



Glasgow City Council

Net Zero and Climate Progress Monitoring City Policy Committee

Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability

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Forestry and Woodland Strategy and Tree Plan Update – Monitoring and Delivery Plan

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 2024/25 and that planned for winter 2025/26 through the Glasgow Tree Plan.
4. Refers the matter of grant funding highlighted within section 8 of this report of Green Action Trust to deliver Phase 2 works in support of this plan at Cadder, and Cathkin Quarry, to City Administration Committee for approval.

Ward No(s): All

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 particular 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 the first update on the progress towards implementing the Forestry and Woodland Strategy, and it includes a Delivery Plan (Appendix 4) containing a range of steps which will contribute towards meeting the aims of the FWS. In addition, this report includes an update on progress in 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. Previously, this was reported separately.
- 1.6 The Tree Plan (and the planting projects it promotes), is one of many ways in which the Council delivers the FWS. Others, in addition to those outlined in this report, include:
 - the 'Avenues' project by integrating street trees and blue-green infrastructure to manage surface water and enhance aesthetics;
 - City centre tree planters - trees placed in metal and concrete planters throughout the city centre;
 - enhancing blue-green infrastructure through the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership (MGSDP):

- Applying the land-use planning requirements of NPF4 policy 6 Forestry, woodland and trees, Glasgow City Development Plan and its related supplementary guidance, Strategic Development Frameworks, Local Development Frameworks, and development briefs to development proposals; and
- Promoting nature-based solutions through Glasgow's Climate Plan, the Glasgow Climate Adaptation Plan 2022-2030, and the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Supporting the planting of street trees in partnership with citizen and business donations through the Trees for Streets platform, utilizing revenues generated by the Glasgow Low Emission Zone.

2 Monitoring the Forestry and Woodland Strategy (Action 29)

- 2.1 Monitoring the Forestry and Woodland Strategy is essential to ensure its environmental, social, and economic aspirations are delivered. A Delivery Plan setting out the range of actions which contribute to increasing tree canopy cover in the city accompanied the FWS when City Administration Committee approved the FWS in June 2024. Developing 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 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

3 Carbon Sequestration and Tree Management Working Group

- 3.1 The Carbon Sequestration and Tree Management Working Group is a City Council officer group established to focus on identifying and implementing measures which can increase the quantity of carbon dioxide absorbed and stored by trees within the council's jurisdiction. The measures will contribute to the aims of Glasgow's Climate Plan, the Glasgow Climate Adaptation Plan 2022-2030, the Carbon Management Plan 2023-2030, and the Forestry and Woodland Strategy, amongst others. The work of the group covers a range of activities such as:
- identifying areas for potential tree planting and restoration projects in alignment with relevant strategies;
 - developing policies and guidelines to support tree management and carbon sequestration efforts;
 - raise awareness and encouraging community participation in tree planting and maintenance activities; and

- establishing monitoring systems to track and report on the progress of carbon sequestration initiatives.

3.2 A Sustainability Technical Officer is being recruited to support the work of the Carbon Sequestration & Tree Management Working Group, with this support including liaison with Streets for Trees and the development of costed street tree details suitable for residential streets and local high streets, to complement those already piloted in the city centre, so that a range of options are available at different price points, to support decision-making in relation to funding.

4 Development and Tree Canopy Cover

4.1 The following table indicates the net impact of development proposals on the number of trees on sites where planning permission has been granted. The table includes 'groups' due to the difficulty in clearly identifying the number of individual trees from information provided in some applications for planning permission. The table expresses the information for two periods, 1 January - 31 December 2023 and 1 January– 31 July 2024:

4.2

		Existing Trees/ Groups	Trees/ Groups Lost	Trees/ Groups Planted	Net Change
1 Jan - 31 Dec 2023	Individual trees	1053	710	694	-16
	Groups	17	7		-7
1 Jan to 31 July 2024	Individual trees	1583	281	823	542
	Groups	9	4		-5

4.2 It should be noted that the statistics in the table cover different lengths of time and are therefore not directly comparable. As NPF4 came into effect in mid-February 2023 its impact on applications for planning permission is largely reflected in the above figures. The table does, however, suggest the net change in tree numbers may reflect the characteristics of the development site, the number of trees it supports, the design of the proposed development and the opportunities for compensatory planting either on-site or on alternative sites.

