



Oversight and Governance

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NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH SCRUTINY PANEL

Wednesday 03 December 2025

2.00 pm

Council House, Plymouth

Members:

Councillor Ricketts, Chair

Councillor Holloway, Vice Chair

Councillors Allen, Bannerman, Darcy, Goslin, McCarty, McLay, Raynsford, M.Smith and Sproston.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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Tracey Lee

Chief Executive

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Councillors.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillors will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 October 2025.

4. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3): (Pages 11 - 28)

6. Plymouth Plan Update and Review: (Pages 29 - 44)

7. Plymouth Local Plan: Next Steps and Timetable: (Pages 45 - 68)

8. Tree Management Principles Document: (Pages 69 - 136)

9. Work Programme: (Pages 137 - 142)

10. Action Log: (Pages 143 - 146)

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday 15 October 2025

PRESENT:

Councillor Ricketts, in the Chair.

Councillor Holloway, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Goslin, McCarty, McLay, Raynsford, M.Smith and Sproston.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Bannerman and Darcy.

Also in attendance: Also in attendance: Councillors Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change), Evans OBE (Leader of the Council), Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) and Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities). Rebecca Bridgeman (Head of Collections and Programme) Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth), Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor), Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning), David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), Lindsay Hall (Real Ideas Organisation), Amanda Lumley (Chief Executive of Destination Plymouth), Anna Peachey (Manager for Economy, Regeneration and Partnerships), Victoria Pomery (CEO of The Box), Andy Sharp (Interim Service Director for Street Services) and Claire Taylor (Plymouth Marjon University).

The meeting started at 2.02 pm and finished at 5.07 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

16. **Declarations of Interest**

Name	Minute Number	Reason	Interest
Councillor Allen	19	Worked for a trade union.	Personal.

17. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

18. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

19. **Plymouth Economic Strategy Inclusive Growth Pillar Update (Economic Strategy Pillar 2)**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) The third pillar of the Economic Strategy focused on inclusive growth, aiming to ensure that economic development benefitted all residents focusing on systemic change and long-term commitment;
- b) 46.2% of women in Plymouth earned below the real living wage (£466 per week), and it needed to be tackled through inclusive growth;
- c) 13,600 people were economically inactive due to long-term sickness as of December 2024;
- d) 46,000 residents lived in areas ranked in the bottom 10% nationally for deprivation;
- e) The importance of tackling the barriers for people getting into work;
- f) The strategy set ambitious targets: lifting 3,000 people out of poverty and helping 5,000 economically inactive people into work;
- g) Four themes were identified: good business models, accessible local jobs, community sector empowerment, and employment pathways;
- h) The inclusion of Inclusive Growth within the Economic Strategy was unusual compared to other places across the country.

Lindsay Hall (Real Ideas Organisation) added:

- i) Emphasised the national significance of Plymouth's inclusive growth strategy;
- j) A new reporting system had been developed to measure the projects progress against the work of the five pillars of the economic strategy;
- k) The importance of social value procurement, and the appetite to do more in this area from different organisations in Plymouth such as Babcock through the Plymouth Charter;
- l) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was a choice for businesses and was different from legally mandated social value, but it was important to connect them.

Claire Taylor (Plymouth Marjon University) added:

- m) Social mobility was to enable those within Plymouth communities from lower socio-economic backgrounds to secure the net level of high-quality

education and employment opportunities relevant to them;

- n) The importance of removing barriers to engagement, particularly for those who identified with protected characteristics.

Councillor Penberthy added at this stage:

- o) A project called Building Bridges to Opportunity was a citywide system approach to tackle poverty in Plymouth and would link in with the work on this pillar.

Supported by Anna Peachey (Manager for Economy, Regeneration and Partnerships) and David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), in response to questions, the following was discussed:

- p) The idea of a four-day working week to support gender equality and mental health;
- q) Work with women to identify the barriers they face day-to-day;
- r) Engaging trade unions to tackle employment practices such as zero-hour contracts and fire-and-rehire policies and working with employers to promote better practices and how it can work better;
- s) Some impact was already tracked, but a dashboard and spreadsheet were being developed to track progress;
- t) Some change was long-term and would take time to show in metrics;
- u) It was important to understand the lived experiences of women in the city and reflect this in the work of this pillar of the economic strategy;
- v) Local data was being used to avoid assumptions based on national trends;
- w) More data in the future was needed at both meetings, and in communications, to ensure the work was evidence based, but also to show marked improvements;
- x) Pathways to employment and the government's new target for Level 4 qualifications;
- y) The importance of variety of progression pathways and removing barriers to engagement;
- z) What made this strategy different from previous was strategic, systemic buy-in and the opportunity to leverage social value;
- aa) Statistics showed persistent inequality rather than worsening conditions;

- bb) The importance of holding partners accountable for inclusive growth outcomes.

The Panel agreed to note the report and the continued focus on inclusive growth as a key element of the Plymouth Economic Strategy.

20. **Brand Strategy**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) Plymouth's need to better market itself nationally and internationally;
- b) £4.4 billion investment and 25,000 new jobs over the next decade required a strong brand to attract talent;
- c) The need to brand Plymouth as a great place to live, work, visit and invest in;
- d) Research by Bloom consulting showed that perception affected 86% of willingness to live, work, visit or invest in a place, but that if a city improved perception by just one decimal point, it would equal a 15% increase in tourism, 21% increase in talent attraction and 17.5% increase in foreign direct investment;
- e) The extensive engagement process, including 2,000 hours of meetings with local communities, partners and organisations, 250 public responses, 100 UK-wide surveys, and 100 street conversations and workshops, resulting in overwhelmingly positive feedback;
- f) Research by PRD, commissioned by Destination Plymouth, found that the city had improved over the past 20 years, but perception lagged, and suggested ways in which the city could improve its perception, which would be taken forward in the branding work;
- g) The new strapline was "Make Life an Adventure," supported by six key narratives;
- h) The launch of the promotional film, which received over 119,000 Facebook views and 3,200 LinkedIn views in its first week.

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) added:

- i) Outlined the engagement process and listed key partners involved including: Princess Yachts, Babcock, The University of Plymouth, Arts University Plymouth, Marjon University, Plymouth City College, DBI, Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, Real Ideas Organisation, Plymouth Growth Board, Plymouth Manufacturing Group, Plymouth Culture, Plymouth Community Homes, Ocean Conservation Trust, Theatre Royal Plymouth, The Box, University Hospitals Plymouth, Plymouth Active and Plymouth

Sound National Marine Park;

- j) The brand reflected Plymouth's personality: bold, collaborative, and ambitious;
- k) The brand had received a positive response locally, nationally and internationally;
- l) The brand used a new visual approach, shaped by Plymouth's place, between two national parks alongside a vivid colour palette to contrast against the natural tones of the city's landscape, mirroring the city's energy, whilst rooting it in the physical environment;
- m) A brand toolkit was available online for all to use;
- n) Funding had been provided through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as well as business partners from across the city.

