Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

the tree council

Trees Outside Woodland

Biosecurity and sourcing trees of local provenance

Jess Allan, The Tree Council

Maddie Dixon, Defra

Sophie Rudgewell, Defra

Trees and Woodland Strategies

A strategic approach to resilient treescapes

Jess Allan

fera

the tree council
Working together for the love of trees

Forest Research

Forestry Commission

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Establishment

Appreciation and celebration

Management

Many people and groups shape our treescapes in different ways…

Care and protection

Pest and disease prevention and response

Research, trials, best practice

Local Trees and Woodland Strategies

- Trees are high on the political agenda – relevant to multiple agendas.
- More funding for planting and more interest in having local strategies.
- Focus on local authorities as ‘keystone stakeholders’, but there are many other influences.
- Decision-making and action needs to involve various parties.
- TAWS are useful tools for working together to a shared, collective vision that is appropriate for the local context.
- About a third of English local authorities have a TAWS or similar (Hand et al. 2022).

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Arboricultural Association

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OPEN ACCESS

The creation, content and use of urban tree strategies by English local governments

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ABSTRACT

Urban tree management in England is led by local governments who may describe their policies and practices in a publicly accessible document, termed an urban tree strategy. To understand the role of such documents in urban tree management, this research investigated their prevalence, production, content and use in England. Concurrently, to understand the "life-cycle" of a tree strategy - the processes underlying the production and use of strategies - we conducted semi-structured interviews with 26 local governments. We found 143 of 353 (41%) English local governments had a publicly accessible urban tree strategy. We conducted a review of the content of half (72) of these strategies. We found tree strategies to be highly variable but diverged into two main forms, the 'strategy' form and the 'policy' form. The former is a holistic and forward-looking document, the latter a focused document centred on essential management and legislated duties. The interviews highlighted lack of time, knowledge, money, and/or political buy-in as barriers to strategy production. The variability in the existence and content of strategies could lead to differing urban forest management practices across England, which are not in line with recent national environmental objectives and recommended guidance.

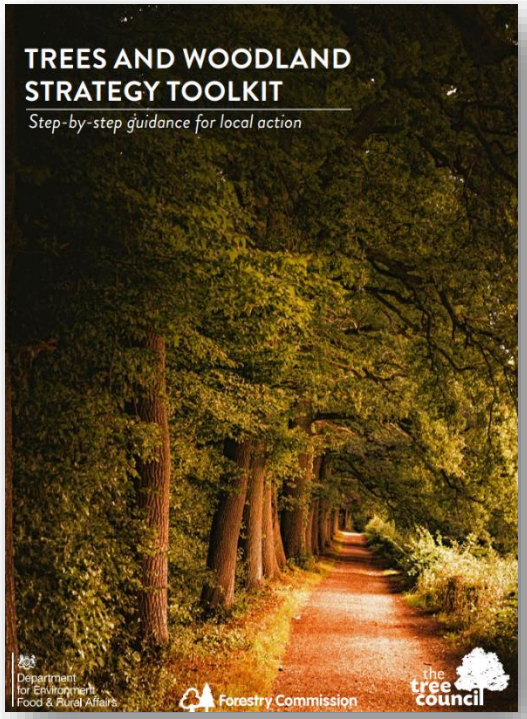
KEYWORDS

Management; policy; urban forest; governance

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03071375.2022.2072623

TAWS toolkit aims

- To **empower and enable** Local Authorities to create TAWS.
- To be a **go-to document** that signposts useful resources.
- To **share solutions** through informative new case studies.
- To provide **support at all stages** of strategy creation, delivery and review.
- To **reflect the diversity** of Local Authority contexts and needs.
- To **encourage outward-looking, holistic strategies** that involve stakeholders.
- It will be updated and continue to **link in new research and tools**.



