

**Glasgow City Council****Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring
City Policy Committee****Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of Neighbourhoods,
Regeneration and Sustainability****Contact: Gillian Dick/Rachel Smith****Ext: 78614****FOREST AND WOODLAND STRATEGY & TREE PLAN UPDATE****Purpose of Report:**

To update Committee on progress in delivering the Forestry and Woodland Strategy through the Delivery Plan, and on progress in delivering the Glasgow Tree Plan

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Notes the contents of the report,
2. Notes the Delivery Plan which will be worked on annually and reviewed where necessary; and
3. Notes the operational delivery of trees planted during 2025/26 and that planned for winter 2026/27 through the Glasgow Tree Plan.
4. Refers the matter of the appointment of Green Action Trust to deliver woodland planting as part of Greening Ruchill, in Castlemilk and on the Clyde Walkway near Westhorn Allotments, to City Administration Committee for approval.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ✓consulted: Yes ☐ No ✓

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Trees and woodlands play vital roles in urban settings. While offering a home to wildlife and spaces for human recreation, they provide insurance against flooding, manage carbon emissions, control water flow and air quality, regulate temperature and energy usage, create jobs and provide multiple health benefits.
- 1.2 The [Forestry and Woodland Strategy](#) (FWS) was noted by the [Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee](#) on 28 May 2024 and approved by the [City Administration Committee](#) on 6 June 2024. The strategy aligns with other Council Strategies such as [City Development Plan](#), [Glasgow's Climate Plan](#), [Glasgow Climate Adaption Plan 2022-2030](#), [Local Biodiversity Action Plan](#), [Open Space Strategy](#), and the [Strategic Plan 2022 to 2027](#).
- 1.3 These strategies have common themes which are embedded within the Council's approach to tackling climate change and enhancing biodiversity through nature-based solutions. Broadly, for example, they promote green infrastructure such as trees, and green roofs; they aim to reduce vulnerability to flooding, heatwaves, and extreme weather through adaptive design and ecosystem services; and by protecting and restoring habitats and expanding green networks.
- 1.4 The FWS aims to increase tree canopy cover within the city generally, while prioritising areas which experience relative deprivation and low canopy cover. It protects woodlands of high nature conservation value and seeks multiple benefits from new planting such as absorbing (and storing) carbon, managing stormwater, and promoting woodland networks. It also requires proposed developments to incorporate trees within their design from the outset and implement mitigation and compensatory measures where the loss of existing trees is accepted.
- 1.5 This report provides an update on the progress towards implementing the Forestry and Woodland Strategy, including an update on delivering the Council's Tree Plan which relates specifically to the Council's estate and is one of the delivery components of the FWS for GCC.

2 Glasgow Tree Plan

- 2.1 The Glasgow Tree Plan contributes to the delivery of the Forestry and Woodland Strategy, the City's Climate Plan, and builds on activity being taken across the operational estate to deliver increased tree and woodland canopy cover across the City. A report was brought to this Committee on [8th November 2022](#), providing the context for the work and setting out details of the proposed planting locations identified to date for delivery over a 10 year period, with presented on [7th November 2023](#), [12th November 2024](#), and [23rd September 2025](#).

- 2.2 The number of trees planted within year four of the Tree Plan, 2025/2026, is the highest since reporting commenced as part of this Strategy, with 29,509 planted.
- 2.3 In conjunction with partner organisations and volunteers, trees have been planted as summarised in the table below. Numbers include;
- 11,166 standard trees planted in parks and open spaces through the Green Connectors project.
 - Almost 11,000 trees planted through our partnership with Green Action Trust
 - 1150 trees planted in the Lavern and District Target neighbourhoods for Clyde Climate Forest
 - Over 5000 trees planted through our partnership with The Conservation Volunteers Scotland.
- 2.4 Tree planting figures will vary each year due to opportunities arising, the input of external organisations, funders and their volunteers and the technical complexity of different planting locations. The programme for 2025/26 has included significant resources dedicated to standard tree planting in parks and open spaces through the city-wide Green Connectors programme. This planting aims to enhance amenity and biodiversity, improve woodland habitat connectivity, and increase canopy cover. This programme has planted trees in all wards across the city. A new contract for Green Connectors tree planted was awarded in June, and this will see further trees planted from October 2026 to March 2027 at sites across all wards.
- 2.5 Work has also continued on new woodland creation in areas of lower tree canopy cover. There are two Clyde Climate Forest Target Neighbourhoods in the city; Possilpark and Lavern & District. Within Lavern & District Target Neighbourhood 1150 trees were planted to create new woodland at sites in Whitehaugh Road and Langton Crescent. New sites to deliver a further 2ha of new woodland have been agreed for planting in the Target Neighbourhoods in 2026/27. We have also worked with Green Action Trust (GAT) on large scale woodland planting at Cathkin Quarry and Cathkin Braes Country Park, with over 11000 trees planted to create over 10ha of new woodland. This partnership with GAT will continue in 2026/27, with opportunities for new woodland creation now being taken forward at 3 new sites.