Amanda Lumley (Chief Executive of Destination Plymouth) added:

- o) It was important through research to understand why people choose to live and move to the city, to help inform the branding;
- p) Princess Yachts and Plymouth City Bus were already using the branding to support their work.

Supported by David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), in response to questions, the following was discussed:

- q) A webinar and outreach were planned to reach smaller businesses within the city;
- r) Concerns were raised about the logo design and public perception;
- s) DNCO, a global branding firm, led the design;
- t) The logo was one part of the brand;
- u) Praised the strapline but suggested future videos include local accents;
- v) Targeted campaigns were planned to reach individuals and businesses that were outside of engaged networks;
- w) Value for money in the branding process;
- x) The brand development group were involved in the procurement process to decide which company to work with on the branding;
- y) The artwork, sound and visuals had all been produced with companies from the South West;

- z) Disappointment that a Plymothian voice had not been used to narrate the video;
- aa) The next phase for Destination Plymouth was how to use and promote the brand;
- bb) A negative post about the brand had received significantly less engagement than a positive one from the same news outlet;
- cc) 25,000 jobs would be created in Plymouth from 2025-2035;
- dd) Possibilities for future funding of the future work of Destination Plymouth;
- ee) The toolkit link would be sent to Councillors **ACTION**;
- ff) The branding had been developed with partners, not just by the Council.

The Panel agreed to note the report.

21. **Update: The Box and its performance**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) The Box had celebrated its fifth anniversary with over 1.1 million visits to date;
- b) A social and economic impact report had been commissioned from Counterculture which The Box had engaged 89% of Plymouth schools and generated £100 million in health and wellbeing value;
- c) 13% of visitors to The Box were new to museums and galleries;
- d) A new season of exhibitions was upcoming including an exhibition looking at the connections between Plymouth and Poland;
- e) A Beryl Cook exhibition would be coming in 2026.

In response to questions, supported by Victoria Pomery (CEO of The Box), Rebecca Bridgeman (Head of Collections and Programme) and David Draffan (Service Director for Economic Development), the following was discussed:

- f) Pop-up shop partnership with Bookbag and that future commercial partnerships were planned with those whose values aligned with The Box;
- g) Staff were engaging communities and planning more pop-ups and engagement outside of The Box in other venues such as Market Hall through archives, loaning of items, as well as utilising a digital offer;

- h) The Box compared favourably with national institutions in terms of visitor demographics;
- i) The Box was aligned with the city branding;
- j) Enquired how many visitors to Plymouth had visited The Box which the team explained they did not have to hand but could provide through Destination Plymouth **ACTION**;
- k) Information on whether local visitor travel area was beyond the boundary of the travel to work area for Plymouth **ACTION**;
- l) There had been a shift in cruise ship visitors and trips to keep more within Plymouth, and The Box was getting more visits from cruise ship visitors;
- m) New ideas had to be thought of all the time, for example The Box was one of the first venues to do silent discos, but several different venues across the city were doing them, so the commercial strategy had to adapt;
- n) The scale of the collection (over 2 million items) and future programming, including digital innovation.

The Panel agreed to note the update.

22. **Plan for Nature and People**

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) There had been a 19% decline in species abundance in the UK since 1970 and 16% of British species were at risk of extinction;
- b) There was a need to address the disconnect in the city between how the Council's work in this area was perceived, compared to what was being achieved;
- c) The Plan for Nature was co-created with hundreds of residents and stakeholders;
- d) It aimed to address biodiversity loss, climate resilience, and community engagement;
- e) Some examples of the planned actions included: planting 1000 street trees by 2023, working with communities to develop neighbourhood level enhancement, achieving green flag status for 12 sites in the city by 2030, celebrating Plymouth's unique species expanding ecotherapy and social prescribing, creating Plymouth's first natural capital investment prospectus;

- f) Expressed thanks to all the residents, academics, environmental groups, Council officers, Councillors and other organisations who had helped shape this new document.

Kat Deeney (Head of Environmental Planning) added:

- g) The need to make Plymouth's natural assets work for the city;
- h) The importance of aligning work in this area to national environmental policies;
- i) Plymouth had the UK's first national marine park and the UK's first local authority owned habitat bank;
- j) The plan strategically aligned nature alongside growth;
- k) Five key objectives were identified, with a five-year action plan and monitoring framework;
- l) The need to rebuild trust with the community on the Council's work in this area;
- m) Over 1000 residents were engaged in conversations that fed into the creation of the plan.

Supported by Andy Sharp (Interim Service Director for Street Services), in response to questions, the following was discussed:

- n) There was a multi-agency plan for water in development;
- o) A select committee on flooding/water would be added to the work programme **ACTION**;
- p) Work was underway on a number of sites across the city that suffered with flooding to reduce flood risk;
- q) Work was underway on how allotments could be best utilised for communities e.g. half or shared plots;
- r) Financial restraints limited the ability to improve playparks;
- s) The steering group would include diverse community voices;
- t) Any executive decision on a capital project over £200,000 had to have a completed climate impact assessment which connected Council departments;
- u) Ecotherapy and social prescribing were being expanded;

- v) 89% of young people who took part in ecotherapy said their anxiety had improved as a result;
- w) Data-led bin collection and community engagement were planned to tackle littering;
- x) Park rangers reported incidents of street homelessness and signposted to support.

The Panel agreed to:

1. Endorse the proposed changes to the draft Plymouth Plan for Nature and People following public consultation, to act as a strategic delivery framework integrating nature and natural spaces into the city's growth;
2. Support the creation of a Year 1 Action Plan for delivery in 2026;
3. Request that this item return to the Panel for annual review of the action plan.

23. **Work Programme**

Councillor McLay asked that the following item be chased as it had been an action from Council:

- a) Plymouth Plan Full Council Motion (To ensure that play was embedded into the plan and that it set a framework for a play delivery plan with targeted interventions).

The Panel noted its work programme.

24. **Action Log**

The Panel noted its action log.

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting:	03 December 2025
Title of Report:	Plymouth Economic Strategy: Sustainable Growth Pillar Update
Lead Member:	Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change)
Lead Strategic Director:	Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth)
Author:	Amanda Ratsey, Head of Economy & Investment
Contact Email:	amanda.ratsey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To provide the Panel with an annual update on the Sustainable Growth pillar of the Plymouth Economic Strategy.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. It is recommended that the Panel note this report and the continued focus on Sustainable Growth as a key element of the Plymouth Economic Strategy.

