahead.

As we look towards 2025/26, the focus will shift to reviewing and refining the strategy itself, making actions easier to implement, track, and evaluate. The goal will be to enhance the efficiency of our efforts and ensure that the strategic planning projects, including the development of the planting palette, are delivered in a more streamlined and impactful manner.

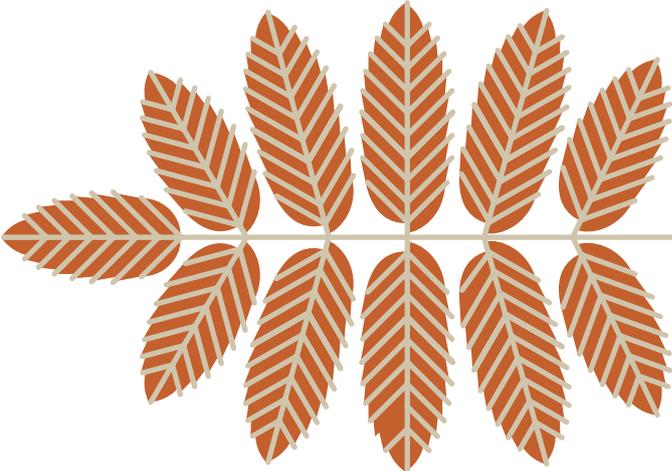
The Partnership’s vision is for a network of trees that Sheffield can be proud of well, maintained and cared for; resistant to the threats of disease and climate change; delivering many benefits for people and the environment. To achieve this, six Outcomes have been identified, each with ambitious action plans to realise them. This report sets out the additional progress made during 2024 to achieving each action, and the cumulative impact against each Outcome that this has had.

The action plans remain live and will continue to evolve as new opportunities, priorities and challenges emerge.

This is the Partnership’s third annual report.

Nathan Edwards
Chair of Sheffield Street Tree Partnership

Rowan
Sorbus aucuparia



OUTCOME 1

Our street trees are **sustainably** and **carefully managed** and maintained in accordance with **best practice**

This outcome focuses on valuing and looking after Sheffield's street trees so that they remain a valuable asset for their communities.

Outcome 1 summary table

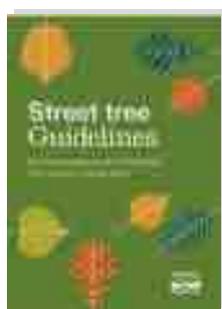
Action ref	Action description	Action status
1.1	Work towards an independent accreditation of street trees	Complete
1.2	Promote and have oversight of the city's approach to street tree management	Complete
1.3	Review, refine and publish the decision-making process for managing Sheffield's street trees	Complete
1.4	Update contract methods statements and management documents	Complete
1.5	Consider ways to influence planning and development e.g. through a Supplementary Planning Document	In progress
1.6	Explore ways to promote existing standards for working in the vicinity of street trees and encourage adherence by all contractors	Ongoing
1.7	Develop an online, user friendly, interactive and live tree map to aid tree management and community reporting	In progress
1.8	Identify important existing and future 'Treescapes' in the city to inform tree officers' management and planting decisions	In progress
1.9	Submit application for Tree Cities of the World recognition	Complete

Further information

1.1 Independent accreditation of street trees

Sheffield City Council was the first Local Authority Globally to achieve PEFC Trees Outside Forests certification in 2021 for sustainably managing its street trees.

The Partnership were a major element of the audit process both in a facilitatory manner as well as providing interviews, testimony and experiences as part of a wider technical, operational and data-led audit of operations. More information about the PEFC certification can be found in our 2022 Annual Report.



1.2 Street Tree Guidelines

This has been achieved and more information about this action can be found in our 2022 Annual Report.

1.3 Decision making process for managing Sheffield's street trees

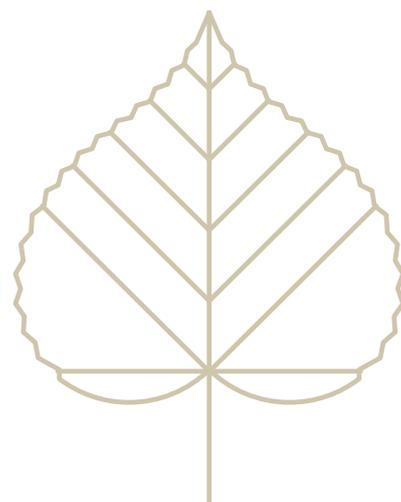
Prior to November 2023, public consultations took place on all street trees managed by Streets Ahead, regardless of condition. In practice, very few people opposed the felling of trees that were dead, diseased, or reported as having structural failings.

During the last year, Section 115 of the Environment Act 2021 has been implemented, which has placed a duty on authorities to consult on the felling of street trees.

Changes to the consultation process in Sheffield have been made to bring what we do in line with the national position. This now exempts trees that are dead, dying, or dangerous (which may be due to decay fungi or disease). Trees which are explicitly listed in an approved planning application are also exempt.

All trees proposed for removal are now shown on an online searchable map as well as physical notices placed upon trees. The online map is available at: [Managing and looking after street trees | Sheffield City Council](#)

More information about the new guidance can be found [here](#).





**Andy Greenwood with a Turkish hazel,
Oxford Street**

1.4 Update contract methods statements and management documents

Following publication of the Lowcock Report in March 2023, Amey SPV, Amey LG and Sheffield City Council worked to amend some items of wording within the PFI contract documentation in order to remove any wording which could be perceived or read to infer that Amey had “targets” for removal of trees over the lifespan of the contract.

Management documents such as the Annual Tree Management Plan are routinely updated by subject matter experts employed / appointed by Amey and submitted to the Authority under what is known as the Contractual Review Procedure. This occurs at regular prescribed intervals, with a minimum submission of once per year.

Amey’s Five-Year Tree Management Strategy has now been superseded by the Street Tree Partnership Strategy as the strategic direction of travel and is therefore no longer compiled or submitted as a standalone document.

Amey’s proposals are checked and verified by subject matter experts employed / appointed by the Authority as well as being shared with SSTP members. Any proposed felling works are published on an online map on the Council’s website which is accessible and searchable by the public.



Contractual Method Statements, whilst not public facing, are updated whenever there is a need to reflect changes in legislation, best practice or operational approach from Amey.

The updating of Method Statements is done using a contractual Change Notice process. Limited funding for surveys, biodiversity monitoring, and volunteer training poses a risk to the delivery of some actions. We continue to seek external funding and are reviewing our approach to ensure that available resources are used as effectively as possible.

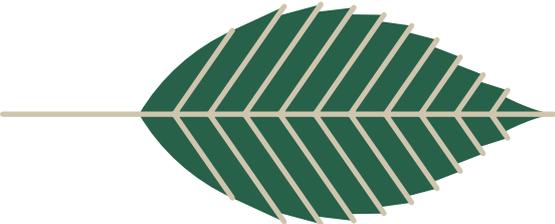
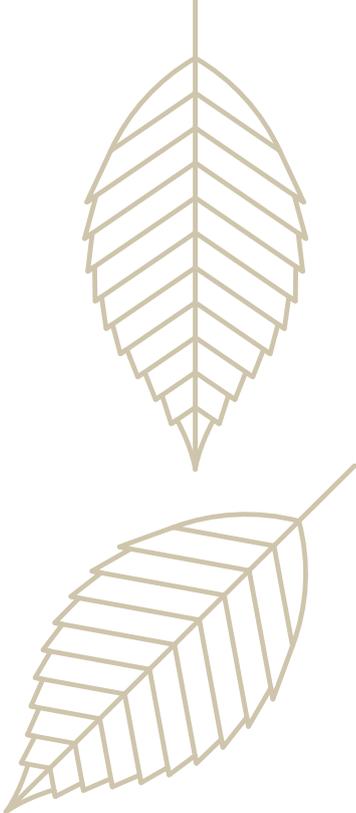
With a new “Small Value Change” process having been agreed by SCC’s Waste and Street Scene Committee in December 2024, this is hoped to now allow for small changes and innovations to be incorporated into Method Statements with minimal administration - enabling SCC and Amey to move quickly to change things to support the work of SSTP in driving best practice - for example allowing us to trial innovations and enabling pioneering research projects using highway trees in Sheffield.

Recent changes to contract terms and ongoing updates to method statements are designed to ensure transparency and compliance. We continue to work closely with partners to manage contractual risks and maintain public trust.

