

Part 5

Moving Forward

Aims and Objectives of the Fingal Tree Strategy

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5.1 Main Aims of the Strategy

Our 4 main aims derived from the vision and guiding principles are as follows:



5.11 Annual Net Increase in tree canopy cover

The Dublin Tree Canopy Study, published in 2017 by the University College Dublin School of Geography has estimated that Fingal has a 6.5% cover of tree canopy, with an estimated cover of 10% across the entire county of Dublin. With a recommended target of 15% to achieve the European city average, Fingal can help to achieve this in implementing targets, policies and objectives set out in this strategy.

There are many ways this can be achieved, from direct tree planting to encouraging the residents in Fingal to plant trees in

their gardens. Promote government level incentives to plant native broadleaf woodland on privately owned commercial and farmland.

5.12 To have a thriving, diverse and sustainable tree population

Trees should be protected, maintained and enhanced as a resource. This resource should be considered as an urban forest. Protecting, managing and enhancing trees and woodland will maximise their potential and will improve the quality of life for the citizens, visitors and workers of a resilient Fingal.

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5.13 Maximise the benefits of trees as a valuable asset and resource

This can be achieved in numerous ways, planting the right tree in the right place through sensible species selection and making sure they not only survive but thrive for many years. Protecting trees from unnecessary removal or damage. Maintaining and caring for trees using the best and latest industry guidelines. Identifying areas where trees are in most need and where they can provide a good service.

5.14 Create a sense of ownership with the public, community groups, and stakeholders

This will entail of engaging with communities and other stakeholders with regards to the value of trees and the services they provide, informing them of future management work such as planting and maintenance. Liaising with residents on planting schemes and taking suggestions on where to plant etc. will form part of this approach and will result in local communities having a sense of ownership of the trees in their areas.

Example: Involving communities in tree projects in the London borough of Hackney has proven very successful with a very low 1% death rate of newly planted trees since the scheme was introduced in 2006.



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5.2 Objectives of the Strategy

5.21 Objective 1: Manage our Trees Coherently, Responsibly & Efficiently

Good management is key to successful delivery and outcome of the tree strategy.

5.22 Objective 2: Protection and Retention of our Existing Trees

This is a key objective in achieving our aims. Firstly, to allow already established trees to thrive and not merely survive will ensure them to grow to their full potential, increasing the canopy cover and benefits simultaneously. There are a wide range of threats and stresses to our trees as outlined in section 3. From direct human intervention to climate change and associated pests and diseases.

5.23 Objective 3: Tree Planting and Establishment Initiatives to Ensure a Sustainable Tree Population

Tree planting is part of the solution to increase tree canopy cover and enhance the resilience of Fingal. There are numerous methods and tools in which this can be achieved. Prioritised planting in terms of which areas are in most need and where planting could serve a valuable purpose with considerations such as flooding, pollutions etc. or a combination of several scenarios.

5.24 Objective 4: Community Involvement, Public Engagement & Awareness Building

Fingal currently consult with various communities, NGOs and residents with regards to tree management but there is always potential to further build and strengthen this key objective potentially resulting very positively as a result. The Council will continue to support planting of trees on private land to encourage collective action approach to increasing tree cover.



Popular Tree giveaway event during the 2019 National Tree Week in Ardgillan

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5.3 The Action Plan

Making it happen

The following proposed Objectives and Actions summarise the main outcomes from the implementation of the Strategy over its lifetime

Objective 1: Responsible, Efficient & Coherent Approach to Tree Management

Action

- 1.1 Secure an Annual Dedicated Tree Budget for adequate resourcing of tree management
- 1.2 Recruit a Tree Officer and Tree Management Team to coordinate and implement the strategy
- 1.3 Resurvey and update the public realm tree inventory data (Street & open space trees) to refresh our inventory and inform maintenance
- 1.4 Develop a cyclical proactive tree management programme based on the surveys data, in the interest of tree health and public safety
- 1.5 Commission a woodland management programme to specify required works and ensure sustainability among existing woodlands and use them to their full potential, in line with the biodiversity action plan
- 1.6 Commission the study and report on the ecosystem services/nature-based solutions provided by Fingal's trees with reference to their economic/climate change adaptation benefits.