Alternative options considered and rejected

This is a report to update the Panel therefore no alternative options are required.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This report supports:

1. The Corporate Plan's prioritisation of Green Investment, jobs, skills and better education.
2. The Plymouth Plan:
 - Strategic Objective 2 '**Delivering a growing city**' where the transformation of the city should be delivered through sustainable growth.
 - Policy GRO1 '**Creating the conditions for economic growth**' by contributing to 'driving productivity and prosperity for all' in our green / blue economy;
 - Policy GRO7 '**Reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change**' by contributing to 'significant reductions in carbon emissions' in areas such as retrofit, renewable energy, heat networks, sustainable travel etc.;
 - Policy INT6 '**Enhancing Plymouth's green city credentials**' by contributing to 'current strengths in green technologies' and our 'exceptional natural environment'.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None.

Financial Risks

The PCC cost associated with supporting these growth projects are funded within existing approved revenue budgets

Legal Implications

None as a result of this report.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None arising as a direct impact of this update report.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

None arising as a direct impact of this update report

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Plymouth Economic Strategy: Sustainable Growth Pillar Update							
B	Presentation							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	N/A	Leg	N/A	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Assets	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Amanda Ratsey											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 21/11/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Laing approved in Cllr Briars-Delve's absence via email											
Date approved: 21/11/2025											

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Plymouth Economic Strategy – Sustainable Growth

Introduction

The Plymouth Economic Strategy (PES) was approved and adopted by Plymouth Growth Board and Cabinet in March 2024. This strategic document (developed through consultation with the city's key stakeholders in the business community public and VCSE sectors), identified 4 key pillars (with skills as an underlying pillar) designed to focus development on actionable areas. Within this process, Sustainable Growth was highlighted as a priority within the development of the city and was designated as one of the 4 pillars of the PES.



Figure 1: Illustration of Plymouth Economic Strategy structure.

Each Pillar has a dedicated leadership and support structure. Sustainable Growth has:

Leads

- **Cabinet** Cllr. Tom Briars-Delve
- **PGB** Richard Stevens
- **PCC** Amanda Ratsey

Support

- **PGB** Helen Wylde-Archibald
- **PCC** Kat Deeney & John Green

Sustainable Growth

In the PES, Sustainable Growth is defined as follows:

“Sustainable growth is growth which does not negatively impact the environment, promotes social inclusion, well-being and helps to drive a green economic revolution. Plymouth has an economic strength in the “blue” sectors, the city has strong businesses within this sector, many of which are at the forefront of economic development. Sustainable growth (which does not negatively affect the environment) will be a priority. For Plymouth, this means developing our blue economy and focusing on the progression within marine focused industries.”

This pillar builds on the existing specialisms with the “blue” sectors of the city and works to position Plymouth at the forefront of the green revolution by developing these blue economies in alignment with sustainability conscious decisions whilst protecting growth. Marine Autonomy and Floating Offshore Wind are some keys examples of sectors which hold vastly positive externalities for the UK and are areas which benefit from the expertise in Plymouth; applying a focused effort to the development such sectors not only hold potential opportunities for the workers in Plymouth by supporting high-value job creation but can also help ensure longevity in and supports a forward-thinking approach to Plymouth’s growth.

A Plan for Action

To deliver economic growth, we have identified six ‘elements’ through which resources will flow:

- 1. Attracting new investment into the city in green jobs, specifically around new and emerging energy production and storage
- 2. Business support, helping businesses adapt to climate change and move to net zero emission
- 3. Decarbonise the current economy, including retrofitting the existing commercial building stock and opportunities
- 4. Restorative Actions which improve sustainability
- 5. Commitment to supporting sustainable travel and living, including public transport provision.
- 6. Skills and Workforce Development needs for a more sustainable economy.

These elements were chosen to best reflect the approach desired by engaged parties and include a wide range of focuses to address the intended scope of Sustainable Growth.

Current Projects

Through the development of the Delivery Plan for the PES, 10 of the projects were judged to align primarily with Sustainable Growth. We have recently reviewed this list of projects to test their alignment with each of the elements. This has resulted in the table below:

Table 1: PES Sustainable Growth Projects and their alignment with PES elements

Project Name	PES Element Alignment
Investing in shore power/net zero infrastructure	1,2,3
Supporting port operations	2
Supporting Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW)	1
Investing in our under-utilised sites*	
Retaining our fishing industry	2, 3, 4
Plymouth Heat Network – Heart of the City Centre	1
Plymouth Heat Network – North of the City	1
Adopting new modes of construction	3
Accelerating efforts to deliver a green estate	3
Enabling Plymouth climate adaptation	4

**This specifically refers to our waterfront sites – there is a wider argument around making best use of brownfield sites*

The leadership group is revisiting this list, by going back to the data, checking progress and looking to the future.

Case Studies

1. Citybus investment in electric buses

As part of a major £31.87 million joint investment in Plymouth's public transport, 50 zero-emission electric double-decker buses are to be rolled out in the city before the end of the year. £19.6million of this investment funding will be provided by Plymouth Citybus and is further supported by a £10.34 million grant from the Government's Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) 2 Fund and contributions from Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council totalling £1.94 million. These new electric buses operating on the 21/A, 42 and 50/51 routes in Plymouth, with six buses serving Cornwall's Rame Peninsula on route 70. With estimated carbon emissions reductions of around 79,914 tonnes over their lifetimes, alongside reductions in NOx (nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide) emissions by 28 tonnes and PM (particulate matter) 2.5 emissions by a tonne, this investment marks a significant step towards cleaner, greener public transport within the city and reinforces the city's commitment to innovation and sustainability. By replacing half of its fleet with these new green technologies, Plymouth Citybus has shown significant support for the climate change ambitions in the Council's [Net Zero Action Plan](#) and also demonstrates the scale of projects needed to make effective differences within the Sustainable Growth of the city.

2. Floating Offshore Wind

As mentioned previously in this report, development in the blue economic holds significant opportunity for Plymouth to progress in sustainable growth. Plymouth is positioned as a key hub for the Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) sector and offers strategic port facilities, deep-water access and strong regional collaboration that could

help accelerate the development within this sector. Not only has Plymouth City Council has held a conference to discuss the opportunities for the city and wider region in FLOW development, but the Council has also continued to support the development of the marine and maritime economy through several partnerships focused in developing port facilities and capability for marine autonomy. One example of this is the [Future Autonomous at Sea Technologies \(FAST\) Cluster](#) within Plymouth, this cluster brings 40+ collaborative organisations together, accelerating marine autonomous systems via surface vehicles, subsurface platforms, remote operations, and Smart Sound Plymouth. Additionally, as the National Centre for Marine Autonomy, Plymouth has continued to develop its relationships with partners to ensure continued growth opportunities within this blue-green sector.