1.5 Consider ways to influence planning and development

The SSTP have made and continue to be involved in representations to SCC’s planning department with regards to applications that propose the removal of highway trees, and / or trees that are prominent from the highway. Representations include objections in principle and suggestions regarding the inclusion or wording of planning conditions relating to highway trees.

SSTP will work with SCC to support its development of a new Supplementary Planning Document once the new Sheffield Local Plan 2025 has been adopted.



Wild cherry
Prunus avium

1.6 Explore ways to promote existing standards for working in the vicinity of street trees and encourage adherence by all contractors

In April 2024 a representative from The UK Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee (HAUC) came to our first away-day of the year; this was particularly pertinent as the SSTP was in discussions, at that time, with numerous cable providers around plans to extend Sheffield's broadband network.

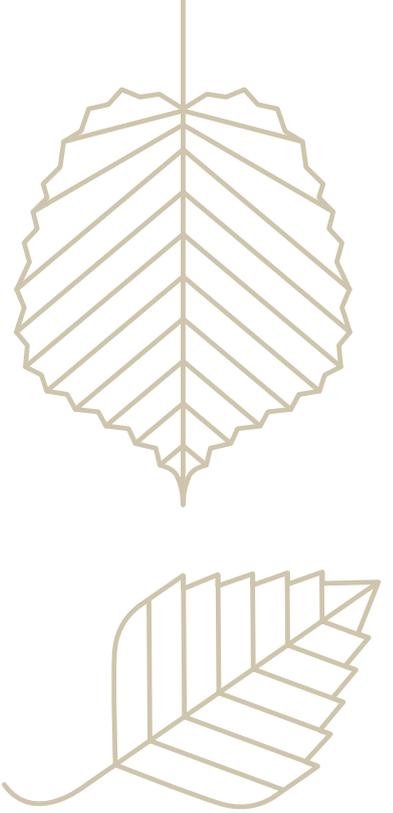
In the run up to the away day, and following this meeting, the Council, with support from the SSTP, had success in working proactively with utility companies such as Alt-Net (high-speed fibre broadband) providers to instil the importance of working carefully and respectfully around trees to ensure they are not damaged whilst managing, installing and maintaining above and below ground infrastructure.

SCC officers also provided in-person briefings and sessions with Alt Net staff members and executives alike to educate around the need to avoid pruning of highway trees during installation of overhead cabling, and instead use alternative methodologies or cable protection technologies for cables within the canopies of highway trees.

SCC Network Management have worked closely with telecommunications providers installing mobile phone infrastructure and signal masts over the last year to ensure that future conflict with highway trees is designed out at the planning stage, and seeking for equipment to be relocated if necessary through negotiation with providers, safeguarding highway trees from unnecessary pruning works.

Partners discussed their responses to the consultation on revising "B5837 - Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction". This is relevant in providing guidance to the construction sector on elements like the size of the protected area around trees and the size of roots that can be cut as well as protection arrangements for highway trees during construction of new developments adjacent to the highway.

BS 5837 is now regarded as the absolute minimum baseline standard for tree protection of highway trees for all developments and planning applications and significant work has been done with the SCC Development Control team to embed this as the status quo moving forward, with a number of planning applications formally resisted due to lack of compliance. This also saw the first ever



highway Tree Preservation Orders made in Sheffield to ensure that development which did not respect the Root Protection Area of Highway Trees could not go ahead without due consideration.

1.7 Develop an online, user friendly, interactive and live tree map to aid tree management and community reporting.

The Watering Champions App is still in development. The App has been developed, however, there remains issues around how this is shared externally, and how this is managed so that it remains current.

Until this is resolved Sheffield Tree Action Groups will continue to provide information on the location of newly planted trees on their social media page and alongside the Street Tree Wardens will encourage people to water new trees.



1.8 Identify important existing and future ‘Treescapes’ in the city to inform tree officers’ management and planting decisions

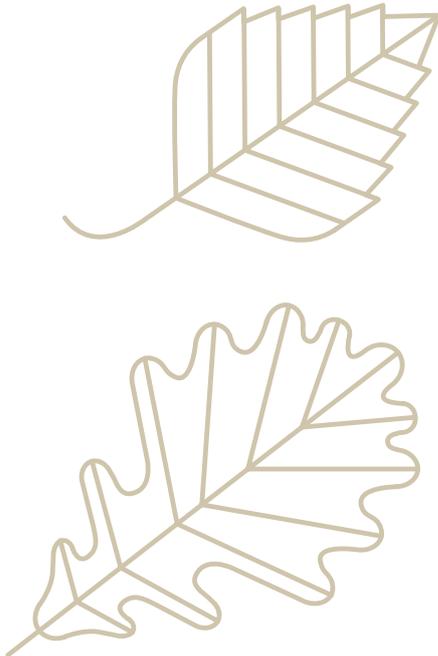
Two workshops were held during the year to consult widely and develop the scope of our new Strategic Planting Palette. The intention is to create a palette to aid spatial species selection, that reflects the multiple characteristics of a given area, including its heritage, tree equity, and biodiversity, etc, so that planting choices can be tailored to deliver the greatest possible ecosystem service benefits and develop diversity and future climate resilience for the city as a whole.

The task and finish group working on this action continues to make good progress, both in terms of how the palette would operate / be used, as well as the tree species that will be embedded within the palette to choose from.

1.9 Submit application for Tree Cities of the World recognition

Supporting SCC to gain and maintain Tree City of the World certification is a way for the Partnership to demonstrate our commitment to good management of urban trees. In order to achieve certification you have to meet five core standards for your urban forest management. Maintaining certification is equally important, and this was achieved again for 2023.

The Partnership will continue its work to maintain certification, and an application for 2024 will be submitted in January 2025; note, recognition is granted subsequently.





OUTCOME 2

Our street trees are **more resilient** through the type and age of trees we plant and **how we manage** the current street tree stock

This outcome focuses on the Partnership's ambition to ensure Sheffield's street trees are more resilient to the effects of climate change and other threats such as pests and diseases.

The following is based on a network of 35,859 trees, as at July 2024.

Outcome 2 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
2.1	Annual review of these measures	Ongoing
2.2	Cyclical tree inspection of at least once every 3-5 years	Ongoing
2.3	Review the current age profile and consider approaches to increase resilience	In progress
2.4	Develop a thorough species selection process for replacements and replanting, with reference to best practice	Ongoing
2.5	Monitor and report the planting of cultivars on the network with the aim of optimising their use	Complete
2.6	Support the establishment of a network of local provenance tree nurseries	In progress

Further information

2.1 Annual review of these measures

The tree network when initially passed over to Streets Ahead was far less diverse than it is now. 95% of the network was in just seven families; now it's in ten families and the proportions of the most numerous families has been reduced. There are guidelines for desirable proportions (F Santamour, 1990) which recommend no more than 30% of any family, no more than 20% of any genus and no more than 10% of any species. The family Rosaceae which contains cherry, hawthorn, rowan and other small trees suitable for urban networks remains a little high at 36% though it is reducing over time.

It is noted however, that although we should avoid significant domination of any one species for network resilience, it wouldn't be effective for strict adherence to mitigate against planting known high performers in favour of riskier alternatives. An example of this is the Sycamore, where its prevalence is slightly higher than desired at 10.6%, but as a good replacement host for species displaced by Ash Dieback it will continue to be used.

Currently the urban tree network is composed of 34 families, 76 genera, 191 species, hybrids and cultivars whose origin can't be defined at species level, and 237 distinct botanical names. This is unchanged from 2023, but an increase from 2022. It's possible to run out of new tree species that are both available and suitable for the current conditions, though climate change is likely to suggest new types in the future.

90.3% of trees are classed as being in Fair or Good condition; the majority of these are classed as Fair.

In terms of Category (BS5837) 41.5% of the network is classed as either A (High Quality) or B (Moderate) though only 1.8% are classed as being of High Quality. The ward with the highest proportion of A/B trees is Beauchief and Greenhill, followed by Nether Edge and then Mosborough.

Both Condition and Category are 'tracker' measures; once the right tree has been selected, planted and watered to help it establish, the rest is up to the tree to do and there's little that can be done to influence these. The values are relatively stable, but if we started to see dramatic changes that would indicate something that we needed to investigate though in practice the tree inspectors will notice large-scale changes first.