5 Highlights of the actions completed this year

5.1 Trees for Streets (Action 25)

As part of plans to increase Glasgow's tree canopy, the Council has partnered with Trees for Cities to make it easier for residents and businesses to sponsor new street tree planting in their neighbourhoods through the [Trees for Streets scheme](#). Trees for Streets is a national street tree sponsorship scheme developed by the charity Trees for Cities in collaboration with a number of other organisations, and was launched. The Council's participation in the scheme was launched in July 2025.

5.2 Citizen Science (Action 21)

The FWS identifies Govan as a priority area for increasing tree canopy cover as it experiences relative deprivation, is at risk from the impacts of climate change and has a low level of canopy cover. The Govan Tree-Community for Ecosystem Services (GOTREES) is a Council supported, citizen science project focused on Govan which receives GALLANT funding. It involves members of the Govan community identifying tree species and quantifying rain-water interception by tree canopies. The project will then be combined with data collected with LiDAR image analysis to identify and map the location of all trees in Govan and calculate biomass. The biomass information can be used to measure carbon storage and estimate rainfall interception by the tree canopy in the area. This can then be correlated with surface flooding maps available from SEPA to assess potential contribution of Govan trees to mitigate surface flooding.

5.3 Environmental Digital Twin (Action 30):

An [Environmental Digital Twin \(EDT\)](#) for Glasgow has been developed and had a 'soft' launch in July 2025. It is a 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. The EDT provides both 2-dimensional and some 3-dimensional map views allowing residents and external organisations to explore tree and woodland coverage and a wide range of other environmental and land-use planning spatial data relating to the city, local neighbourhoods and individual sites.

- 5.4 The ETTAS project was established in 2021 and is led by the University of Strathclyde in partnership with Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow School of Art, the University of Glasgow, artists, communities and others. ETTAS invites citizens of all ages to share personal stories about trees through postcards, drawings, workshops, and public events. The stories demonstrate the emotional, cultural, and ecological connections between people and the trees. A prime example of this is that the Argyle Street Ash tree has been shortlisted for the Woodland Trust's 2025 Tree of the Year award, celebrated as a symbol of endurance and grace amid urban transformation. Planted during the Victorian era and surviving everything from the Clydeside Blitz to modern redevelopment, it was nominated as a public wildcard and is now vying for national recognition alongside other culturally significant trees across the UK

6 **Glasgow Tree Plan**

- 6.1 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. Updates were presented on [7th November 2023](#) and [12th November 2024](#).

- 6.2 Trees planted in year three of the Tree Plan, 2024/2025, in conjunction with partner organisations and volunteers, are summarised in the table below. Numbers include tree planting at Ashgill greenspace, Coll Place, Glen Esk Drive, Househill Park, Knightswood Park and Liverside Crescent, as well as tree planters in the City Centre.
- 6.3 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 2024/25 has seen a greater proportion of the available resources dedicated to the planting of larger trees within residential greenspaces and local civic spaces, with these being more technically complex, and a correspondingly lower proportion of the available resources allocated to the planting of smaller woodland trees, with associated variation in total numbers planted. It is considered that this range of tree sizes, as considered appropriate at each location, can offer certain advantages in relation to immediate visual, biodiversity and surface water management benefits within that locality. Moving forward, it is expected that numbers, and the proportion of trees planting within different spaces, will vary each year informed by placemaking and engagement activity locally, with this programme benefitting from the additional staff resource being recruited to this financial year.

Year	No of trees planted
2024/25	14,274
2023/2024	24,288
2022/2023	5,400
2021/2022	10,055
2020/21	24,000
2019/20	24,204
2018/19	5,961

- 6.4 Various partnerships and delivery methods have been developed to maximise the opportunities and health benefits that exist from participating in environmental activity such as tree planting. This has included partnerships with community groups, schools and other voluntary organisations as well as individuals. One example is working with communities to utilise Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) funding to bring self-seeded woodland (that has established on VDL sites) into active woodland management where appropriate, for example in Cadder woodlands.
- 6.5 A dedicated page on the Council's website, in storymap format, has been established to promote the opportunities set out within this plan, including:
- Information on its benefits;
 - Digital mapping of the opportunities
 - Signposting towards support and advice;