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Objective 2: Tree Protection & Retention

Action

- 2.1** Prepare tree related planning and design guidelines for inclusion in the next Fingal County Development Plan
- 2.2** Review the Council's existing TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders) with a view to revising and updating this list.
- 2.3** Develop best practice guidelines/requirements for utility companies and contractors when working in proximity to trees, to include open spaces.
- 2.4** Map and survey all significant/historic stands of woodland within the county e.g. in excess of 5ha with a view to updating the County Development Plan's Specific Zoning Objectives in relation to woodlands.
- 2.5** Assess and adopt tree valuation methods for compensatory / replacement planting, e.g. Cavat, iTree.
- 2.6** Participate as a member with the Tree Council of Ireland with a view to influencing national policy relating to trees

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Objective 3: Tree Planting and Establishment Initiatives to Ensure a Sustainable Tree Population

Action

- 3.1** A programme of targeted Strategic Annual Tree Planting including identifying and mapping priority locations, to include sites suitable for woodland creation. Reviewed in an annual works programme, presenting what is planned for the coming year. Taking advantage of government funding programmes such as the New Woodland Creation Scheme on Public Lands
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- 3.2** Promote the retrofitting of integrated constructed tree pits incorporating SuDS within urban areas with low levels of tree cover.
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- 3.3** Prepare a list of suitable tree species recommended for differing situations / functions and make available to developers and other stakeholders following the guiding principle of right tree, right place
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- 3.4** Explore opportunities to partner with companies and other entities for Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives involving tree planting.
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Objective 4: Community Involvement, Public Engagement & Awareness

Action

- 4.1** Construct a dedicated and interactive tree webpage on the Council's website. Providing opportunities such as a Tree Champions contact list, citizen science/public participation schemes for tree identification and surveying etc. and other tree related matters. For knowledge sharing and public information and awareness purposes
- 4.2** Participation in National Tree Week/Day events such as Tree Giveaways and community planting schemes
- 4.3** Develop protocols for engaging with communities and residents for proposed significant tree management works and works affecting trees
- 4.4** Involve residents and community groups e.g. tidy town/community garden groups in the establishment of newly planted trees in their area e.g. watering



Appendices

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APPENDIX I: Proposed Tree Related Policies

(for inclusion in the adopted Tree Strategy and other relevant Council documents)

Policy1: The Council will carry out tree pruning and felling outside of the nesting period as far as reasonably practicable. A typical exception of this is on the grounds of health and safety concerns, the National Parks and Wildlife Service shall be informed in these instances.

Policy2: The Council will explore and implement biosecurity measures and protocols to keep tree pests and diseases under control within Fingal.

Policy 3: The Council plans to inform and promote the importance of trees as part of the urban environment and put them on a level footing with all urban infrastructure.

Policy 4: In balancing tree risks and benefits the Council will:

1. Manage the risk of significant injury or property damage to levels that are as low as reasonably practicable.
2. Operate a system of proactive and reactive tree inspections.
3. Maintain a detailed record of trees and inspections.
4. Ensure competent individuals carry out tree inspections.
5. Ensure work identified through the inspection programme is undertaken by suitably qualified staff or contractors within the appropriate timeframe.

Policy 5: The Principle of planting the 'right tree in the right place' will apply for all new tree planting.

Policy 6: Following instances of tree removal, subject to availability of space and resources, replacement will be in accordance of size of removed tree

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Policy 7: As well as pruning for arboriculture reasons, the following shall be the general standard as to (street)trees in the public realm:

- Footpaths: 2.5m overhead clearance
- Roads: 4.5m overhead clearance
- Buildings: 2m clearance

Policy 8: The Council aims to ensure that every tree felled is replaced to guarantee a renewable tree stock in Fingal for future generations

Policy 9: The Council will not remove trees without adequate justification. When felling work is proposed, the reasons for the work will be documented and recorded to include photographs.

Policy 10: The Council will not plant large canopy deciduous trees within a distance equal to their maximum potential height on the south or west side of private dwellings. For evergreen trees this distance will be increased to twice their maximum height. This will minimise or eliminate afternoon and evening shade problems going forward.

Policy 11: The Council may seek to prosecute anyone found to be carrying out unauthorised work or causing damage to its trees without permission and where appropriate apply the maximum penalty.