English Oak
Quercus robur

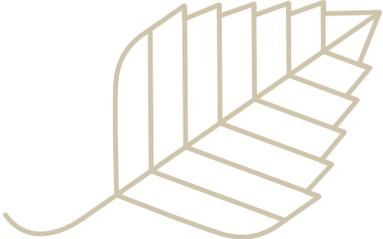
2.2 Cyclical tree inspection of at least once every 3-5 years

Trees are inspected on a rolling five year programme, unless factors such as defect or disease indicate a higher frequency. For example, trees with Ash Dieback are surveyed on an annual basis, and this enables Streets Ahead to monitor disease progression in terms of the rate the tree declines. Street Ash trees are not declining as fast as initially predicted, so are being retained on the network for longer, where it is safe to do so.

2.3 Review the current age profile and consider approaches to increase resilience

One of the challenges managing street trees is ensuring the age-profile of the stock optimises benefits while ensuring succession. As mature trees deliver the greatest benefits, the right balance of mature, maturing and newly planted trees needs to be struck to ensure future stability against a background of changing climate.

As in previous years 62% of the network is maturing, with no change in the breakdown between new, young, semi-mature and early mature trees. This is because the number of trees replaced each year is also stable, so as trees are maturing, the number of young trees is replenished. There’s very little research on what a ‘perfect’ age profile would look like, so as long as good new trees are being planted the age profile looks healthy.



2.4 Develop a thorough species selection process for replacements and replanting, with reference to best practice

Sheffield has had a tree palette for developers which was conceived by the Urban Landscape Design team prior to implementation of the Streets Ahead contract which served as the initial baseline for Amey's species selections in Sheffield from 2012.

Over time, Tree Inspectors at Amey used their longstanding knowledge of the city and expertise to develop a palette of replacements to choose from beyond this baseline, and variance in street trees began to evolve in an organic way, being cognisant of emerging pest and disease threats, the challenges of climate resilience, lessons learned in Sheffield from previous years' planting successes or failures within specific climatic domains or suburbs of the city - as well as nursery stock availability and cultivar innovation.

Over time, this became more closely linked to the TDAG *Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure: A Guide for Specifiers* document, published in 2019, although the situation remains fluid as changes in best practice are reviewed.

The new Strategic Planting Palette currently in development (see Outcome 1), will assist this process by providing information on the network's composition for expert practitioners and provide support for non-experts in their planting choices.

2.5 Monitor and report the planting of cultivars on the network with the aim of optimising their use

Cultivars are intentionally bred varieties, and are created for desirable characteristics like specific flowers, fruit or form, or resilience in the face of disease or conditions like heat or drought. They are generally propagated by cuttings resulting in little or no genetic diversity within a named variety, and it's unwise to plant too many of any one type.

As ever, the rule is "right tree, right place", and cultivars are useful in challenging urban environments. Currently we have 65 named varieties in 15 families, comprising 21% of the urban tree network. Around two thirds of these are in the Rosaceae family, which isn't a surprise as both apple and cherry are dominated by cultivars. The highest percentage of a named cultivar is the Kanzan cherry at 3.5%, although these are no longer being planted as they produce virtually no pollen or nectar and do not fruit.





2.6 Support the establishment of a network of local provenance tree nurseries

This action is a long-term ambition, and given the expiration of the current contract between Sheffield Council and Amey, it wouldn't be possible to produce trees that would meet the current procurement constraints and timeframes. In response, the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership stated their support for the development of a local nursery that could supply local provenance stock within their letter of support for the Forest for the Nation bid that was submitted. Regrettably this bid was unsuccessful. As such the SSTP are now in discussions with the University of Sheffield to develop a pilot project for school based small scale nurseries aimed at providing local provenance trees to their surrounding streets. This project is in the early stages of development.

OUTCOME 3

Increase the value and benefits that flow from our street trees

This outcome focuses on recognising and valuing the many important benefits of street trees, and then working to increase these benefits.

The benefits that we gain from street trees include:

- Reducing airborne pollution particles, making our air cleaner to breathe
- Contributing to offsetting our carbon emissions
- Helping to reduce the effects of climate change, such as flash flooding and rising temperatures.
- Enhancing Sheffield’s ‘Green City’ reputation and contributing to a sense of place and collective pride.
- Improving our physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Making the city more attractive to encourage students, visitors and businesses to come to Sheffield and help boost the local economy
- Providing local environmental benefits like shade, natural traffic calming and reduced verge and pavement parking
- Providing a connection for people to the natural environment on their doorsteps
- Supporting and protecting the city’s biodiversity and wildlife.

Outcome 3 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
3.1	I-Tree Eco recalculated in spring every year and reported as a five-year moving average	Ongoing
3.2	Undertake equivalent planting in advance of felling mature trees as part of planned schemes where possible	Not started
3.3	Identify suitable locations on the network and under plant with hedges	Not started
3.4	Training Street Tree Wardens to monitor biodiversity supported by street trees	Not started

Further information

3.1 I-Tree Eco recalculated in spring every year and reported as a five-year moving average

It was originally envisaged when the Strategy was first adopted and published that iTree Eco calculations would be completed every spring.

As it takes five years for the tree inspectors to complete a full condition survey of all trees on the highway network, the frequency with which this was originally intended to be calculated has, following discussion and agreement, been amended to 5-year intervals to align with current practices.

The changes due to tree replacement are less than 2% of the total each year, and so any changes on an annual basis would be too small to interpret and would represent a poor use of staffing and finance.

3.2 Undertake equivalent planting in advance of felling mature trees as part of planned schemes where possible

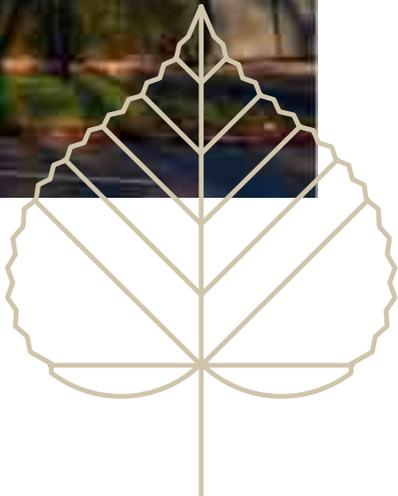
As yet no suitable areas have been identified where this could take place, but new opportunities are constantly looked for.

3.3 Identify suitable locations on the network and under-planting with hedges

This is being kept under review for inclusion in the replacement Amey Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) which has unfortunately suffered delays due to staff illness and absence. An updated LBAP is due to be published in Autumn 2025.

3.4 Training Street Tree Wardens to monitor biodiversity supported by street trees.

This remains an ambition of not only the Partnership, but the volunteer Street Wardens too; the main barrier to achieving this action is securing the necessary funding.



OUTCOME 4

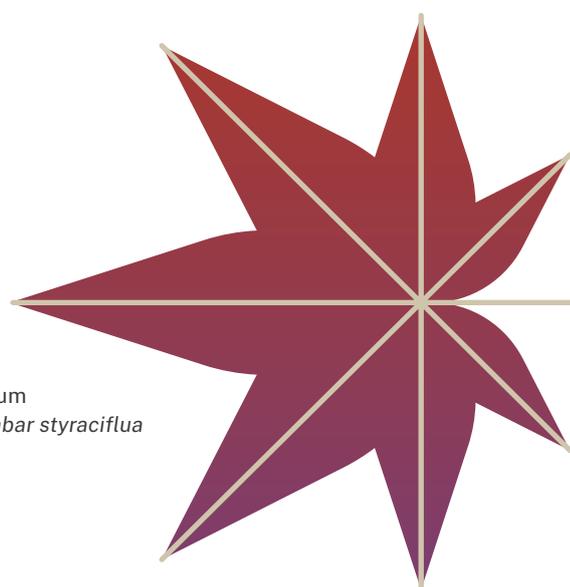
Contribute to a more **equal distribution** of **urban forest** across the city

There is now a proven body of evidence supporting the health and wellbeing benefits of being able to access nature and having trees within your community. The ambition of this outcome is to increase tree planting in areas of lower canopy cover across the city, especially in areas with poor air quality and lower indices of living environment and /or health deprivation (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) ranking.