Revisiting the Data

Recent data from various national and regional sources reveal a mixed but encouraging picture of Plymouth's economy that can be used to inform the PES Sustainable Growth Pillar work. In this report, key data sources will be evaluated and conclusions drawn to explore what this data can tell us about Plymouth's ability to grow green-job numbers and thus, help protect against environmental harm whilst continuing to grow the economy

One key dataset that is useful to evaluate when exploring Plymouth's sustainable economic growth development is the [ONS Estimates of Green Jobs](#). This data provides detail on the emissions by sector nationally and can be used as an important tool when considering how best to approach the decarbonisation of Plymouth's economy. The report highlights a national shift in employment towards lower-emission sectors and shows similar patterns within Plymouth estimates. Within 2023, nearly half (46.0%) of all UK full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs were described as working in firms within the 10 lowest residence-based emission levels industries. These 10 industries collectively accounting for 4.4% of total emissions; averaging around 1.4 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per FTE employee in 2023, compared to an average of 77.6 tonnes per FTE across all industries. Some examples of the industries considered in the lowest emissions industries include: Arts, entertainment and recreation; Financial and insurance activities; Education; and Public administration and defence.

The most recent Business Register and Employment Survey results for Plymouth, these 10-lowest emissions industries accounted for roughly 45.0% of all employees in 2024. Similarly, the top 5 highest emission industries accounted for roughly 17.6% of FTEs within the city (2024); this is primarily driven by high employment in the manufacturing sector within the city. While Plymouth is currently behind UK averages for proportion of employment in the low-emissions sectors, the number of the low-emission employment (using the categories above) have increased by roughly 2,750 between 2015-2023 (roughly 660 more than the highest emitting industries). Thus, continuing to grow Plymouth's employment in lower-emission industries would not only help increase the city's sustainable economic growth by being conscious of lower-emission industry growth, but will also position Plymouth competitively in the expanding green economy.

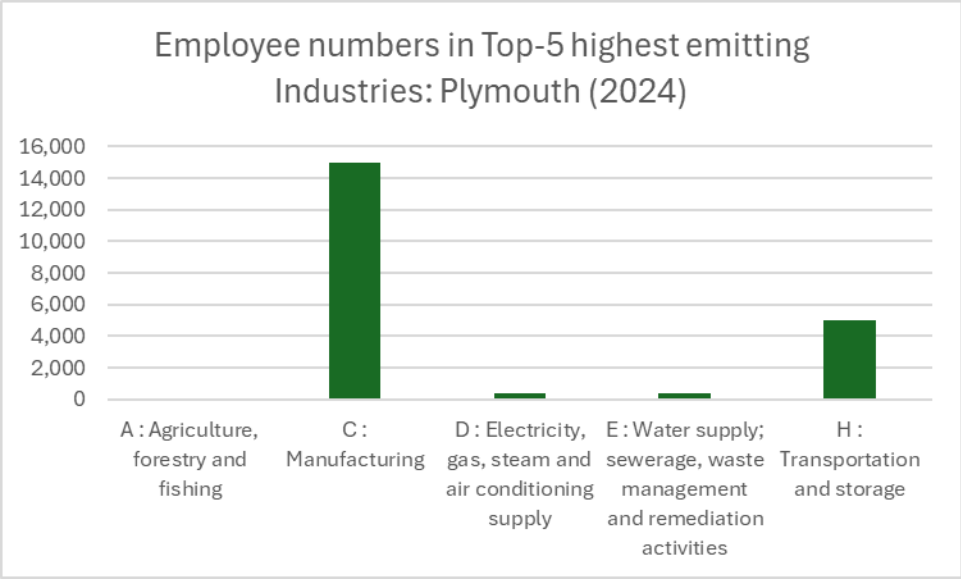


Figure 2: Graph to show the Employee count in the 5 highest-emitting industries based on those highlighted in the ONS Estimates on Green Jobs report (BRES, 2024).

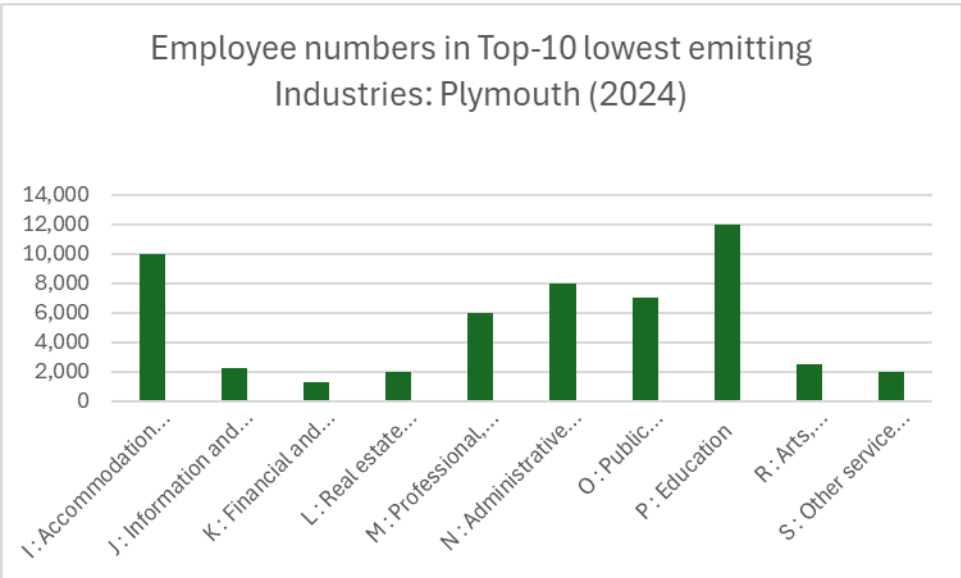


Figure 3: Graph to show the Employee count in the 10 lowest-emitting industries based on those highlighted in the ONS Estimates on Green Jobs report (BRES, 2024).