- A geo-referenced web-form to allow for new planting suggestions to be submitted to this service.
- Live, to-date, opportunities for individuals to donate trees
- Further information is available via the following link: [Glasgow Tree Plan](#)

7 City Centre Greening

- 7.1 Greening the Districts is a priority action from the [City Centre Strategy 2024-30](#), with updates taken to taken to the Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration City Policy Committee [22nd April 2025](#). The associated Landscape Action Plan details planting of trees, growing, playing and biodiversity small-scale projects, and aims to deliver greening ambitions highlighted by the District Regeneration Frameworks and the Avenues programme. It will be the collective term for all greening activity undertaken by the Council in the city centre in the short term. Further development of these actions will be progressed by NRS should the capital bid be approved.
- 7.2 To complement this, preparation of a Green-Blue Integrated Infrastructure Plan has commenced. This 'Greening the Grey' Plan will provide a blueprint for an overarching city centre greening and water management network and will encapsulate all greening projects within it. The Plan will reflect the Landscape Action Plan's projects along with other structural greening and water management projects and, as such, include raingardens, Avenues, pocket parks and ambitions of the Tree Plan. In line with regeneration priorities, greening will be targeted to support development of strategic sites and enhance gateway points.
- 7.3 Some examples of city centre greening being progressed through current tree planting programmes include:
- Greenspace north of Buchanan Street bus station with City Centre team-works undertaken – now considered a [green connector](#), with an enhanced maintenance schedule.
 - Garnethill Community Projects delivered, with planters maintained by local community.
 - Planters in Merchant City/Saltmarket - small multi-stem trees maintained by community groups have been installed
 - Tree planting at the Broomielaw greenspaces has been undertaken and is being monitored
 - Tree planting at the Dundasvale greenspaces is currently subject to technical assessment, and thereafter stakeholder engagement
 - 20 new trees in planters located around the city centre, funded through LEZ income
 - 8 large planters have been relocated away from George Square to other parts of the city centre

8. Planting at Cadder Woods and Cathkin Quarry

- 8.1 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 outlined in Appendix 3. Delivery to date has highlighted that national funders, both governmental and charitable, as well as organisational donors, found this joint working has matched technical and fundraising expertise to local strategy, priorities and opportunities.
- 8.2 Vacant and Derelict Land (VDL) funding is being used to bring a long term VDL site in Cadder into actively managed greenspace. Phase 1 of the VDL funded project has included the preparation of a woodland management plan and delivery of site operation commenced in March 2025 to define and create footpaths and active travel routes with funding from Sustrans linking Vaila Street to Herma Street and to Cadder primary school and the Forth and Clyde canal tow path. The formation of a forest schools classroom, removal of site debris and non-native invasive plant species are also included within these works. The above operations were identified by Cadder residents as key to delivering a quality, multifunctional greenspace within their community.
- 8.3 A subsequent successful funding bid will see Phase 2 of Cadder commence with further woodland and habitat management, footpath and play works programmed for Winter 2025/26, with an associated funding contribution of £79,000 from existing budgets.
- 8.4 A 6 hectare site adjacent to the former Cathkin Quarry has emerged as an opportunity for around 10,000 trees to be planted following the appropriate stage of works being reached as part of wider reclamation activity. Woodland planting is costed at £64,700, with anticipated grant income of £58,225, with the remainder of the funding coming from existing budgets.
- 8.5 It is recommended that Committee refers the matter of grant funding of Green Action Trust to deliver works in support of this Plan at Cadder Phase 2, and at Cathkin Quarry, to City Administration Committee for approval.

9. Further Updates

- 9.1 Tree Nursery
VDL funding has also been secured to support the establishment of a Glasgow tree nursery. This will provide 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. VDL funding has been secured for the first phase of works, and a working group of national and local stakeholders are meeting to progress. Enabling works are now underway. NRS are actively seeking a partner organisation to manage the tree nursery when developed.

- 9.2 A Community Forest created by Voice for Nature, who are partnering with the Eranda Rothschild Foundation, SUGi and Glasgow City Council to create one of three Eranda Rothschild Community Forests in the UK is being proposed as a woodland extension and a community space adjacent to St. Angela's primary school with a projected start date of Autumn 2026.