Outcome 4 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
4.1	Analyse the distribution of all trees across the city in relation to air quality, living environment and health deprivation indices	Ongoing
4.2	Use mapping analysis to target additional planting, including through community funded planting	Ongoing
4.3	Develop measures that will lead to a more even distribution of trees across the city e.g. through redistribution, community funded planting	Ongoing
4.4	Influence others to consider additional planting in local centres, district centres, and the city centre	Ongoing

Sweet gum
Liquidambar styraciflua



Further information

4.1 Analyse the distribution of all trees across the city in relation to air quality, living environment and health deprivation indices

Within Sheffield there is a clear east/west divide in relation to canopy cover, which mirrors other inequalities such as deprivation indices and life expectancy. Apart from the suburbs of Southey, Firth Park and Shiregreen, which have a relatively high number of street trees, the east of the city generally has a much lower canopy cover than the west of the city, and the Partnership have been looking for opportunities to address this issue. Additionally, trees present in the east of the city tend to be concentrated on the main roads rather than residential streets (see Sheffield Street Tree Strategy p.36 and Appendix 8) which restricts the benefits that street trees can give communities.

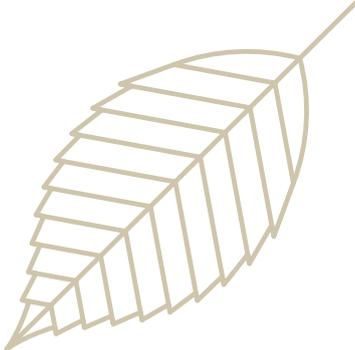
This data is currently being used to shape our developing planting project in Darnall. This project was discussed and agreed to be a Partnership priority at our away day in October 2024.

4.2 Use mapping analysis to target additional planting, including through community funded planting

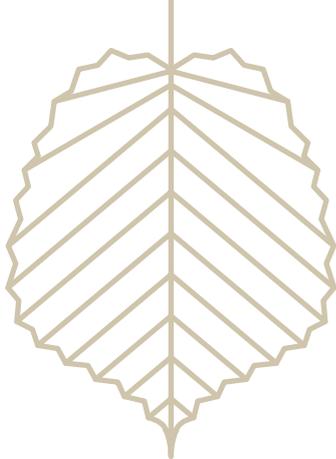
The new **Tree Equity map** provides a means to assess which areas are in the greatest need. It's clear that the city centre to M1 corridor is an area where an intervention(s) would be of the greatest benefit and the Partnership will continue to target the planting of additional trees within these areas.

The National Tree Equity Map was created to set a national standard in each UK country to help make the case for investment in areas with greatest need. It combines indices of multiple deprivation (income, health and employment), air quality, heat gain, the proportion of children and elderly and tree cover to create a single score, though people can interrogate the scores by reducing the impact of some of the inputs to focus on particular issues. It allows people who intuitively know where the areas of need are to have a measure consistently calculated across the UK's urban areas which should help funding bodies to understand which areas are most in need.

Collaborative working between the University of Sheffield and the Street Tree Wardens has identified a number of potential planting locations within the Darnall Ward. These will be further surveyed by Amey in early 2025 to confirm that they are viable locations.



This work seeks to support the SSTP's Strategic planting project for Darnall which commenced in October 2024, and which will draw together the above with fundraising and community engagement activities throughout 2025.



4.3 Develop measures that will lead to a more even distribution of trees across the city e.g. through redistribution, community funded planting etc.

Several measures were developed over the course of 2024 as follows:

The first of these was the setting up and launch of Trees for Streets - a digital platform that enables individuals or groups to identify potential planting locations and to pay for new planting within their streets. A link to the platform is available [here](#). Within the 2024 planting season this platform has resulted in the planting of 12 trees across the city.

Secondly, where street trees are removed in the rural west, in areas ripe for natural regeneration or next to already well wooded private land, the Partnership have discussed and agreed that selected replacements should be implemented within tree-poor residential areas within the city rather than within the immediate locale of the original felled tree. This measure has led to planting in areas such as Southey, Parsons Cross and Foxhill for example.



A further 43 trees were planted in the Nether Edge and Sharrow area working with Nether Edge and Sharrow Sustainable Transformation (NESST) during the 2024 planting season.

Zest (an award winning community enterprise) sponsored 5 trees on Infirmary Road.

On Ecclesall Road (Banner Cross shopping area), 11 trees funded by the Economic Recovery Fund (ERF) and a further 8 trees funded by Amey were planted following a successful Tree Warden Planting challenge won by Nicola Gilbert, a local resident and Tree Warden.

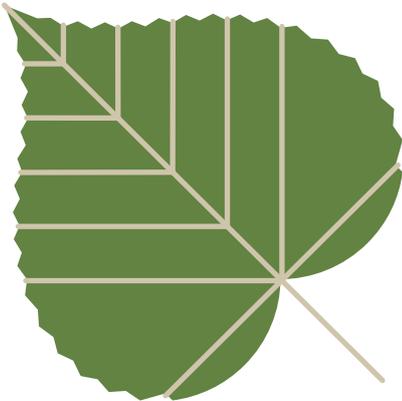
A total of 79 trees were planted during this reporting period.

4.4 Influence others to consider additional planting in local centres, district centres and the city centre

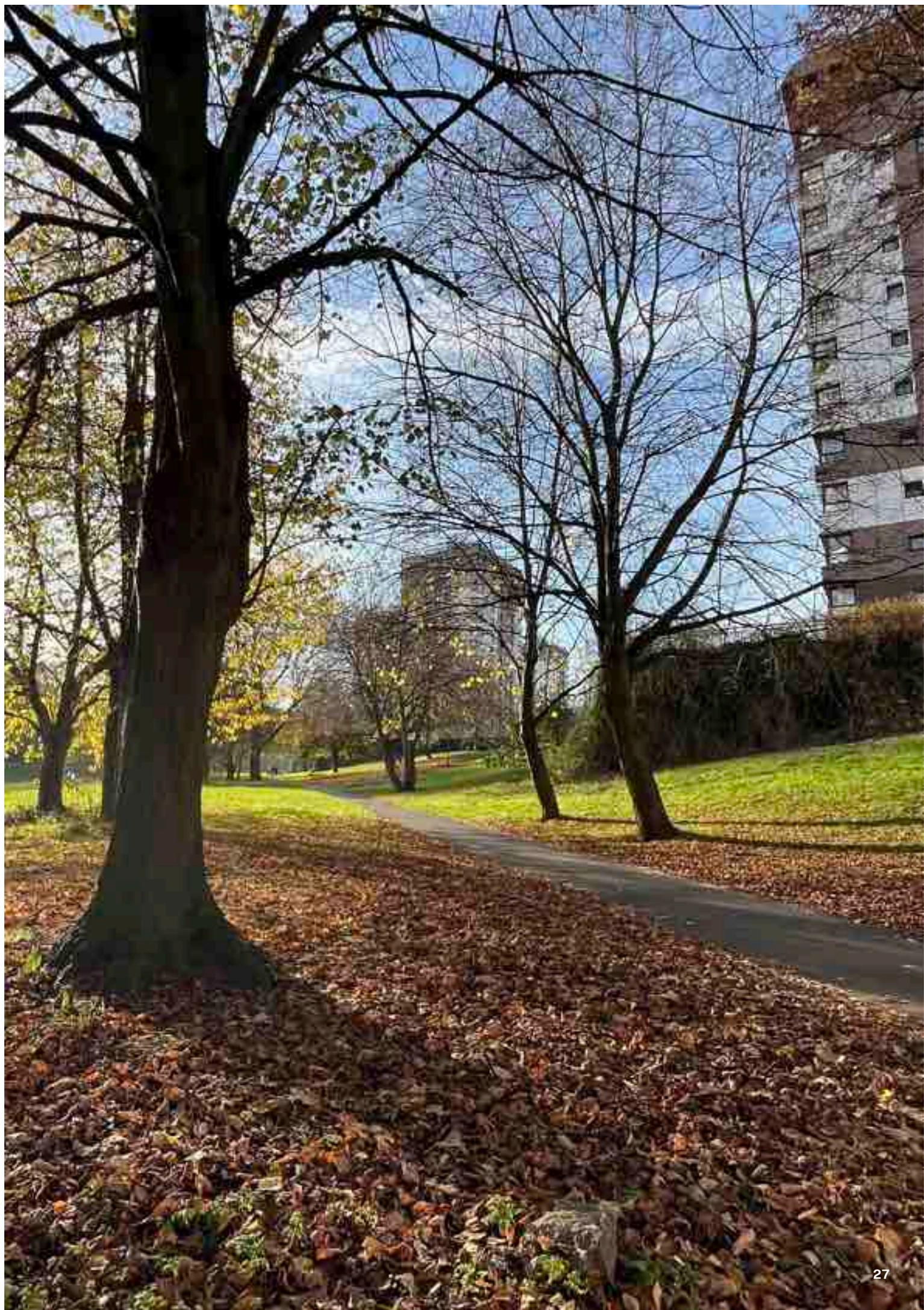
The Partnership was consulted regarding several notable development schemes during 2024. In all cases the Partnership advocated for additional planting and/or for applicants to consider in full their approach to tree planting, locations, species and community consultation. Examples include the following:

- **Plans for Stocksbridge Library and Market Square.**
- **Revised highway proposals for the Shalesmoor Roundabout/ Neepsend**
- **Banner Cross/Ecclesall Road tree planting scheme.**

Details of the above are available within our meeting minutes and can be provided on request.