Practical guidance

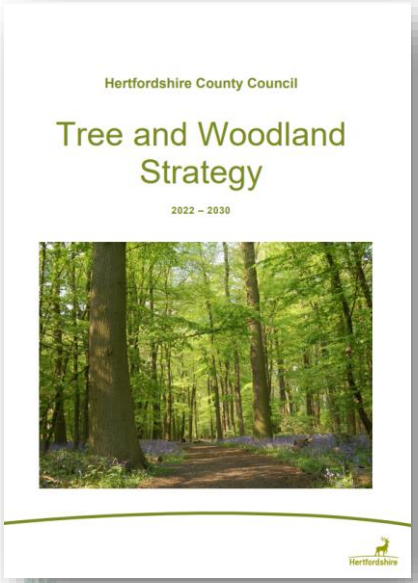
Phase	Steps	Key resources
1: Get started	Make the case for a TAWS	• List of how trees benefit local authority services and policies – page 13 • Practical guidance for public engagement – page 19-21
	Assemble a team	
	Define a project brief	
	Identify stakeholders	
2: Develop the strategy	What to include in your strategy?	• A list of useful types of evidence and how to obtain it – pages 32-33 • A downloadable checklist to help you decide what to include in the strategy – pages 26-27
	Gather the evidence	
	Create a shared vision	
	Set effective targets	
3: Deliver the strategy	Secure funding	• Action Plan example – Appendix D • Recommendations taken from the case studies – pages 51-43
	Develop an action plan	
	Consult and engage	
	Monitor, evaluate, review and update	

How does biosecurity fit into TAWS?

- Local priorities may vary but resilience should be a widespread aim in TAWS.
- TAWS are an opportunity to:
    - Raise awareness of the importance of biosecurity.
    - Set objectives or a vision for a healthy treescape.
    - Define ways of working or principles.
    - Provide leadership and clear direction.
- Many TAWS have references to biosecurity (examples coming up).
- If you have treescape expansion targets, think about sourcing of trees – is there local capacity?
- TAWS toolkit encourages working with local community and volunteers to achieve common goals.

Hertfordshire County Council

- Total canopy cover 21.4% - half of this is made up of trees outside woodlands.
- Adopted target to establish 1.8 million new trees (inc. 600,000 hedgerow trees).
- Council-enabled planting has risen from approx. 20,000 to 100,000 trees per year.
- Strategy supports delivery of other council ambitions.
- Tree health and resilience is prioritised and integrated into their TAWS.



Set principles

3. Improve biosecurity controls

To achieve this tree and woodland managers should consider the following:

- Establish plant procurement protocols which give strong weighting to biosecurity considerations, in order to minimise the risk of introducing pests and diseases. This may prioritise securing stock which has been propagated and grown in the UK, either from domestic seed (UK Sourced and Grown) or seed which has been imported in line with best practice biosecurity controls (UK Sown and Grown)
- When UK sown and grown trees are not available and alternative selections are not possible, ensure that trees are secured from nurseries operating a best practice approach to quarantine and supply chain management. The Plant Healthy certification scheme can be used to help identify suitable nurseries
- Follow sanitary guidance provided by Defra's agencies to reduce the risk of cross-contamination, e.g. Keep it Clean
- Require contractors to adhere to agreed procurement and biosecurity protocols
- Identify opportunities to contract-grow, guaranteeing a supply of UK grown trees to meet future requirements
- Promote national and local campaigns for the suitable management of green waste by residents and local businesses

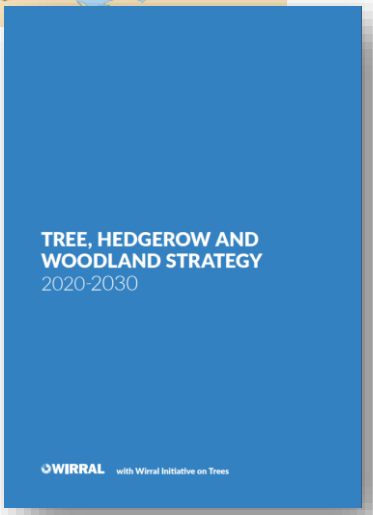
Identify threats

Tree pests and disease

- Ash dieback
- Oak processionary moth (OPM)
- Acute oak decline
- Bleeding canker of horse chestnut

Wirral Borough Council

- Declared an Environmental and Climate Emergency in 2019.
- Tree, Hedgerow and Woodland Strategy published in 2020.
- Programme manager appointed to deliver the strategy.
- Collaborated with local Tree Warden Network and ran a public consultation.
- Aims to ‘protect, restore and maintain Wirral’s existing trees, hedgerows and woodlands.’
- Strategy provides a framework for decision-making.



https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/tree-preservation/consultation-tree-strategy

Following good biosecurity practices is critical for preventing the introduction of pests and diseases.