Year	No of trees planted
2025/2026	29,509
2024/2025	14,274
2023/2024	24,288
2022/2023	5,400
2021/2022	10,055

- 2.6 We continue to work in partnership with third-sector organisations, community groups and schools to deliver the Tree Plan. One example is the Glasgow Canopy Project which aims to increase tree canopy cover in Govan and

Bridgeton/Dalmarnock, two wards in the city with [low tree equity scores](#). This project, funded by the Urban Forestry Challenge Fund, involves working with The Conservation Volunteers Scotland, Clyde Climate Forest and local community groups to plant trees and hedgerows and deliver training in tree planting and aftercare.

- 2.7 Our approach comprises 20 high level actions being taken towards increasing the tree canopy cover across Glasgow. These actions and progress made towards their delivery are listed in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 provides information on proposed woodland creation sites within the draft CDP2, and all tree planting completed in parks and open spaces in the 2025/26 planting season. This includes woodland whips, standard trees and fruit trees, and hedgerow trees. Sites and tree numbers are provided for every ward, and a summary sheet provides the total for each ward.
- 2.8 Sites have been identified as potentially suitable for tree and woodland planting over the 10 years period of this plan, and provides the locations for tree planting in parks and open spaces in the 2025/26 planting season. Identified planting sites represent opportunities to plant the equivalent of 231.625 hectares of tree canopy, once fully grown, over this 10-year period. This represents an increase to over 17.4% canopy cover citywide, or the equivalent of 361 football pitches. This will be augmented by tree planting activity by other land managers across the city.
- 2.9 Trees planted as part of our tree plan will include opportunities to replace trees lost through [Ash Dieback](#), with updates in relation to our response to Ash Dieback brought to the relevant committee.
- 2.10 Further information is available via the following link: [Glasgow Tree Plan](#)

3. Planting at Cadder Woods and former Cathkin Quarry

- 3.1 The Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction City Policy Committee paper [27th August 2019](#) provided an update on the Concordat that Glasgow City Council, along with 18 other Local Authorities, has with Central Scotland Green Network (CSGN) and its delivery arm, the Green Action Trust, a registered Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation with a charitable purpose to improve Scotland's environments for people and for nature. Guided by this Concordat, NRS is working with Green Action Trust, and a range of communities across Glasgow to bring forward woodland creation and management as part of wider greenspace projects, with this Concordat allowing us to work at scale and pace in delivering on a number of projects reported on as part of the Tree Plan. Delivery to date has highlighted that national funders, governmental charitable and organisational funders, found this joint working has matched technical and fundraising expertise to local strategy, priorities and opportunities.
- 3.2 Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) funding has been used to transform a long term VDL site in Cadder into actively managed greenspace. A woodland management plan has been produced, and delivery of year 1 actions was

completed in March 2026. In addition to woodland habitat enhancement the actions included new active travel routes connecting Vaila Street to Herma Street, Cadder primary school, and the Forth and Clyde canal. A forest schools' classroom has been created and is actively used by the primary school and GCC Countryside Ranger Service. Further woodland and habitat management and a play area upgrade are programmed for 2026/27, with a funding contribution of £79,000 from existing budgets.

- 3.3 Woodland creation has been completed at a 6-hectare site adjacent to the former Cathkin Quarry with 5440 native broadleaved trees planted in March 2026. Funding to support the woodland creation included the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund and grant funding from Scottish Forestry.
- 3.4 Further opportunities for woodland creation in partnership with Green Action Trust have been identified as part of wider Greening Ruchill. The former Ruchill golf course has a small area of ancient semi-natural woodland and there is scope for up to 5ha of new woodland creation to enhance woodland habitat connectivity along the Forth and Clyde Canal. Linking woodland creation with access improvements at this site will support the development of a green corridor connecting Cadder Woods to Ruchill Park and the Claypits local nature reserve. Further sites for woodland management and creation in partnership with Green Action Trust have been identified in Castlemilk and on the Clyde Walkway near Westhorn Allotments.

4. Glasgow Tree Nursery

- 4.1 A further example of partnership working example is the construction of a site for a Glasgow Tree Nursery on an area of vacant and derelict land next to Broomfield Park. Vacant and Derelict Land funding has been secured for the site, initial site remediation is completed, and procurement is underway for construction of the nursery facilities and infrastructure. Once operating the nursery could produce up to 10000 native trees each year, and well as supporting training, employability and volunteering opportunities. We are working with Barmulloch Community Development Company and The Conservation Volunteers Scotland to explore possible operating models for the nursery.