*Common lime
Tilia x europaea*



OUTCOME 5

Increase street tree canopy cover

Street trees form a relatively small, but important part of the urban forest canopy cover for the city. Canopy cover is used to assess whether the total biomass of our street trees is increasing over time, and greater biomass generally translates into greater benefits from the ecosystem services that we derive from trees. These benefits include reducing particulate air pollution, flood prevention and supporting biodiversity as well as contributing to urban nature recovery networks and facilitating connections across urban areas to other wildlife areas.

Outcome 5 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
5.1	Calculate canopy cover annually in spring/early summer	Ongoing
5.2	Explore ways to monitor biodiversity across our street trees	Not started
5.3	Explore ways to enhance biodiversity and bio abundance across our street trees	In progress



Further information

5.1 Calculate canopy cover annually in spring/early summer

Conducting a full survey of the entire network takes up to five years and this means that purchasing an annual survey from organisations such as Treeconomics doesn't represent a good use of funds when funding is limited. Instead, the Partnership has been developing a 'tracker canopy value', which will be measured consistently year on year. Changes and breakdowns will have meaning within our area, but the actual value may not be directly comparable with other sources.

In 2024 total street tree canopy was measured at 134 hectares (though this value may change as we refine the methodology used to calculate this figure), where 83% of canopy is provided by the 74% of trees classified as in a 'Fair' condition. This provides us with a measure of the overall resilience of our street trees to the current climatic conditions they are being subjected to.

When looking at the composition of the overall street tree canopy by families, size comes into play as a significant factor. Our current data shows that 24.5% of the canopy is in the 17.6% of trees in the *Sapindaceae* family (Sycamore, Maple), whereas *Rosaceae* (cherry, apple etc) has 36% of the network by composition but only 18.6% of the canopy, due to trees in this family tending to be smaller in size.

As 2024 is five years since the baseline survey was conducted, external consultant I-Tree Eco have been contracted to provide an estimate of street tree leaf area value as part of their iTree report. The full I-Tree Eco report from Treeconomics will be available Autumn 2025.

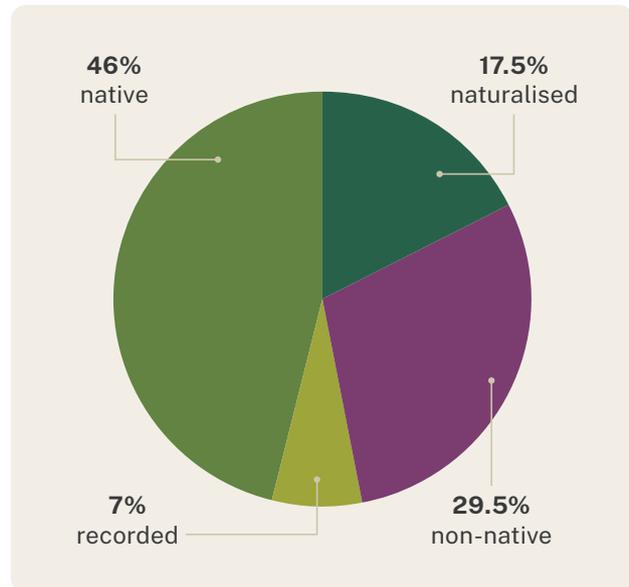
5.2 Explore ways to monitor biodiversity across our street trees

This is covered in part by action 3.4 (Training Street Tree Wardens to monitor biodiversity supported by street trees) and the actions surrounding the LBAP (Local Biodiversity Action Plan). The Partnership has however concluded that methods to enhance the City's biodiversity through its street trees needs to be further reinforced and developed. The Partnership is committed to a review of the strategy in 2025, and biodiversity will be considered a central tenant.

To progress with this endeavour it is important to consider biodiversity in a structural way. The Partnership has started this process by asking the question 'how native is our network?' 'How does street tree planting support biodiversity?' The Data and Evaluation sub-group undertook to investigate the first of these questions.

Looking at the network as a whole, native trees dominate on the western fringes as the city merges with the Peak District, whereas non-native trees dominate in the urban centres and the east due to the challenging conditions.

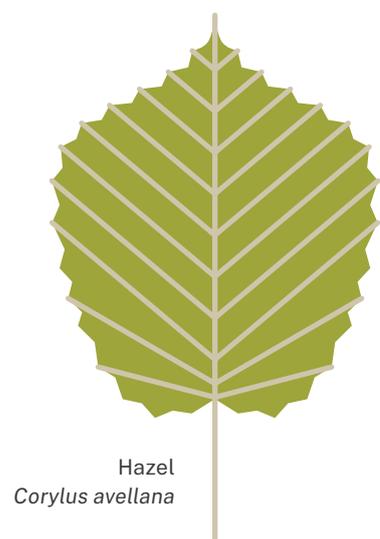
Overall, the network is currently **46% native** (including cultivars of native species), **17.5% naturalised** (mostly Sycamore), **29.5% non-native** and **7% recorded** only at genus level. Comparing this with the baseline year of 2019, the percentage of native trees has declined slightly from 46.5% though the number of native trees has not reduced; the reason for these slightly contradictory facts is that the number of trees overall is increasing and these increases are occurring in urban areas where non-native trees have been considered to be more appropriate.



5.3 Explore ways to enhance biodiversity and bio abundance across our street trees

The emerging Strategic Planting Palette, the development of which was shared in the December 2024 partnership meeting, will inform the biodiversity element of this action once launched. The palette will in part provide guidance that promotes native species choice within sites identified as nature recovery areas and will also steer choice away from species that through their selection, would potentially disrupt ecologically sensitive areas.

The palette will not however, contribute to bio-abundance. There are ways to contribute to bio-abundance; planting to support nearby ancient woodlands, and by selecting trees that support pollinators and birds where it's feasible to do so. The Partnership will need to explore these and other methods in order to determine how best to meet this objective.



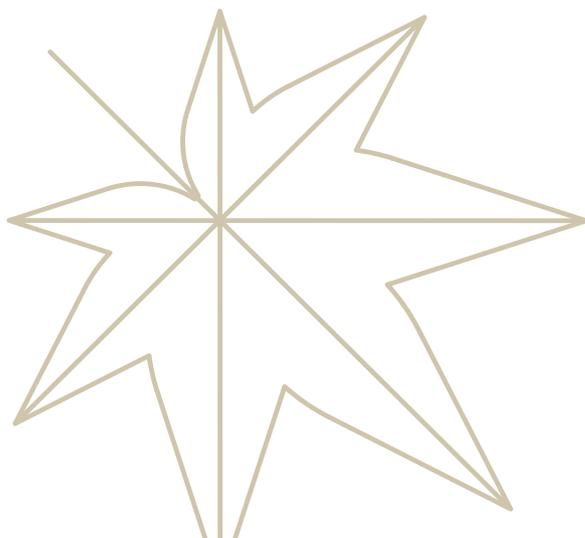
OUTCOME 6

The wider **community** of all ages is involved in **caring for** and **valuing** street trees

This outcome aims to raise awareness of the benefits that we all gain from street trees and to encourage more people in Sheffield to value the street trees within their communities and help us to care for them. By raising awareness and engaging with communities, we hope that some of these people will go on to become volunteers. By increasing the number of volunteer tree wardens we can increase the resources available to monitor the health of street trees and increase their numbers.