Policy 12: Where new trees are being planted, these will be located so they do not cause future interference to existing streetlights, typically no closer than 7m from the centre of the main stem to the pole.

Appendices

APPENDIX II: References

- Common Sense Risk Management of Trees – National Tree Safety Group, 2011
- Amenity Trees and Woodlands, A Guide to their Management in Ireland – Tree Council of Ireland 2010.
- NATIONAL JOINT UTILITIES GROUP (NJUG). Guidelines for the planning, installation and maintenance of utility apparatus in proximity to trees. Volume 4, issue 2. London: NJUG, 2007.
- The Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS) - The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government
- All – Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020
- Dublin Tree Canopy Study, UCD School of Geography
- Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure, A Guide for Specifiers – Trees & Design Action Group
- Trees do more than you think – London Tree Officers Association
- The Arboricultural Association
- BS 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations
- BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations
- BS 8545:2014 Trees: From nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations
- Felling and Reforestation Policy, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, 2017.
- Trees, Forests and the Law in Ireland, Damian McHugh and Gerhardt Gallagher, 2004 by COFORD, National Council for Forest Research and Development, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland.
- Trees in the Townscape A Guide for Decision Makers, 2012 - Trees & Design Action Group
- Trees in Hard Landscapes, A Guide for Delivery, 2014 – Trees & Design Action Group
- CIRIA SuDS Manual 2015, Ch. 19 Trees
- Nowak, D.J., Crane, D.E. & Stevens, J.C. (2006) Air pollution removal by urban trees and shrubs in the United States. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, 4, 115-123.

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- Nowak, D.J., Greenfield, E.J., Hoehn, R.E. & Lapoint, E. (2013) Carbon storage and sequestration by trees in urban and community areas of the United States. *Environ Pollut*, 178, 229-36.
- Coley R.L., Kuo, F.E., & Sullivan, W.C. (1997) Where does community grow? The social context created by nature in urban public housing. *Environment and Behaviour*, 29, 468 - 494
- Guidelines for Managing Openings in Public Roads, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2017.
- Matthew P. White, Ian Alcock, James Grellier, Benedict W. Wheeler, Terry Hartig, Sara L. Warber, Angie Bone, Michael H. Depledge & Lore E. Flemming (2020) Spending at least 120 minutes a week in nature is associated with good health and wellbeing
- Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, The Sustainable Development Goals National Implementation Plan 2018-2020
- Ulmer, J.M., Wolf, K.L., Backman, D.R., Tretheway, R.L., Blain, C.J.A., O'Neil-Dunne, J.P.M., Frank, L.D. (2016) Multiple health benefits of urban tree canopy: The mounting evidence for a green prescription. *Health & Place*. 42. 54-62

APPENDIX III: Glossary of Terms

Arboriculture is defined as the cultivation, practice and study of the care of trees and shrubs in the landscape. Professionals working in the trade have expanded the definition to include the production, selection, planting, maintenance, management and removal of all wooded plants for amenity purposes.

Biodiversity describes the 'variety of life', or the range of plants, animals and habitats that exist in a given area.

Carbon Sinks are natural systems like forests, soil and oceans that store carbon removed from carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Carbon Sequestration is the process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide. This helps to either mitigate or defer dangerous climate change.

Climate Change is primarily a problem of too much carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere. This carbon overload is caused mainly when we burn fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas or cut down and burn forests.

Crown Lift or crown raising is the removal of the lowest branches and/or preparing of lower branches for future removal. It is an effective method of increasing light transmission to areas closer to the tree or to enable access under the crown. Crown lifting is generally specified with reference to a fixed point, e.g. 'crown lift to give 5.5m clearance above ground level'.

Evapotranspiration is the process by which water is transferred from the land to the atmosphere by evaporation from the soil and other surfaces and by transpiration from plants.

Face reduction is the pruning of branches on one side of the tree. It is carried out when the branches of a tree are touching an adjacent building or extensively overhanging a private property.

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Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned network of high quality natural and semi – natural areas with other environmental features, which is designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services and protect biodiversity in both rural and urban settings.

Nature Based Solutions are defined by the International Union for Conservation of nature as ‘actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human wellbeing and biodiversity benefits

Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS) “total”solution to rainwater management and is applicable in both urban and rural situations...SuDS can also provide amenity benefits to local communities and benefits for biodiversity simultaneously. In this way SuDS features are not just part of the County’s drainage infrastructure but a vital part of the County’s Green Infrastructure.