Complementing this research, data published by [New Horizon Economics on Energy Used to Generate £1 Million GVA \(2015-2023\)](#) underscore the link between energy consumption and economic growth. This article looks to compare the amount of energy required to generate £1 Million of Gross Value Added (GVA) across local authorities and thus explores the impact of energy productivity across the UK. Different areas of the UK see various levels of energy productivity and correlations can be drawn between these energy-productivity levels and economy sector composition. For example, areas such as Pembrokeshire, North Lincolnshire and Neath Port Talbot are highlighted as the most energy-intensive local authorities in 2023 due to the high levels of heavy industry-related economic sectors (e.g. oil and gas terminals and steelmaking). Consequently, these areas need high levels of energy to produce £1 Million GVA. Alternatively, areas such as the City

of London, Manchester and Bristol were all listed as low energy-intensive areas due to their reliance on service-dominated economies such as finance, business services and government/knowledge roles; resulting in low energy demand to GVA ratios.

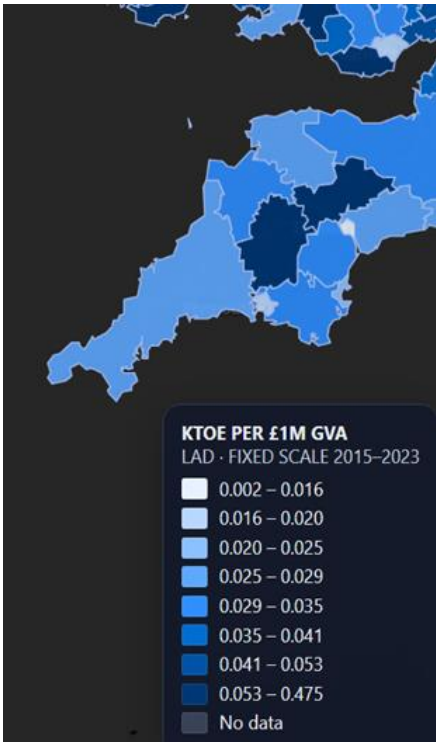


Figure 4: Screenshot from [New Horizon Economics on Energy Used to Generate £1 Million GVA \(2015-2023\)](#) to show Plymouth’s energy productivity compared to local area.

As you can see in the heat-map above, Plymouth is shown to have high energy productivity (i.e. lower levels of energy needed to produce £1 Million of GVA); particularly when compared to UK averages and surrounding local authorities. This is likely due to the high proportion of public sector roles (government/knowledge roles are reported to be some of the lowest energy demanding economies. While exact levels of energy-demanded varies across time, Plymouth has retained a higher energy productivity level relative to other neighbouring local authorities in the South-West since 2015.

The growth in Green-jobs both nationally and locally show that Plymouth is on a positive path towards sustainable economy growth. The city is continuing to make progress in economic growth while focusing efforts in lower-emission and innovative sectors. Plymouth can continue to align strategic economic growth priorities with the green transition through the continuation of efforts to decarbonise our current economy and increasing employment in sectors such as low-carbon technology development, marine autonomy and offshore renewables. In doing so, the city can support the development of a cleaner, more resilient local economy for future generations.

Progress Update

Trial project monitoring reporting was conducted by the PES team in October. Whilst full monitoring has not yet rolled-out, initial data shows that progress is being made in these projects. 7 have been able to return the progress monitoring; of these, 4 are in active delivery and 5 have been rated with a green RAG rating for overall project health (i.e.

progress is being made and no faults are reported). The chart below shows the reported Project Health Breakdown for the pillar. Overall, only one Red RAG rating element was reported, and this has been noted by the team and the project will receive additional support where necessary.

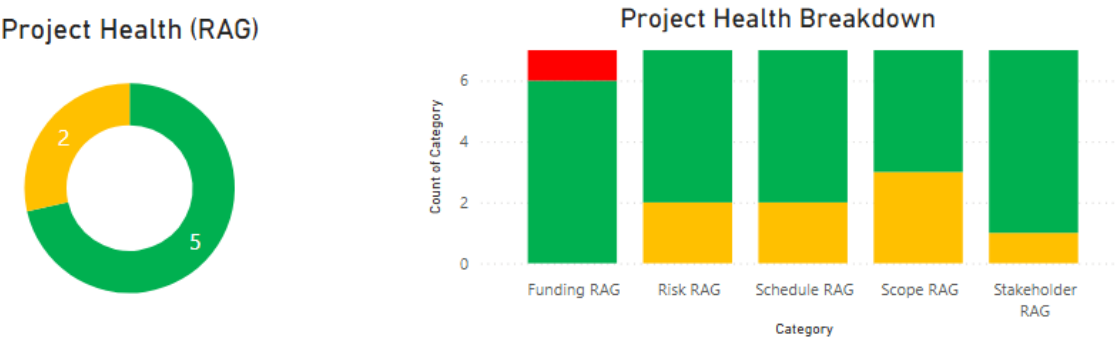


Figure 5: Summary tables of RAG ratings from the PES monitoring reports for Sustainable Growth projects.

Work is still being done to develop strategic project alignment within the pillar. To ensure the successful continuation of progress, the leadership group will continue to meet regularly and ensure decisions are made with the most appropriate approach to the Pillar focus.

Next Steps

Through the leadership group, we are:

- Meeting on a quarterly basis
- Reviewing the current list of projects to see where changes may be needed
- Looking at areas that are not partially or fully addressed within the current portfolio of projects

Essentially, we are reflecting on the purpose of this pillar – making the connection between the underlying data and where we need to act. We are revisiting the available evidence and understanding where there are gaps and how we can address them.

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Sustainable Growth Pillar Report

3rd December 2025

1 of 4 Pillars in our Economic Strategy



Leads

- **Cabinet** Cllr. Tom Briars-Delve
- **PGB** Richard Stevens
- **PCC** Amanda Ratsey

Support

- **PGB** Helen Wylde-Archibald
- **PCC** Kat Deeney & John Green



A Plan for Action



To deliver economic growth, we have identified six 'elements' through which resources will flow:

- Attracting new investment into the city in green jobs, specifically around new and emerging energy production and storage
- Business support, helping businesses adapt to climate change and move to net zero emission
- Decarbonise the current economy, including retrofitting the existing commercial building stock and opportunities
- Restorative Actions which improve sustainability
- Commitment to supporting sustainable travel and living, including public transport provision.
- Skills and Workforce Development needs for a more sustainable economy.

Case Study I – Citybus Investment in Electric Buses



“Fifty zero-emission electric double-decker buses will be coming to Plymouth this year as part of a major £31.87 million joint investment in the city’s public transport.”

Plymouth City Bus



Case Study 2 – Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW)



“With a variety of wharfs, docks and marina facilities all sheltered by the natural harbour of Plymouth Sound and two breakwaters, the city is home to the most comprehensive shore side marine offering in the South West. Its significant manufacturing and engineering capabilities Plymouth becomes the ideal place for serving many aspects of the planned floating offshore wind developments in the Celtic Sea.”