Outcome 6 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
6.1	Continue to develop the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership to take forward this Strategy	Ongoing
6.2	Promote the new process that allows residents and community groups to fund additional street tree planting	Ongoing
6.3	Support the Street Tree Warden scheme (or similar) for Sheffield	Ongoing
6.4	Develop an engagement and outreach programme to encourage children, young people, families, and adults to learn about and value their local trees	In progress
6.5	Arrange an annual celebration to raise awareness and acknowledge volunteers	Complete



Further information

6.1 Continue to develop the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership to take forward the Strategy

This year we have continued to see new developments within the Partnership, including the addition of a new member, Sheffield Hallam University.

Several of our **Partners** have also seen staff changes with consequential changes to representation on the Partnership.

Three of the original four working groups are now established and have begun delivery on key actions within the strategy. They have drawn in additional support and expertise from partner organisations, and will continue to develop and strengthen into 2025.

In light of Paul Selby's resignation from the Partnership the Community Planting strand will be merged with the Engagement strand in order to take forward community planting ambitions. The Partnership thanks Paul for his contribution to the Partnership and wishes him well with future endeavours.

Discussions around the design and implementation of Core Investment Streets (CIP) have been devolved to a new task and finish group that is due to commence in spring 2025. This task and finish group will discuss optioneering for CIP streets and support SCCs design, consultation and implementation programme.

Two Partnership working Away-Days were held, as well as two workshops with a broader invite-list to develop the scope of the Strategic Planting Palette. The Away-Day in April brought Partners together to discuss Biodiversity Net Gain, trees in relation to utilities and the council's approach to risk. The away day in October allowed us to spend time focusing on the planning and development of a new planting project for the Darnall area, planned for 2025/6. The Away-Days allow the Partners to meet in person and have deeper discussions around issues and opportunities.

6.2 Promote the new process that allows residents and community groups to fund additional street tree planting

The Partnership supported the development and launch of Trees for Streets - a digital platform that enables individuals or groups to identify potential planting locations and to pay for new planting within their streets. A link to the platform is available [here](#) - please refer back to **Outcome 4.2** for further details.



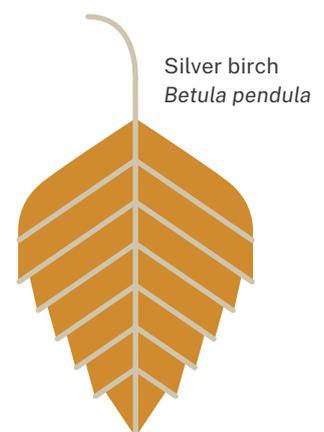
6.3 Support the Tree Warden scheme

The Street Tree Warden scheme provides a friendly community of local people involved in looking after and acting as a voice for the trees on their streets and surrounding area. The Street Tree wardens continue to be facilitated by Amey and supported by the Partnership, who ultimately oversee their role as guardians of the city's street trees. Street Tree wardens meet monthly either online or in-person when meetings are combined with learning opportunities, such as tree walks with an Amey Tree Officer. This year, wardens took part in a learning and scoping exercise in Darnall, where they were trained to identify suitable sites for new street trees, a skill we hope to see them use in the coming years.

There currently remains around 30 Street Tree Wardens, who over the past year have continued to play an important role in monitoring and caring for street trees, including keeping an eye out for any signs of pests and disease or damage and reporting these to Amey. Wardens also continued to water young trees in their 'patch' throughout the summer months when young tree maintenance is particularly important to ensure newly establishing trees survive and thrive into the future. As the 'voice' of the trees in their area, Street Tree Wardens have also actively engaged residents and businesses, for example, helping to fundraise for new street trees which will provide multiple benefits to their businesses, customers, and visitors for many years to come.

As advocates for street trees, Street Tree Wardens lead and participated in a range of events for this year's Urban Tree Festival and National Tree Week, including supporting Amey to plant a new Street Tree near Hunters Bar; leading street tree walks and talks and events such as a haiku poetry and tree celebration. The Wardens have also continued to work with Sheffield City Council's Community Forestry Team and connect with associated groups and organisations across the city, such as the Green Spaces Forum; connections which we will seek to develop and grow over the coming year.

Looking to 2025, we aim to grow the Street Tree Wardens reach and impact, including through retaining and recruiting more wardens across the city, securing funding to deliver training, and increasing the activity of Street Tree Wardens across the city. This activity will be lead by the Street Tree Wardens Working Group.



6.4 Develop an engagement and outreach programme

This work is being undertaken by the Engagement Working strand, and in 2024 links were established with community groups and leaders.

The plan for a Communications and Engagement strategy and program was delayed during 2024 due to staff changes and the initial focus of the group being the planning and delivering of the Urban Tree Festival. Plans will now be produced in early 2025, ready to feed into the Strategy refresh during 2025.

6.5 Annual celebration

The Partnership held a week-long Urban Tree Festival, held to coincide with National Tree Week, between 23rd November and 1st December 2024. The festival included more than 16 free events, spread across the city, from family-friendly activities and tree planting in Darnall neighbourhood park, to guided walks in Bowden Houstead Woods, to an urban sketching safari, and forest bathing and haiku writing at Whirlowbrook Park. The festival was a great success, despite some challenging weather with snow and sub-zero temperatures, and gave the Partnership the opportunity to connect with new audiences to promote the benefits of street trees.



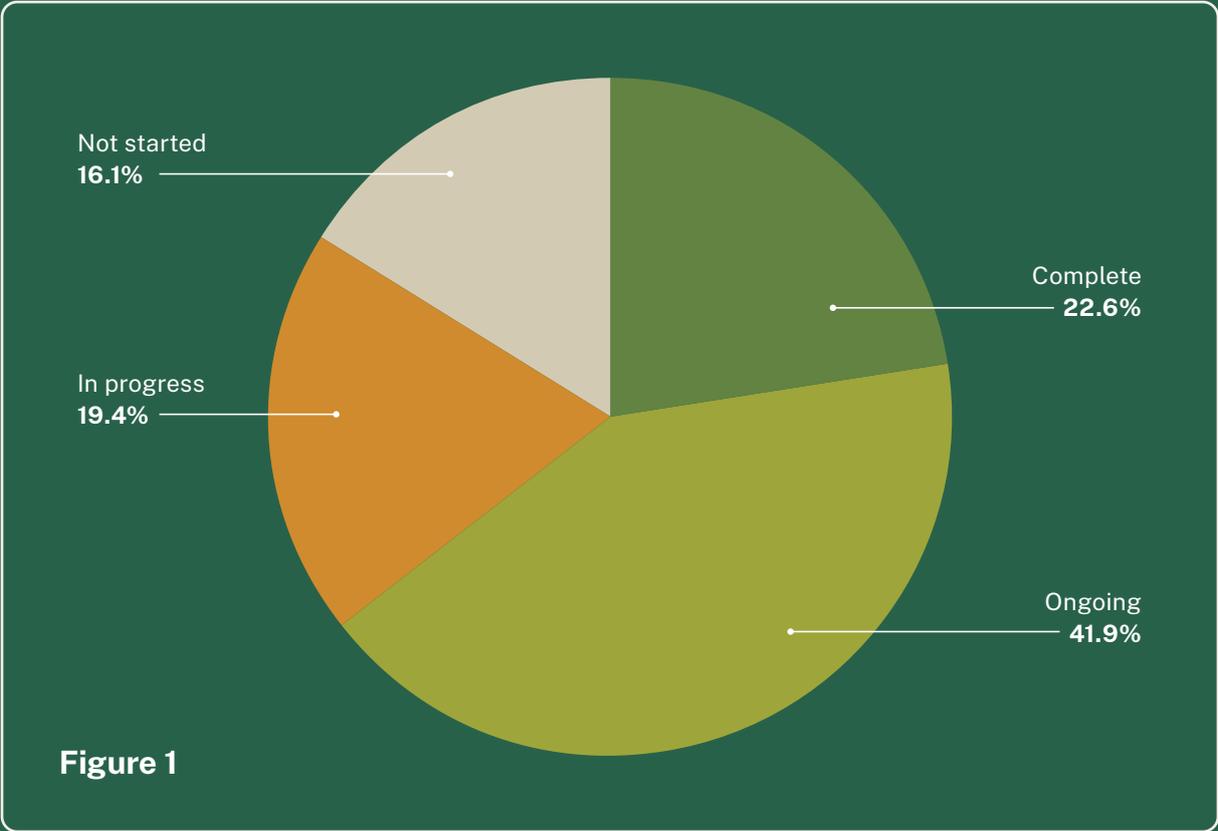
Haiku session at Whirlowbrook Park

Final Comments

As we reflect on 2024, we acknowledge the slower pace of delivery, which stems from the complexity of the challenges we now face. While earlier years brought quicker wins, this year has been about laying the groundwork for more substantial, long-term solutions. The changes in personnel and the focus on CIP have further slowed our progress, but we remain optimistic that the restructuring of responsibilities will allow the Partnership to regain its momentum.