Tree Canopy Cover is the metric used to indicate the benefits provided by the urban forest. It is measured as tree canopy cover percentage of the total area under review. It has the advantage of being relatively simple and inexpensive to assess using spatial analysis techniques. Increases in tree canopy cover can most efficiently be realised by maximising tree protection and maintenance in combination with new plantings. If trees are managed such that their anticipated mature crown projections are realised, significant canopy cover increases can occur in conjunction with new planting (Grove et al; 2006). As trees and their canopies take time to grow, more than twenty years will generally be needed to achieve a measurable change in canopy cover.

Urban Forest is an internationally used term to define an integrated, city wide approach to the planting, care and management of trees in the city to secure multiple environmental and social benefits for urban dwellers.

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APPENDIX IV: Useful Tree Related Websites

www.treesaregood.org

www.treeCouncil.ie

www.trilliontreecampaign.org

<https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service/>

www.treesforcities.org

<https://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/>

www.epa.ie

<https://www.woodlandsofireland.com/>

<https://www.heritageCouncil.ie/>

<https://dublinclimatechange.codema.ie/>

<https://www.climateireland.ie/#/>

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/>

<https://www.observatree.org.uk/>

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/>

<https://www.treetalk.co.uk/>

APPENDIX V: Tree Preservation Orders

Under the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2011, local authorities have a mandatory responsibility to include objectives in the Development Plan relating to the preserving of amenities. In guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment in 1986, local authorities are encouraged to undertake special tree surveys as part of the general process of preparing the Development Plan. It suggests that trees of amenity interest be mapped and listed and that owners and occupiers of land on which such trees stand be notified. It also suggests that Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) be made in appropriate cases, taking account of the relative amenity importance and degree of risk to the particular tree(s).

Section 205 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides for the making of a TPO by the planning authority where it seems to that authority to be necessary to preserve tree(s) on amenity or environmental grounds. This prevents the cutting down, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of the trees. In addition, the TPO may require the owner and occupier of the land affected by the order to enter into an agreement with the planning authority to ensure the proper management of any trees (including the replanting of trees), subject to the planning authority providing assistance (including financial) towards such management as may be agreed.

TPOs cannot apply to dying, dead or dangerous trees or where felling is otherwise required by statute. Where a TPO has been made, an application may be made under the Act for consent to fell trees covered by that TPO. If consent is given by the local authority, that local authority may also attach conditions.

Regarding TPOs, or indeed Planning Permission, there is no statutory link between the Planning Acts and the Forestry Act 2014. Both operate separately. This means, for example, that Planning Permission may have been obtained to develop an area, which may itself involve felling trees. However, the felling should not take place without a felling licence from the Forest Service of the DAFM. Similarly, with TPOs, a felling licence may have issued from the Forest Service for felling, but the trees cannot be cut down unless the local authority also issues consent.

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APPENDIX VI: Example of leaflet requesting the aid of residents for establishment of newly planted trees

PLEASE WATER YOUR TREES!

Newly-planted trees need to be watered regularly over the summer months if they are going to become established and thrive.

If you have a tree outside your house, or one that you pass on your daily walk, then you can help.

Requirements vary depending on a number of factors such as species and location, but a general rule is that they should receive at least 50 litres of water per week in May, June, July and August:

Please water regularly during dry periods with as much as you can – Every little helps

- Watering should ideally be carried out in the early morning or evening.
- It is good practice to water trees for the first three years after planting.
- If the tree has a watering pipe, then half of the water should be poured down the pipe and the other half on the surface of the tree. If the tree has a watering bag, then fill that.
- Where possible, water should be sustainably sourced. Harvested rainwater is ideal, but bath water, or water which has been used for the washing up, is also suitable.