5 Greening the City

- 5.1 [Glasgow's City Centre Strategy](#) and [The Avenues](#) set out a range of tree planting measures, with updates provided to committee 18th November 2025.
- 5.2 A range of tree planting measures are included as part of wider investment to deliver Connecting Glasgow, with updates provided to committee [17th March 2026](#).
- 5.3 A paper was brought to this committee [26th May 2026](#) providing an update in relation to the Greening the City programme and other Street Tree activity.

- 5.4 To continue to support delivery, two new Greening the City Officers were funded as part of the budget which Glasgow City Council set for 2025/26. This resource will support the additional challenges of tree planting within urban streetscapes, and will bring forward proposals for street tree planting to supplement those set out in 5.1 and 5.2. Officers will review sources of funding, bringing forward technical solutions (both for initial planting and in support of long-term tree health) and procure and manage street tree planting contracts. Both new street tree planting locations and tree pits which are currently vacant will be reviewed as part of this activity. Trees planted via this route will be included in future reporting to this committee, with procurement activity planned for later this financial year.
- 5.5 Anderston City Yorkhill Area Partnership has allocated funding to support the delivery of street trees through the Area Partnership's Neighbourhood Infrastructure Investment Fund, and trees planted via this route will be included in future reporting to this committee, with procurement activity planned for later this financial year.

6 Monitoring the Forestry and Woodland Strategy (Action 29)

- 6.1 Appropriate monitoring methodologies will provide insights into, amongst other things:
- carbon sequestration levels and the effectiveness of trees and woodland in climate adaptation;
 - species diversity and ecological connectivity;
 - verify whether the canopy cover target and spatial distribution goals are being achieved;
 - help ensure NPF4 Policy 6 Forestry, woodland and trees, and Policy 3 Biodiversity, is being applied in the determination of applications for planning permission relating to trees and woodlands;
 - indicates the net impact of development proposals on the number of trees on sites where planning permission has been granted

7 Mapping Suitable Locations for Street Trees (Action 25)

- 7.1 Increasing the number of trees on the city's street, and introducing a variety of species, can deliver more than visual amenity benefits. These benefits include a wide range of environmental, social, economic and health benefits which contribute to creating more sustainable, resilient and attractive urban environment.
- 7.2 Work is ongoing, to map the many factors, such as footpath widths, street furniture and utility services, which might prevent tree pits from being located within the city's footpaths. By identifying locations which have physical constraints, resources can be directed to those footpaths where trees are more likely to thrive and provide maximum amenity, environmental, social, economic and health benefits in the longer term.

8 Value of Urban Trees (Action 7)

- 8.1 A memorandum of Understanding has been agreed between the Council and the University West of Scotland with regard to working in partnership with Network Rail to combine the Council's Environmental Digital win with Network Rail's high-resolution aerial and other sensor datasets, and the University's artificial intelligence. The partnership will develop data that can improve environmental monitoring, inform decision-making, and support more sustainable and resilient planning outcomes.
- 8.2 It is anticipated the outputs of the partnership will provide a baseline source of data on matters such as the number of trees across the city, their species and distribution. The outputs will also inform our understanding of the contribution trees make to climate resilience, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. They will also contribute to estimating the existing carbon storage levels and annual carbon sequestration rates. The information will be helpful in informing development design with regard to retaining valuable trees and habitats, the environmental impacts of proposed developments, and their compliance with planning policies. The information would also provide a baseline against which changes in habitats and tree cover could be monitored over time.
- 8.3 The Council's ability to control works such as topping, lopping or felling of trees is exercised through specific statutory powers, with the principal and most robust mechanism being the designation of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) under Section 160 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Under Section 160(1A), a TPO may be made where it is expedient in the interests of amenity or where trees are of cultural or historical significance. The effect of a TPO (Section 160(3)(a)) is to enable the Council to prohibit the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, or wilful damage or destruction of trees, and to secure replanting. The Act, however, also provides limited exemptions, allowing works such as felling or lopping where they are urgently necessary in the interests of safety, to prevent or abate a nuisance, or where authorised by '*development consent*' or other legislation, provided that written notice of the works is given to the planning authority as soon as practicable after the works have been undertaken.
- 8.4 There are means to protect trees within conservation areas through Section 172 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 which makes it an offence to carry out works such as cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting or wilfully damaging trees within a conservation area without following the prescribed procedure. The procedure requires anyone proposing to undertake tree works to give the Council six weeks' prior written notice, which provides the Council the opportunity to assess the amenity, cultural or historic value of the trees and designate a TPO if appropriate. There are exemptions, however, and these are set out in the Regulation 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Regulations 2010 which allow works to very small trees, operations carried out under a forestry felling licence, works by statutory undertakers or public authorities for operational purposes, and the pruning of trees cultivated for fruit in accordance with good horticultural practice without giving prior notice.