Invest Plymouth



Next Steps



- The Leadership / Support group is now meeting on a quarterly basis
- The first round of monitoring is complete
- We are reviewing the current list of projects to see where changes may be needed
- We are looking at areas that are not partially or fully addressed within the current portfolio of projects

Questions?

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting:	03 December 2025
Title of Report:	Plymouth Plan Update and Review
Lead Member:	Councillor John Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport)
Lead Strategic Director:	Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
Author:	Jonathan Bell (Head of Spatial Planning & Sustainable Development)
Contact Email:	Jonathan.bell@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The primary purpose of the report is to update the Scrutiny Panel on the Plymouth Plan and to provide an opportunity for the Panel to influence current consideration of the need for a review of the plan. Additionally, the report responds to a Motion on Notice from the City Council's meeting of 18 September 2023, where the Council resolved that the opportunity be taken to use the Plymouth Plan Review to ensure that play was embedded into the plan and that it then set a framework for a play delivery plan with targeted interventions.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. To note the update on and proposed review of the Plymouth Plan.
Reason: To ensure that the Scrutiny Panel is kept informed of the Plymouth Plan and has opportunity to consider the need for and scope of a review.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. To not review the Plymouth Plan. This option is not recommended as significant elements of the plan are now out of date, and there is a need to simplify / restructure the plan to ensure continued engagement with and ownership of the plan amongst city partners.
2. To cancel the Plymouth Plan. This option is not recommended given the continued support of partners for a strategic plan of this nature, and the role that the Plymouth Plan has and continues to play in avoiding the need for multiple city strategies and presenting a clear direction of travel for the city which also helps with funding bids and investment decisions.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Corporate Plan is in part the City Council's strategic response to the Plymouth Plan, setting out the role that the Council will play.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

There are significant indirect benefits of having a plan of the nature of the Plymouth Plan, as it reduces the need for work on multiple city strategies and puts the city in a stronger position when seeking

grants and attracting investment. Application of delivery against the plan has significant impacts on the MTFP but these are managed on an individual basis with reference to the plan at this review stage there are no direct impact to consider.

There are no direct resource implications from the review of the Plymouth Plan as this process can be managed within existing revenue budgets and staffing structures.

Financial Risks

There are no significant financial risks from the Plymouth Plan review.

Legal Implications

The Plymouth Plan currently includes several statutory plans, and with the restructuring of the plan it might be that some of these need to be dealt with in a different way, including through strategic delivery plans sitting within the Plymouth Plan family of documents. This will be a matter for more detailed consideration in the review process and will need to be managed under the policy framework.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The Plymouth Plan provides the opportunity for the city to make clear its environmental and decarbonisation direction of travel.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The Plymouth Plan provides the opportunity for the city to make clear its direction of travel in relation to all key policy matters. The detail is included in linked delivery plans within the Plymouth Plan family of documents.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Plymouth Plan background paper							
B								
C								

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	ITG.2 5.26.0 87	Leg	LS/00 0038 41/10 /LB/I 2/11/ 25	Mon Off	n/a	HR	n/a	Assets	n/a	Strat Proc	n/a
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 07/11/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor John Stephens - <i>Approved by email</i>											
Date approved: 09/11/2025											

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PLYMOUTH PLAN BACKGROUND PAPER
Natural Infrastructure & Growth Scrutiny Panel
03 December 2025



I Introduction

- 1.1 The Plymouth Plan is the city's long term strategic plan, owned not just by the City Council but also by partners and stakeholders in the city.
- 1.2 The plan was first adopted by the City Council in 2015 after an extended period of engagement and conversations with the city.
- 1.3 Since that time, it has undergone three 'refreshes', where limited updates were made to the plan:
 - In February 2017, when the decision taken in 2016 to prepare a Joint Local Plan with South Hams and West Devon necessitated some changes to the Plymouth Plan.
 - In March 2019, when the formal adoption of the Joint Local Plan necessitated the need for a further refresh of the Plymouth Plan, making the Plymouth elements of the Joint Local Plan in effect the Plymouth Plan's spatial strategy.
 - In January 2021, when the Plymouth Plan was brought into alignment with the Climate Emergency Declaration made by City Council in March 2019.
- 1.4 However, there has never been a comprehensive review of the Plymouth Plan and therefore much of its content and language is as it was in 2015.

2 About the Plymouth Plan

- 2.1 The concept of the Plymouth Plan grew out of a series of challenges identified by city leaders back in 2012. There was a growing sense of frustration about the sheer number of plans and strategies that the city had, many of which had different visions for the city and used different assumptions about things such as demographic forecasts. This lacked coordination and made it difficult for the city to speak with a single voice.
- 2.2 The outcome was the launching by Cabinet on 11 September 2012 of the Plymouth Plan project, something that was to prove quite unique in UK local government and ultimately won numerous awards, including at national and international level.
- 2.3 The intention behind the Plymouth Plan was that this would be more than just a strategy, but it that would be part of a wider system that connects strategy to delivery, and which is owned and driven by city partners using the architecture of the partnership board structure as a key vehicle.
- 2.4 The Plymouth Plan is currently built around a city vision to 2034 which is broken down by four key themes:
 - Healthy City
 - Growing City
 - International City
 - Regional City (this fourth theme was added when the Joint Local Plan was integrated into the Plymouth Plan).

- 2.5 For each theme, the plan then sets out:
- A Strategic Outcome, to set out at a high level what we want the city to be like in 2034
 - A Strategic Objective, which puts some flesh on how we will seek to achieve this outcome.
 - A series of policies, which identify the key interventions needed.
 - Five ‘measures of success’, as a limited set of metrics to help us know whether or not we are moving in the right direction.
- 2.6 Separate to the Plymouth Plan, but part of the overall systems architecture, are delivery plans which set out specific delivery proposals to implement the plan.
- 2.7 Monitoring of direction of travel in relation to the measures of success has been through a [Plymouth Plan Annual Report](#). This sits alongside more detailed monitoring and review reports, including the [Joint Local Plan Authorities Monitoring Report](#) (produced annually) and the [Plymouth Report](#) (produced every 3 years) which is the core document forming the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

3 How the plan is fairing

- 3.1 The Plymouth Plan is now just over 10 years old and although it has been effective for many years in guiding city plans and strategies and supporting the city’s case for funding and investment, it is important to consider whether or not it continues to deliver what the city needs. This was the basis of a commission given to the Health Determinants Research Collaboration Plymouth (HDRC) in October 2024.
- 3.2 Using ‘Appreciative Enquiry’ as a methodology, HDRC interviewed 18 people across 9 different partnerships in the city, with four main lines of enquiry:
- Whether the plan is still considered a valid aspiration
 - What the levels of awareness are of the plan and its system
 - Whether the plan still meets partner/ship needs
 - To recommend areas to address.
- 3.3 The key findings of HDRC’s work are summarised below:
- Overwhelming support for a plan of this type – an overarching strategy describing the ambition for Plymouth which is a city-wide plan not a council plan.
 - Some good awareness of how the plan is useful, not only in directing delivery, but also in making connections across a wide range of themes, internally to the city and externally to wider country and internationally.
 - Some sectors of the city find that other urgent operational priorities means that its relevance as a guiding document is limited.
 - The impact of COVID, the cost of living crisis, new political landscape and changes in people and organisations means that the plan, its purpose and use, is not embedded as well as it was.
 - Some uncertainty around ownership and relevance within the Council and amongst wider partners.
 - There are some gaps in content created by changes in the context in which we work – e.g. NHS recovery, planning requirements around housing, targets around criminal justice system, responding to the speed of growth of technology.