More information about tree watering can be found in the **London Tree Officers Association (LTOA)** publication *Sustainable water management*, available for free download at www.ltoa.org.uk

General information about trees and tree care can be found at the **Arboricultural Association** website www.trees.org.uk

www.trees.org.uk | www.ltoa.org.uk | www.ato.org.uk | www.mtoa.co.uk
 Arboricultural Association | London Tree Officer Association | Association of Tree Officers | Municipal Tree Officers' Association

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APPENDIX VII: Infographic Depicting Headline Figures from a study of the Ecosystem Services that Trees Provide (See Action 1.6)

Report carried out by Treeconomics for Ealing Borough Council

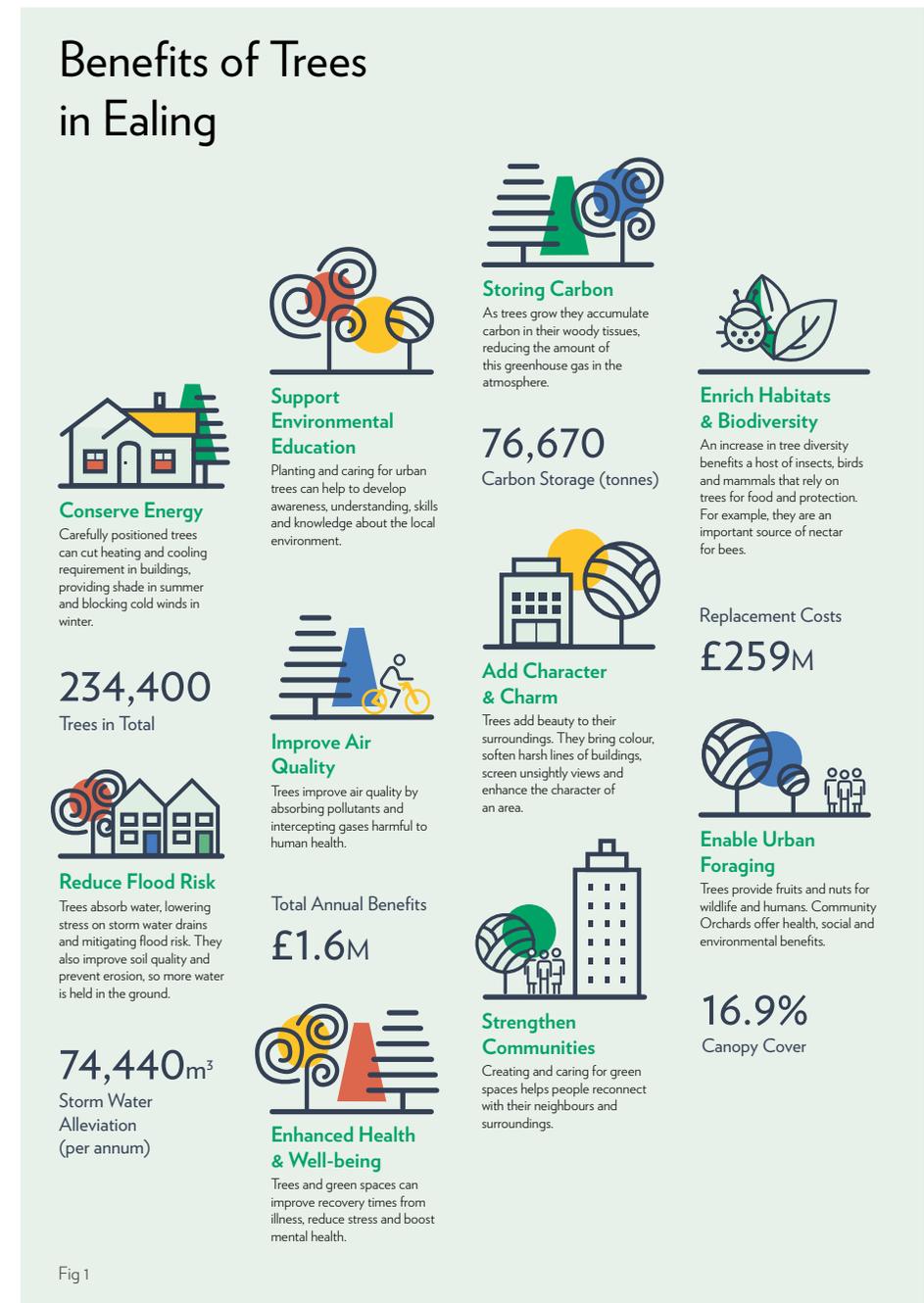


Fig 1



**Comhairle Contae
Fhine Gall**
Fingal County
Council