Raise awareness

4. Establish and support local tree nurseries on Wirral to provide future tree stock that will be climate resilient and offer appropriate planting for Wirral's environment. This will include schools, community groups and volunteers collecting seeds and cuttings of suitable trees and growing them on.

7. Use and extend the strategy to set out how Wirral will respond to Ash dieback and any other pests or diseases that threaten Wirral's existing, replacement and new tree cover.

Commitments

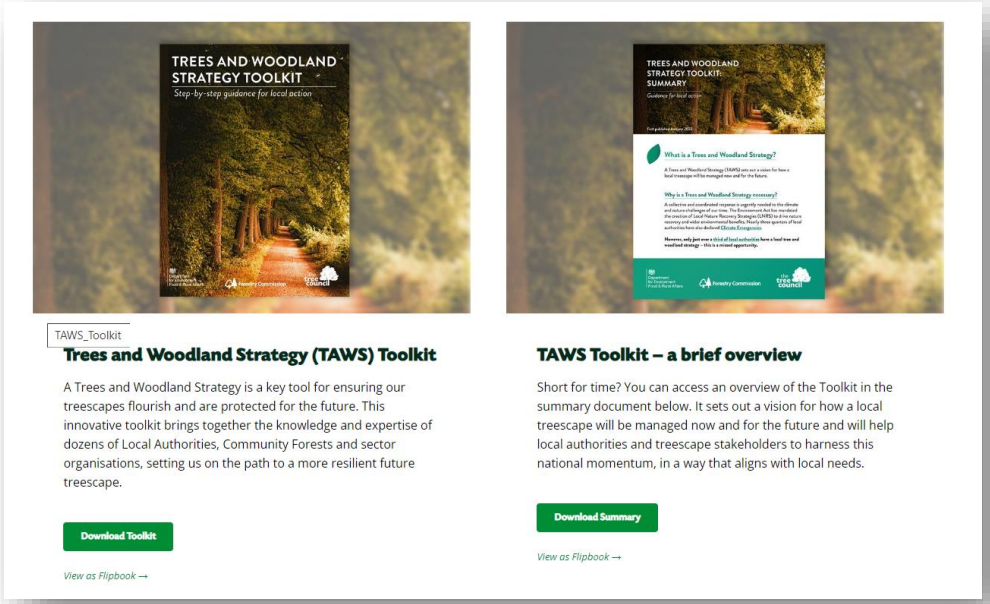
pests or diseases. Commercial stock often comes from a limited genetic base and is therefore vulnerable when new disease strikes. WBC will actively engage with volunteer-assisted nurseries that can collect local seed and grow up until large enough to plant out. This will provide a variety of local genotypes and trees that are likely to be adapted to local conditions. While this should not be the only source of trees for Wirral, it can play an important part and increase community involvement in new trees while at the same time managing biosecurity i.e. the prevention of the introduction and spread of harmful organisms.

Identify opportunities to make practical changes or action.