- There are some gaps that have been exposed, now we have a greater appreciation of the potential impact of some sectors on others, for example, the role of culture in growth, climate change, skills requirements for new sectors.
- The language is somewhat dated.
- Targets for some sectors have changed.
- Some partners are so focussed on daily challenges that it is hard to look up above the parapet.

3.4 Overall, reflecting on the findings of the HDRC work and wider experience from many years of working with the Plymouth Plan, the following conclusions can be reached:

- There remains value in having an overarching strategic plan owned by the city, but it is perhaps too long and complex for ease of use.
- This was a highly ambitious programme which has held together well since the plan's inception, but this has become more difficult over time.
- The original aims remain valid, but the right balance between strategic intent and detailed provision is needed to ensure that it remains effective in achieving these.
- A reformed approach should be considered which:
 - still provides a shared direction overall direction of travel for the city,
 - but which doesn't profess to be what it has proved too difficult to be,
 - is shorter, more practical, accessible and clearer in how it can be used by partners,
 - and is understood to be more than just a plan but a system to support delivery.

3.5 Subsequent conversations with a range of city leaders and partnership board chairs have confirmed that there is a strong appetite for continuing with a plan of the nature of the Plymouth Plan, which partners and boards can own and use, and which provides a strong framework for delivery planning as part of a wider strategic planning system.

4 Towards a plan review and reformation

4.1 There is an alignment of circumstances that point to now being an appropriate time for a full review and reformation of the Plymouth Plan. These include:

- The HDRC research.
- Britain's Ocean City branding work, which was considered by this Panel at its meeting of 15 October 2025.
- Collaborative work amongst a number of city leaders on a new narrative for the city vision for 2050.
- The launch of Team Plymouth and the opportunity of significant defence investment to drive regional growth and prosperity.
- Plymouth city centre's shortlisting as one of 12 new towns nationally.
- The fact that the plan is now over 10 years old and there have been many other changes locally, nationally and globally since.

4.2 A review presents a significant opportunity to ensure that the plan's vision, its strategic outcomes and objectives and its metrics remain meaningful and relevant for the next 10 years, including also addressing any gap areas.

4.3 Additionally, the opportunity also exists to make the plan simpler, easier to use and more agile, by stripping out much detailed content that sits better with delivery plans, including the policies. In this way, the Plymouth Plan will become a higher-level plan that sets a clear

strategic framework and direction of travel and avoids duplication and the risk of inconsistencies with the delivery plans.

5 Embedding play into the Plymouth Plan (Motion on Notice)

- 5.1 At its meeting on 18 September 2023 the City Council considered a Motion on Notice on 'recognising the importance of outdoor play in child development and the need for a city-wide play strategy'. Councillor Lauren McLay introduced the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Poyser. Following contributions from various councillors, the Council agreed amongst other things the following:

'3. Resolved that the opportunity was taken to use the Plymouth Plan Review taking place in 2024 to ensure that play was embedded into the plan and that it then set a framework for a play delivery plan with targeted interventions. This action was to be included in the work programme of the relevant scrutiny committee.'

- 5.2 This matter has not been brought before the Panel until now because a Plymouth Plan review process wasn't under consideration at the time. However, as set out earlier in this report, it is considered that the circumstances are now clearly favour of reviewing the plan.
- 5.3 With regard the current Plymouth Plan, play is addressed primarily through Policy HEA7, which highlights the importance of high quality, health promoting places to play near to where children live and that families are confident to enjoy and explore, whilst also emphasising the role of the natural environment for play. This is also reinforced in Policy GRO6 on Plymouth's natural network. There is no single delivery plan for play, instead play sits within a number of delivery plans particularly relating to green space and the natural environment.
- 5.4 The Plymouth Plan review provides an opportunity to elevate emphasis given to the role of play in the overall city strategy. However, given the nature of the Plymouth Plan this will inevitably be high-level, and the detail will still need to be, as at present, in the relevant delivery plan(s).
- 5.5 We are not yet at the stage of drafting the changes to the Plymouth Plan and so are unable to put forward proposals for this meeting on how play is addressed in the plan. However, as the plan review goes through its process, Members will have the opportunity to consider the draft Plymouth Plan review.

6 Approach and timescales

- 6.1 As a high-level strategic plan, which will ultimately be owned, approved, endorsed and delivered not just by the City Council by partnership boards and stakeholders in the city, it is important that the approach allows for engagement and co-design of the changes to the plan. The City Council has a key role as convener of the process.
- 6.2 Three stages to the review process are anticipated:
1. **Stage One: Raise awareness of the Plymouth Plan and the need for a review.** This is the stage we are currently in and will continue to Spring 2026. It includes conversations within the city, using findings from recent engagement processes (e.g. the City Survey and the 'Big Community Conversation' conducted earlier this year for the Local Government Reorganisation process) and looking at data from review processes, including the Plymouth Plan Annual Report. Consideration is also being

given to the implementation of a campaign, supported and promoted by partners, to help gather a balanced range of perspectives across sectors and communities (the details of this programme are still being developed). In this stage, we will seek to highlight the main issues that the plan review needs to address.

2. **Stage Two: Drafting the review of Plymouth Plan.** This stage is likely to take place during Spring / early Summer 2026. The continuation of conversations with partnerships and stakeholders will be of key importance in helping to co-design the reviewed plan, with a draft plan being published to provide an opportunity to test the content with the city prior to moving to Stage Three.
3. **Stage Three: Approving the reviewed plan.** This stage is likely to occur in late Summer 2026. The final version of the Plymouth Plan review will be brought to a full meeting of City Council for formal adoption, but partnership boards will be invited to endorse the plan, and city partners will be invited to approve it within their organisations.

