

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOODS COMMITTEE ON 17th NOVEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Arun District Council's Greenspace Tree Planting Strategy 2021 - 2031

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DATE: November 2021
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AREA: Services Directorate, Neighbourhoods Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A 10-year Tree Planting Strategy and associated planting plan 2021-2031 has been drafted in support of the Council's declaration of a climate emergency. The planting plan will be developed in full consideration of 'best practice' principles, local management knowledge and required resource. This will ensure future tree planting undertaken by the Council is carried out in a sustainable and considered way.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To approve and adopt the proposed Arun Greenspace Tree Planting Strategy 2021-2031 and associated planting plan

1. BACKGROUND:

1.1 In Dec 2020 Members of the Environment & Leisure Working Group were presented with a report detailing the proposed aims and objectives of a tree planting strategy for Arun, alongside guiding principles that would be followed in respect of future tree planting on Arun land.

1.2 Following this, officers have now finalised the strategy which includes a proposed planting plan for the next ten years, which has been developed following a robust site-based assessment, to ensure that the premise of 'right tree right place' is followed.

1.3 The Tree Planting Strategy and associated planting plan can be viewed in the appendices to this report.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Arun's Greenspace Service is experienced in the successful delivery and establishment of large-scale tree planting projects and arboricultural (tree) management.

2.2 As a landowner there is significant opportunity to plant more trees on Arun owned green space over the next ten years. This will support the Council's recent declaration of a climate emergency within Arun.

2.3 It is imperative that all future planting is carried out in line with best industry practice and in a well-considered and planned way. This will ensure the best chance of sustainability and long-term health of these trees and minimise future management liabilities of this newly planted tree stock. The Tree Planting Strategy 2021 – 2031 will provide a framework to ensure that this happens.

2.4 This ten-year strategy and planting plan will be led and driven by Arun District Council. Its primary focus will be to supplement and enhance the existing tree cover and tree numbers on land under the ownership of the Council. This is because the Council will have direct control, management responsibility and liability for trees on its own land moving forward.

2.5 Whilst it seeks to be ambitious the planting plan must also be deliverable. There is no value in pushing boundaries and quantities of tree planting at the expense of best practice and quality.

2.6 Throughout this process officers have tried to look at opportunities within each ward equally and without prejudice. However, the differing availability of suitable open space within wards and existing tree stock determines what can realistically be achieved, and has therefore shaped our planting proposals.

2.7 Arun is not in a position to extend this strategy or action plan to land owned by others. We are however happy to share the best practice principles with other landowners to facilitate the successful establishment of trees.

2.8 The England Trees Action Plan May 2021, is a national document that has lots of relevance to Arun's strategy and illustrates how Arun is at the forefront of the delivery of these actions, including:

- plant more trees in towns and urban places
- working with the planners to ensure more trees are included in new development
- help fulfil the role of connecting people with trees

The link for the plan is in the background papers to this report:

3.0 DETERMINING A TREE PLANTING STRATEGY FOR ARUN'S GREEN SPACES

3.1 The strategy itself and associated planting plan has been developed by officers from the Council's Greenspace Service. It is underpinned by industry best practice and the availability of space available.

3.2 It is our aim to ensure delivery of the strategy is collaborative. It is vital however that the delivery is coordinated through a considered planting plan and underpinned by the objectives and best practice as set out in the strategy document.

3.3 On this basis, the Greenspace Service undertook consultation with all Town & Parish Councils in June 2021. They were asked to provide their views on the following;

- The proposed aims and objectives of Arun's Tree Planting Strategy
- Their own proposals for tree planting on land under their control or in collaboration with others i.e. West Sussex County Council
- Any proposals or suggestions for Arun land which they wished to be considered for inclusion in our planting plan
- Whether there was appetite and opportunity for collaborative/partnership working in respect of delivering tree planting under the Arun strategy

3.4 This was a positive initial exercise with good engagement and overwhelming support from those who responded for the principles identified within our strategy. A full summary of responses can be viewed in the appendices to this report.

3.5 Following endorsement of this report and the strategy, we will continue our dialogue with Town and Parish Councils and Community Groups to progress aspirations and involvement in the delivery of tree planting across the Arun district.

4.0 SUMMARY OF TREE PLANTING & DELIVERY

4.1 The ten-year planting plan proposes the following as a minimum;

- Approx. 33,000 whips planted
- Approx 500 standard trees planted
- Across 84 sites
- An appropriate range of both native and non-native species

4.1.1 Details of the above are provided in the strategy document contained within the appendices to this report. Proposals for planting this winter in all or part are highlighted in the report with an asterisk.

4.2 Beyond that delivery of the planting plan will be phased over ten years and will develop over this period. This will allow Arun time to consider and plan for partnership involvement (including funding contributions and grant funding) community tree planting events and initiate the successful procurement of tree supply, planting and aftercare needs as necessary to ensure best value.

4.2 Financial and physical resources are a limiting factor. Tree planting will be largely facilitated through a commitment to fund materials costs from existing service budgets. We will as far as reasonably possible, utilise the Council's in-house Tree & Maintenance Team and Greenspace Management Contractor Tivoli Group Ltd in delivery of the tree planting and aftercare arrangements.

4.3 There are a number of opportunities for third party support which are being actively pursued to aid delivery of the strategy. These include;

- Parish & Town Council's as identified in 3. above.
- Support from local business, including Arun's own contractors such as Tivoli Group Ltd
- Donations and involvement from charitable organisations e.g. Rotary Club
- Free whips available from the Woodland Trust
- External grant funding where available

4.4 Housing site open spaces are included within the planting plan. The Greenspace Service manage these open spaces and any tree contained within on behalf of the Housing Service. Tree planting within such areas can have a positive impact on the local environment and provide an important opportunity for community engagement.

4.5 The Queens Green Canopy.

The purpose of the QGC project is to thank The Queen for her exceptional service, to celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee and to promote the importance of trees to the environment. Communities, charities, schools, youth groups, councils and landowners will be planting trees across the UK to create a lasting legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership. Arun will contribute towards this landmark through its planting programme in the winter of 2022/23. Proposals are currently being considered and will be shared in due course.

5. PROPOSAL(S):

1. For Members of the Environment & Neighbourhood Services Committee to approve the proposed Greenspace Tree Planting Strategy and associated planting plan for Arun

6. OPTIONS:

- a) To approve the strategy
- b) To not approve the strategy

7. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council	✓	
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify) Arun Biodiversity Forum	✓	

8. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability	✓	
Asset Management/Property/Land	✓	
Technology		✓

Other (please explain) Tree Policy	✓	
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9. IMPLICATIONS:

Land/Management - The Council's adopted Tree Policy outlines the approach to the management of trees in its ownership. Delivery of this strategy and the future management requirements will be underpinned by the policy but will place additional resource pressures on the Greenspace Service and the Council's in-house Tree & Maintenance Team.

Sustainability - positively contributes to ADC target for 2030 carbon reduction

Financial – budget allowance for delivery from existing service budgets. All expenditure in relation to delivery of the strategy will be itemised for monitoring purposes and review, standing order and procurement requirements will be followed.

10. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To support the Council's commitment to tackling climate change through a considered, deliverable and sustainable ten-year strategy for tree planting.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

[The England Trees Action Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

12. APPENDICES

1. Greenspace Tree Planting Strategy 2021-2031
2. Summary of Parish & Town Council consultation