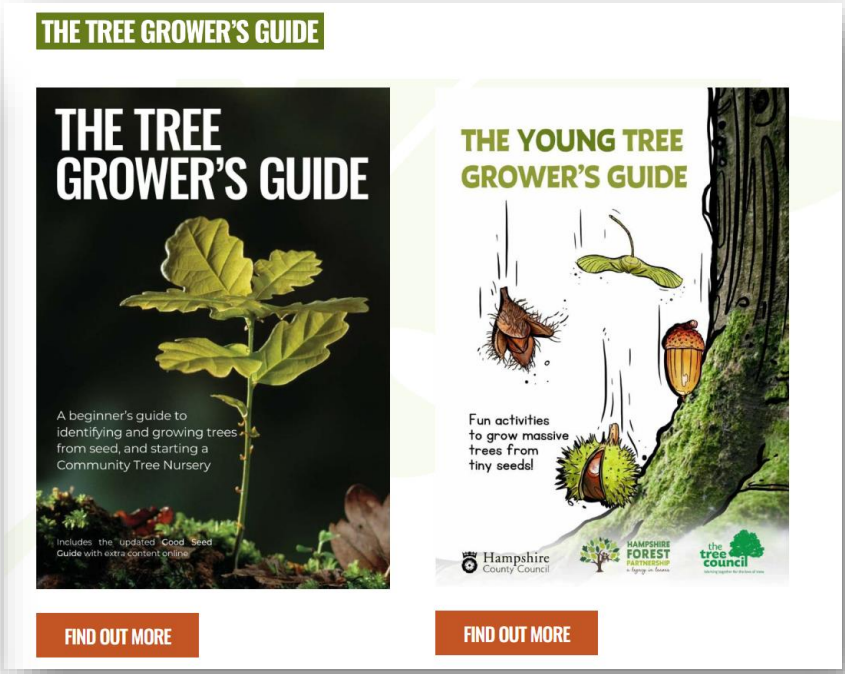
Final thoughts

- TAWS toolkit is there to help guide every stage of a TAWS – please use it and let us know what you think!
- Biosecurity and resilience should go hand-in-hand with any treescape expansion objectives.
- Community Tree Nurseries could boost local capacity for tree supply and provide other benefits – great way to engage people in caring for trees!
- Local volunteers like Tree Wardens could play a role in this.
- Ensure good biosecurity practice is followed and connect with others.

Useful resources



https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/trees-and-woodland-strategy-toolkit/



https://treegrowersguide.org.uk/

Upcoming webinar – 26th March

https://www.tickettailor.com/events/thetreecouncil/1142834

Healthy, Happy Trees – Creating your own little tree nursery, how to grow healthy, happy trees and spring seed sowing

Tue 26 Mar 2024 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM GMT Online, Zoom

Following on from the success of our **Getting Sowing** talk, **Healthy Happy Trees** is the next in our series of online talks all about introducing you to the world of community tree nurseries and giving you a calendar of easy to follow, informative sessions to help you on your tree growing journey.

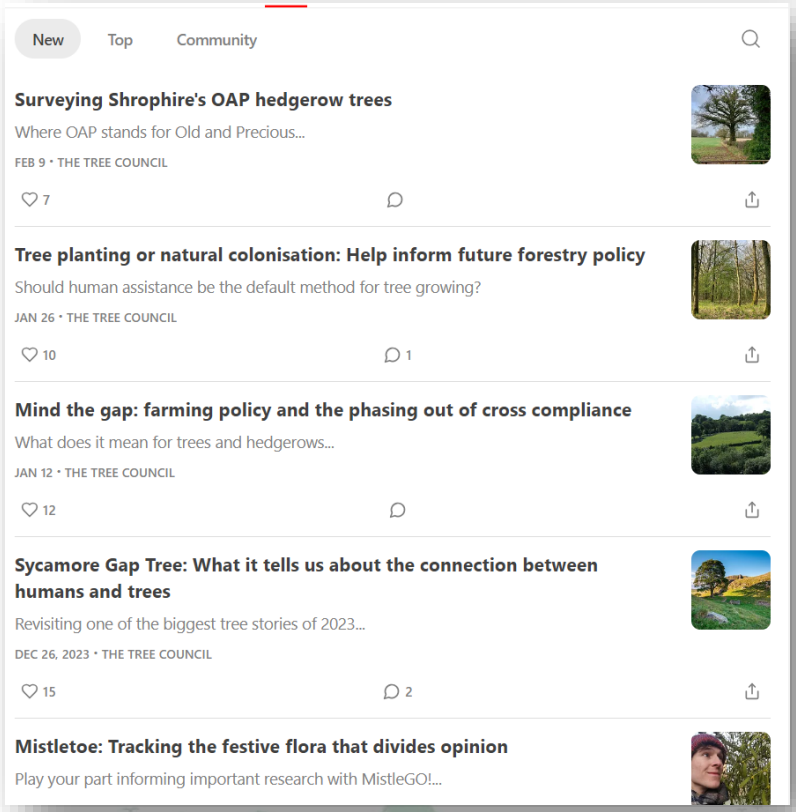
Healthy Happy Trees will:

- Explore what you need to think about when designing your tree growing space.
- Go through some basics on biosecurity and how to grow healthy trees.
- Give you more great case studies of people growing trees themselves.
- Teach you how to deal with seeds that are germinating in Spring.
- Advertise the next talk in our tree growing series - *Growing Up – Keeping your trees alive and well over the summer months* – which will take place in **June 2024**

FULL DETAILS TO FOLLOW – Keep an eye on our socials for more info

TreeTalk substack

https://treetalk.substack.com/



New Top Community

Surveying Shrophire's OAP hedgerow trees

Where OAP stands for Old and Precious...

FEB 9 • THE TREE COUNCIL

♡ 7

Tree planting or natural colonisation: Help inform future forestry policy

Should human assistance be the default method for tree growing?

JAN 26 • THE TREE COUNCIL

♡ 10 1

Mind the gap: farming policy and the phasing out of cross compliance

What does it mean for trees and hedgerows...

JAN 12 • THE TREE COUNCIL

♡ 12

Sycamore Gap Tree: What it tells us about the connection between humans and trees

Revisiting one of the biggest tree stories of 2023...

DEC 26, 2023 • THE TREE COUNCIL

♡ 15 2

Mistletoe: Tracking the festive flora that divides opinion

Play your part informing important research with MistleGO!...

Thank you for listening

Website
https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/trees-and-woodland-strategy-toolkit/

Acknowledgements

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Thank you to our funders at Defra

Type into your search bar: www.mentimeter.com – and enter the code: 6738 8418

Community Tree Nurseries (CTNs)

- Local seed collection ➡ local planting
- Native broadleaf specialists
- Added social / environmental benefits to tree production

Weeping Cross – a town council nursery

Trees Outside Woodland

Statistics are taken from HM Government funded research into CTNs published by Forest Research: "Social Research for Community Tree Nurseries" https://cdn.forestresearch.gov.uk/2022/10/CTN-Evaluation-FINAL-Report-Jan2023.pdf

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CTNs and your tree strategies

- Work with local stakeholders
- Source resilient trees
- Source healthy trees
- Support supply of resilient and healthy trees for future sourcing.
  - Supporting local nurseries
  - Establishing tree nurseries

Trees Outside Woodland

Weeping Cross – a town council nursery

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CTNs and biosecurity

‘There’s a common perception that local varieties and provenances, locally collected seed and 'small scale' operations (such as CTNs) pose no biosecurity risk.’

The current picture of CTN biosecurity:

- 54% can trace trees from source to sale
- 49% monitor regularly for pests and diseases
- 10% have a formal written biosecurity policy (a further 37% had something informal such as a common understanding of principles and practice)
- Most CTNs showed a willingness and enthusiasm to learn and improve!

Statistics are taken from HM Government funded research into CTNs published by Forest Research: “Social Research for Community Tree Nurseries”

CTNs and biosecurity

We are supporting biosecurity in CTNs through:

- Providing Grant support.
- Supporting the Fellowship of the Trees' CTN collaborative, with the aim to create a peer-to-peer learning network.
- Support the facilitation of training and resources.
- Support to achieve plant healthy certification – Group scheme and capital support.

Community Tree Nursery Collaborative | Fellowship of the Trees.

What can you do?

If you are setting up a CTN:

- Read The Tree Grower's Guide which has lots of information on how to maximise biosecurity when setting up and running a CTN.
- Join the Community Tree Nursery Collaborative | Fellowship of the Trees, where you can join a community of CTNs and benefit from peer-to-peer learnings.

If working with a CTN, look for signs of good biosecurity:

- **Certification** – such as UKISG (Woodland trust), Plant Healthy certification.
- **A biosecurity policy** – A CTN should have a biosecurity policy highlighting their commitment to biosecurity and the steps they are taking to achieve it. (E.g. Moor Trees - bio security policy)

Questions

- How much do you know about Community Tree Nurseries?
- What do you think about CTN biosecurity?
- Any questions for us?