We are deeply grateful for the commitment and hard work of all those who have contributed to the Partnership, especially those who have moved on. Their legacy will continue to guide us as we move forward.

Looking ahead, the strategy review in 2025 will be crucial in ensuring that we're better equipped to deliver, monitor, and document our actions. This review will focus on simplifying the process, making it easier for all involved to track progress and make adjustments where necessary. It will ensure the importance of Sheffield's street trees to support nature recovery and biodiversity enhancement is fully captured, and that new tree planting is prioritised.





Alongside the strategy review the emphasis for the coming year will be on the delivery of strategic planting projects, the development of the planting palette, and ensuring that the actions laid out are actionable, measurable, and impactful. With these changes in mind, we are confident that the future of Sheffield's street trees is bright and that our collective efforts will yield lasting benefits for the city and its residents.

Figure 1 on page **36**, shows the status totals for all actions across the 6 different Outcome areas within the Strategy. The classification of 'Ongoing' refers to actions where activity has now become 'business as usual' with no defined completion date, whereas actions reported as 'In Progress' refers to those where activity has started but is not yet completed. The statistics illustrate little change from 2023, however this underplays the Partnership's ongoing activities and input into the works of other organisations that are not core to the actions of the street tree strategy. Progress continues to be made, however given the complexity of the issues we are seeking to resolve we all recognise the importance of delivering smarter not harder if we are to deliver at pace.

Appendix

Measures Summary comparing 2024 with 2023 and 2022

Figures were taken in July 2024, with a tree count of 35,859. This count does not include community planted trees which have not yet been accrued to the Streets Ahead maintained project network, which happens three years after planting. Neither does it include trees close to the highway which are on land managed by SCC's Housing department, or trees in shelterbelts.

Species Diversity: Family, Genus and Species breakdowns

The recommended proportions are: no more than **30%** of any one family, no more than **20%** of any single genus, no more than **10%** of a single species (F Santamour, 1990) though these are guidelines and should be viewed pragmatically against other initiatives like supporting biodiversity.

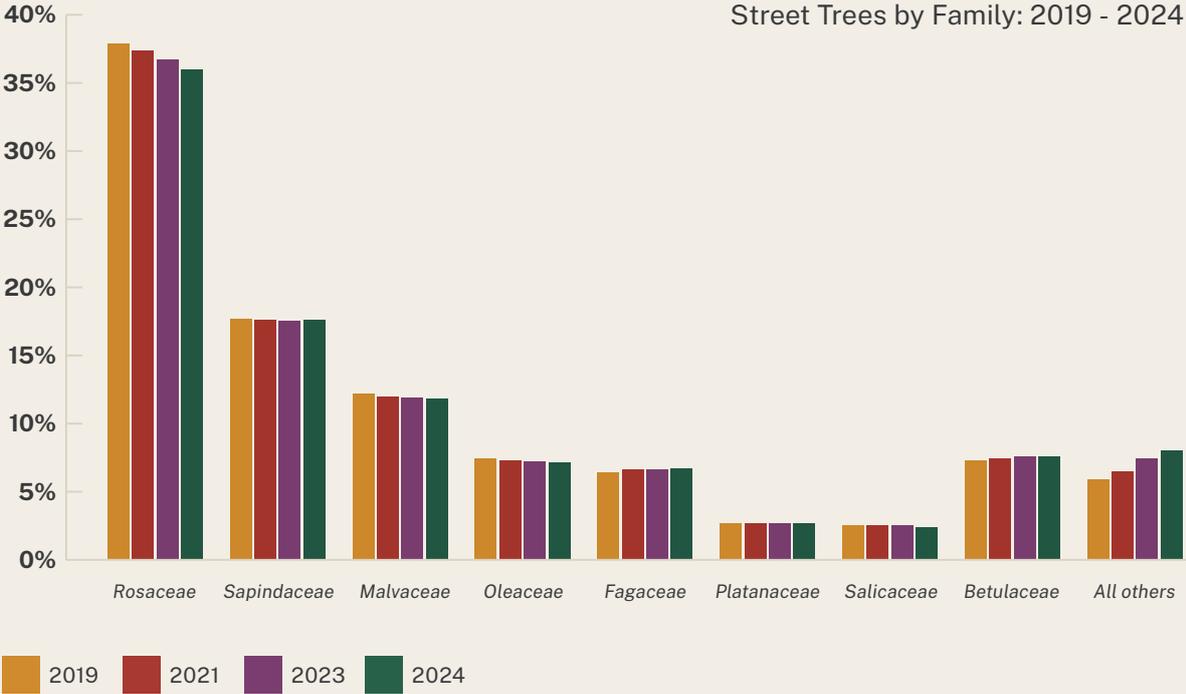


Family

The number of families rose to **34** in 2023 and is unchanged in 2024; the percentage of trees in the *Rosaceae* family is slightly higher than recommended but has reduced further to **36%**. The percentage of the **26** families comprising 'All others' has increased to **8%**.

This is a more than **50%** increase in the number of tree families on the network since the Street Ahead contract started and is a significant increase in diversity.

Tree family	2012	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	↑ ↓
<i>Rosaceae</i>	39.7%	37.9%	37.8%	37.4%	36.9%	36.7%	36.0%	↓
<i>Sapindaceae</i>	20.4%	17.7%	17.6%	17.6%	17.5%	17.5%	17.6%	↑
<i>Malvaceae</i>	11.9%	12.2%	12.1%	12.0%	11.9%	11.9%	11.8%	↓
<i>Oleaceae</i>	10.1%	7.4%	7.3%	7.3%	7.2%	7.2%	7.1%	↓
<i>Fagaceae</i>	7.2%	6.4%	6.4%	6.6%	6.6%	6.6%	6.7%	↑
<i>Platanaceae</i>	3.4%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	—
<i>Salicaceae</i>	2.7%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.4%	↓
<i>Betulaceae</i>	1.8%	7.3%	7.4%	7.4%	7.5%	7.6%	7.6%	↑
All others	2.7%	5.9%	6.2%	6.5%	7.2%	7.4%	8.0%	↑



Genus

Between 2022 and 2023 the number of genera increased by four to 76 and is unchanged in 2024. *Acer* (maple) still has the highest percentage by genus at 16.7%, ahead of *Prunus* (cherry, plum) at 15.7%. Looking at genera in the *Rosaceae* family, the percentages of *Prunus*, *Sorbus* (rowan, whitebeam), *Malus* (apple) and *Crataegus* have all fallen.

The proportion of *Fraxinus* (ash) is reducing slightly over time as trees infected with Ash Dieback disease meet the safety threshold for felling. In general, the disease isn't progressing as fast in Sheffield's street trees as it is in the river valleys, so it's possible to retain trees on the network for longer.

The top ten genera make up 81.6% of the total, down from 82.9% in 2022. The remaining 18.4% are in 66 different genera, four more than in 2022 which again increases the diversity and resilience of our tree network.

Genus	2012	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	↑ ↓
<i>Acer</i>	19.1%	16.8%	16.8%	16.7%	16.7%	16.6%	16.7%	↓
<i>Prunus</i>	20.6%	16.6%	16.5%	16.3%	16.1%	15.9%	15.7%	↑
<i>Tilia</i>	11.9%	12.2%	12.1%	12.0%	11.9%	11.9%	11.8%	↓
<i>Fraxinus</i>	10.0%	7.4%	7.3%	7.2%	7.2%	7.1%	7.0%	↓
<i>Sorbus</i>	9.7%	8.0%	7.9%	7.7%	6.4%	7.4%	7.2%	↓
<i>Malus</i>	5.2%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.4%	6.4%	6.3%	↓
<i>Quercus</i>	3.8%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%	↑
<i>Crataegus</i>	3.0%	4.9%	4.9%	4.9%	4.9%	4.8%	4.7%	↓
<i>Betula</i>	2.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.4%	4.5%	4.4%	↓
<i>Platanus</i>	3.4%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%	—
All others	2.9%	15.3%	15.8%	16.4%	17.1%	17.6%	18.4%	↑



Species

'Species' count stands at **191** in 2024, in **237** distinct varieties. For this analysis, trees are collated into species if it is possible to do so, and by botanical name if it isn't. Pre-contract data isn't available, as trees weren't defined precisely enough in that survey. Only **2.9%** of trees are now only identified at genus level.