- 8.5 Planning conditions attached to a planning permission can be used to control works to trees, including their retention, protection during construction and replacement, where such measures are necessary to make the development acceptable. Such conditions are limited to the scope of the development which has been granted planning permission, although they can be enforced through the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 8.6 The High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013A provides very limited means of controlling tree works in specific circumstances. This generally only applies to neighbour disputes about hedges adversely affecting the reasonable enjoyment of a domestic property, typically through the loss of light or having an overbearing impact. The legislation relates to trees forming a hedge, not to individual trees, and the control the Council can enforce through this legislation generally relates to maintaining the height of the hedge at a certain level and not to other general arboricultural work.

9 Environmental Digital Twin (Action 30)

- 9.1 The [Environmental Digital Twin \(EDT\)](#) for Glasgow is the Council's publicly available spatial data mapping tool which combines datasets such as tree canopy cover, and other environmental mapping with data on SIMD, planning applications, schools and other land uses. As a result of the wide range of data it contains, it is a powerful evidence-based decision-making tool which improves the accessibility of environmental information, and enables:
- better evidence-based decisions
 - faster assessment of proposals
 - improved environmental protection
 - greater transparency
 - stronger cross-service collaboration
 - reduced time devoted to data collection and analysis
- 9.2 The scope of data contained within the EDT, and its visibility and usefulness across the Council Services, will continue to be explored and developed on an on-going basis. In particular, how it can be utilised to estimate, map and monitor carbon capture (sequestration) and carbon storage values across the city in line with the Council's Climate Plan 2026-2030, will be examined. This requires the development of a citywide approach to measuring carbon sequestration in line with a national approach.

10 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial:

There are no direct financial implications as a result of the Forestry and Woodland Strategy. Funding is required to carry out planting and other projects as part of the Tree Plan and

sources of funding are outlined in the report above. Future funding is being explored.

Legal: The production and of the Forest and Woodland Strategy meets the Council's statutory requirement in terms of Section 53 of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 (which amends the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997).

Personnel: The FWS and Tree Plan are being delivered by NRS staff.

Procurement: There are no procurement implications.

Council Strategic Plan: Grand Challenge Three: Fight the climate emergency in a just transition towards a net zero Glasgow.
Mission 2: Become a net zero carbon city by 2030

Commitments

12: Support new 'pocket' or 'wee' forests throughout the city, work with communities to identify opportunities for tree-planting, support the delivery of the Clyde Climate Forest.

21. Support the Glasgow National Park City campaign and support local environmental groups and conservation projects to provide nature-based volunteering opportunities.

33. Develop a tree nursery so we can nurture the saplings, of local provenance, which we would then plant across the city and supply to the wider Glasgow Conurbation while also providing training and employment opportunities via a social enterprise.

34. Deliver increased tree planting across the city as part of a comprehensive Tree Plan for Glasgow, including measures to support replacement when trees are lost to damage or removal, and responding to Ash Dieback disease, and develop a Forestry and Woodland Strategy for the city.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify.

Can support outcome 6 (tackling social isolation and loneliness)

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

Potential positive impact – tree planting can provide opportunities for community activities and volunteering

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Increasing tree canopy cover on vacant and derelict sites can reduce blight, improve health and wellbeing, provide leisure and recreation opportunities, and change the way local communities and others perceive disadvantaged areas.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

Climate plan Theme 1: Communication and Community Empowerment. To engage with communities about the climate challenge. To foster participation and collaboration

Climate plan Theme 2: Just and Inclusive Place. Ensure that the transition to a net-zero society is a catalyst for building a fairer, healthier, prosperous, resilient and greener city for all

Climate Plan Theme 4: Health and Wellbeing. To protect and enhance local habitat connectivity and biodiversity in the city. To support creation and maintenance of good quality, multifunctional green space to help reconnect communities with nature. To support equitable access to good quality, multipurpose open space and green infrastructure in the city.

Climate Plan Theme 5: Green Recovery. Supporting tree planting and maintenance, peatland restoration, and green infrastructure.

What are the potential climate impacts as a

Additional tree and woodland planting across the city will sequester carbon emissions, help

result of this proposal?

control water flow, improve air quality, and regulate temperature.

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

Yes, as above

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N

No impacts have been identified as part of activity to date

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

11 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Notes the contents of the report,
2. Notes the Delivery Plan which will be worked on annually and reviewed where necessary; and
3. Notes the operational delivery of trees planted during 2025/26 and that planned for winter 2026/27 through the Glasgow Tree Plan.
4. Refers the matter of the appointment of Green Action Trust to deliver woodland planting as part of Greening Ruchill, in Castlemilk and on the Clyde Walkway near Westhorn Allotments, to City Administration Committee for approval.