10 Tree Action Plan

- 10.1 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 2.
- 10.2 Appendix 3 sets out sites identified as potentially suitable for tree and woodland planting over the 10 years period of this plan, and summarises action taken in 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25 and that planned for 2025/26. Additional sites are being nominated by communities and stakeholders to support Action 2. Some locations may be unsuitable for planting due to e.g., utility infrastructure. It is considered that these sites – a mixture of parks, open space and streets-represent opportunities to plant the equivalent of 231.625 hectares of tree canopy, once fully grown, over this 10-year period. This would represent an increase to over 17.4% canopy cover citywide and can be augmented by tree planting activity by other land managers across the city. This is the equivalent of 361 football pitches.

11 Street Trees

- 11.1 As part of this review, a supplementary inspection of our existing street trees has been carried out to better understand the performance of historic street tree solutions, and identify any works required to secure long term tree health. To date 114 trees have been inspected, with recommendations including the re-planting of 7 trees, the re-surfacing of 1 former tree pit where conditions are not considered to support healthy tree growth and works to remove 66 items of metalwork such as tree grilles or tree guards where these are no longer required. This work is being, costed as part of this Plan, and site instructions will be raised for removal of redundant metalwork, with 5 trees replanted during 2024/25.
- 11.2 NRS has primarily been delivering street trees into the public realm (i.e., into footways and precincts) via wider capital investment programmes such as Oatlands and Sighthill Regeneration, Liveable Neighbourhoods and the City Deal Avenues. This approach provides an effective means of undertaking engagement with statutory bodies, traffic management and excavation work. As funding opportunities arise, there has also been some replacement of existing

street trees where these have been lost to vandalism or natural causes (and where underground utility infrastructure permits).

- 11.3 A number of wards are considering opportunities, or have already made a commitment, to support the delivery of street trees through the Area Partnership's Neighbourhood Infrastructure Investment Fund, including Greater Pollok and Anderston City Yorkhill, and trees planted via this route will be included in future reporting to this committee once delivery programmes have been developed.
- 11.4 NRS Greenspace and Biodiversity have been working with Sustainability colleagues to explore securing investment from businesses in the city into tree planting, responding to the number of Glasgow businesses investing funding into carbon offsetting schemes across the world to reach their Environment and Social Governance goals. NRS Sustainability has engaged with businesses in the city through the Sustainable Glasgow Green Economy hub to gauge interest in investing in Glasgow. These discussions have highlighted that businesses were keen to support a scheme in Glasgow and would be interested in investing their home city as opposed to international schemes. It is envisaged that this would include a contribution towards future maintenance. A number of sites considered to be particularly suited to this approach have been highlighted in Appendix 3. Establishing an accredited scheme would be resource intensive, and as we move towards that, we would allow contributing businesses to badge and promote their involvement using the Sustainable Glasgow mark in the interim. The Trees for Streets platform is being explored as a route to bringing this investment into tree planting.

12 Next Steps

- 12.1 NRS will continue to collect spatial data to monitor the progress and continuing appropriateness of the approach within the Forestry and Woodland Strategy. The Forestry and Woodland Strategy will inform the emerging City Development 2.
- 12.2 Opportunities will be pursued across the council estate to increase our tree planting aspirations as well as leading on, and facilitating, projects over the coming planting season (Autumn/Winter 2025/26). Tree loss of ash trees will continue to increase across the city due to the progression of ash dieback and opportunities will arise for replacement tree planting on some of those sites. Updates in relation to any scheduled community tree planting events and projects will be shared with the respective local elected members and information shared with Friends of groups, community organisations and via our social media channels, where appropriate.
- 12.3 Annual updates will be provided to this Committee on the Forestry and Woodland Strategy and Tree Plan.

13. 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 2021-25? 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 result of this proposal?

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

14 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 2024/25 and that planned for winter 2025/26 through the Glasgow Tree Plan.
4. Refers the matter of grant funding highlighted within section 8 of this report of Green Action Trust to deliver Phase 2 works in support of this plan at Cadder, and Cathkin Quarry, to City Administration Committee for approval.