Genus	Species	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	↑ ↓
<i>Acer</i>	<i>pseudoplatanus</i>	10.83%	10.78%	10.68%	10.68%	10.60%	10.64%	↓
<i>Tilia</i>	<i>x europaea</i>	8.71%	8.69%	8.60%	8.57%	8.54%	8.52%	↓
<i>Prunus</i>	<i>serrulata</i>	8.29%	8.29%	8.25%	8.18%	8.37%	8.26%	↓
<i>Fraxinus</i>	<i>excelsior</i>	7.03%	6.97%	6.92%	6.87%	6.77%	6.65%	↓
<i>Quercus</i>	<i>robur</i>	4.36%	4.37%	4.38%	4.41%	4.24%	4.29%	↓
<i>Sorbus</i>	<i>aucuparia</i>	4.10%	4.05%	3.94%	3.77%	3.67%	3.49%	↓
<i>Acer</i>	<i>campestre</i>	2.61%	2.69%	2.68%	2.73%	2.79%	2.82%	↑
<i>Crataegus</i>	<i>monogyna</i>	2.74%	2.73%	2.70%	2.70%	2.71%	2.74%	↓
<i>Platanus</i>	<i>x hispanica</i>	2.78%	2.73%	2.74%	2.70%	2.67%	2.66%	↓
<i>Acer</i>	<i>platanoides</i>	2.75%	2.67%	2.71%	2.69%	2.71%	2.69%	↓
All others		45.81%	46.03%	46.40%	46.71%	46.94%	47.24%	↑

Cultivars

Cultivars are planted for several reasons: a showy ornamental form, a tolerance to street conditions like salt, or for resistance to disease like the dutch elm disease resistant elms. However, an individual cultivar lacks genetic diversity which could be an issue if a pathogen spreads that they don't have an effective response to.

Comparing 2024 with 2022, the number of named cultivars has **increased** and the percentage on the network has increased to **21%**. **70%** of the 21% are *Rosaceae*, but this isn't surprising given that around **36%** of the network's trees are in this family. This does not include known hybrids, most of which are infertile or can't be guaranteed to breed true so cultivated by propagation; this would raise the proportion to almost a third of the network.

Named cultivars on the network are composed of **66** botanical names from **25** genera in **15** families.

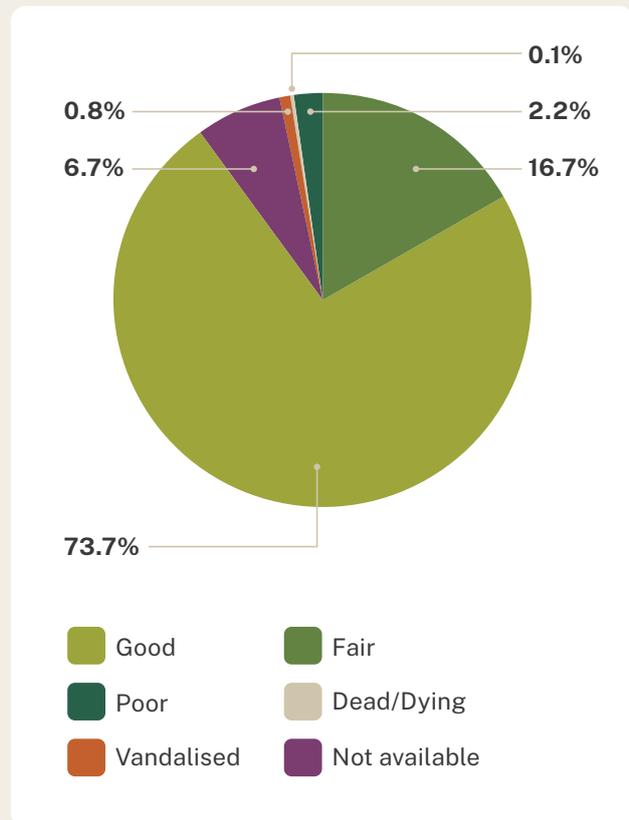
Tree Condition / Category

Condition

90.3% of the trees are 'Fair' to 'Good', a slight increase. This is a smaller change than the reduction in the number classed as 'not available' but is still a cause for optimism.

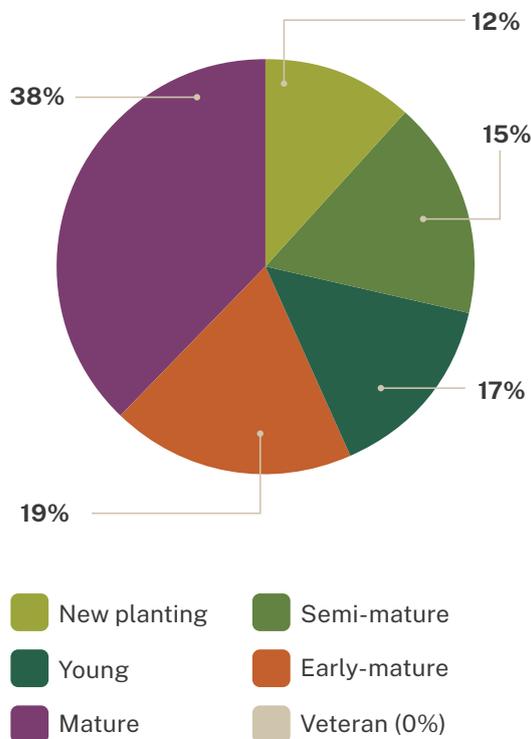
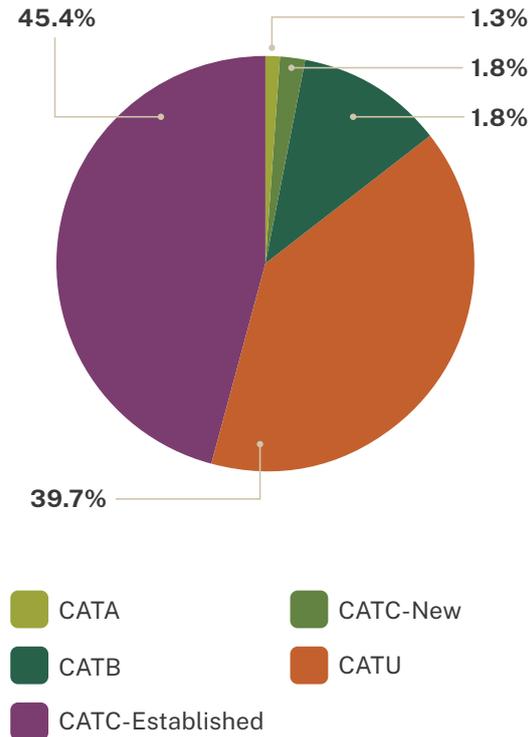
Condition is an estimate of the tree's overall physiological and structural condition. It's a subjective assessment based on expertise and experience. For consistency it's best if trees are surveyed by the same inspector year on year.

It's difficult to influence this measure in established trees, though tree wardens and residents will have an important role to play in looking after our younger street trees, as trees in good condition grow faster, and cope with stresses such as drought and disease better.



Category

There are four categories in BS5837:2012, which is used for this analysis; note that all newly planted trees and trees with a diameter of less than 150mm are classified as CatC in BS5837. In this analysis 'New Planting' has been used as a proxy. **45.4%** of the established (Young through to Veteran) trees are classed as CatC (Poor), with **25%** of these being in the 'young' age class. **41.5%** are classed as CatA (Good) and CatB (Moderate), which is an improvement on 2022 (39.3%). If we calculate the value as recorded irrespective of age, the value of A/B trees rises to **42.8%**.



Age Profile

As at summer 2024, **62%** of the stock is maturing (new, young, semi-mature and early-mature), which is unchanged from 2021. The percentage of 'young' trees has risen slightly. Remember these figures don't include community planted trees from the last three years.

A tree provides maximum benefits when it's at maturity, so a good age profile would incorporate mature trees providing benefits, older trees retained for cultural or biodiversity value, and younger trees planted to maintain tree stocks in future. More analysis is required into the health and vitality of our street trees before we can determine whether current proportions need to be adjusted and how we would manage that transition, but there are no current causes for concern.