7 Possible questions for consideration by the Scrutiny Panel

7.1 Questions that the Panel may wish to consider include:

- What are the experiences of Panel members in relation to the Plymouth Plan?
- Does the Panel endorse the idea that the city should continue to have a plan of the nature of the Plymouth Plan?
- Does the Panel feel that this is the right time to conduct a review of the plan?
- Does the Panel have any views on issues that the Plymouth Plan review should address?

ANNEX – THE STRATEGIC OUTCOMES, OBJECTIVES AND METRICS OF THE CURRENT PLYMOUTH PLAN

Healthy City

Strategic Outcome

People in Plymouth live in happy, healthy, safe and aspiring communities, where social, economic and environmental conditions and services enable choices that add quality years to life and reduce the gap in health and wellbeing between communities.

Strategic Objective 1

Delivering a healthy city.

To integrate health and wellbeing, promote choice and personal responsibility, formulate health-enabling local policy and develop good quality local services. This will be achieved by:

1. Delivering solutions and creating environments which address the wider determinants of health and wellbeing and make healthy choices available.
2. Reducing health and wellbeing inequalities and the burden of chronic diseases in the city.
3. Delivering the best health, wellbeing and social outcomes for all people, and reducing and mitigating the impact of poverty, especially child poverty.
4. Helping ensure that children, young people and adults feel safe and confident in their communities, with all people treated with dignity and respect.
5. Building strong and safe communities in good quality neighbourhoods with decent homes for all, health-promoting natural and built environments, community facilities and public spaces and accessible local services, alongside supporting restoration of natural habitats and ecosystems.
6. Enabling people of all ages to play an active role in their community and engage with arts and culture and other activities to promote social cohesion and good mental health and wellbeing.
7. Providing a safe, efficient, accessible and health-enabling transport network which supports freedom of movement and active travel and promotes low carbon lifestyles that are beneficial to physical and mental health.
8. Providing vibrant, effective and modern education settings that enable children and young people to develop as active citizens in the community and enjoy a good quality of life in a dynamic and modern economy, and delivering quality lifelong learning which is available to everyone and can be tailored to quality employment and social opportunities.
9. Ensuring people get the right care from the right people at the right time to improve their health, wellbeing and social outcomes.
10. Making Plymouth a centre of clinical excellence and innovation to benefit the sustainability and growth of the medical and health care sectors in the city and to create education and employment opportunities.

How we will know we have been successful - our measures of success of a healthy city.

- A. People in Plymouth have the best start to life and improved health, increased life expectancy, and a better quality of life, helping to reduce the gap in health inequalities.
- B. More people taking care of themselves.
- C. More residents are contributing to and being involved in their community.
- D. People of Plymouth are well housed, live in good quality, well looked after neighbourhoods where they feel safe and happy.
- E. Good quality and sustainable health and wellbeing services for people who need them, whether they are public services or care in the community.

Growing City

Strategic Outcome

Plymouth has used its economic, social, environmental and cultural strengths to deliver quality and sustainable growth. The city's long term prosperity has been improved, and its economy has been transformed and rebalanced. It has raised its productivity, and provides higher average wages as well as employment opportunities to support a skilled and talented workforce. Its population has grown to nearly 300,000 by 2034.

Strategic Objective 2

Delivering a growing city.

To create the conditions for high quality and sustainable growth, (clean growth) which meets the present and future needs of Plymouth residents and businesses and transforms the city into a prosperous place to live, work and visit, and to empower people to equip themselves with the skills and to find the opportunities to take advantage of that prosperity. This will be achieved by:

1. Building on our industrial strengths to continue to transform and re-balance the economy, building a strong inward investment and export portfolio with a focus on productivity and higher value, knowledge based industries (including marine / marine technology, advanced manufacturing, creative / digital , and the medical/healthcare sector and high value international tourism), alongside supporting the city's valued naval / defence presence.
2. Developing a new and substantial cross-sector strength in businesses addressing, and supporting others to address, the climate emergency.
3. Capitalising on Plymouth as a 'city of makers', using this wealth to drive the creative economy by retaining more creative graduates and attracting makers on a national scale to locate to Plymouth.
4. Managing the city's growth and change, in a way that minimises carbon emissions, is resilient and adaptive to future technological and environmental changes and impacts, and which provides sustainable solutions for development, energy, waste and water catchment management.
5. Creating an environment where businesses can thrive and where the aspiration and talent of the city's population is harnessed and new talent, ideas and innovation attracted to the city.
6. Developing quality jobs and valuable skills, including supporting those who are underemployed or outside of the labour market, allowing everyone to benefit from increased growth and prosperity.
7. Maintaining and enhancing Plymouth's natural networks, providing the green and blue natural spaces needed to support the social and economic wellbeing of Plymouth, recognising its important role in managing climate change and achieving net-zero as well as safeguarding the natural environment for future generations.
8. Delivering a sustainable transport network that supports Plymouth's long term growth while at the same time addressing existing carbon emissions.
9. Delivering a positive and sustainable approach to waste management that optimises its economic and social benefits, whilst minimising adverse environmental impacts.

How we will know we have been successful - our measures of success of a growing city.

- A. The population has grown close to the city's ambition of 300,000.
- B. Plymouth continues to be recognised as a leading Green City.
- C. Plymouth has a vibrant, productive, inclusive and innovative business sector with a workforce that is paid a living wage.
- D. The people of Plymouth have the skills to be school ready and work ready to meet the needs of the city, enabling them to avoid poverty.
- E. Plymouth continues to strengthen the conditions for increased growth, including ensuring effective infrastructure delivery.

International City

Strategic Outcome

Plymouth is internationally renowned as Britain's Ocean City and is the UK's premier marine city, famous for its waterfront and being home to the UK's first National Marine Park. It is recognised as unique among UK cities for its natural drama and for its 500 year old history as a place of embarkation and exploration. Plymouth's continuing journey towards a world leading marine city supports the cultural experiences it offers to visitors who are looking for authenticity and character. The city's world class universities and research institutions are recognised for their innovation, and Plymouth is a place where businesses can capitalise on a unique economic position and talented workforce. Visitors from around the world are welcomed to a city that provides a diverse cultural experience and a perfect base for enjoying the city's surrounds, land and marine. Plymouth is an international city that local communities can enjoy, be a part of and be proud of.

Strategic Objective 3

Delivering the international city.

To enhance Plymouth's profile as an international city where the city projects itself to people who might invest, study or visit the city; to encourage and support Plymouth's businesses to engage in trading terms in an increasingly global market place; and to ensure the city fulfils its potential as a distinctive, dynamic, cultural centre of international renown. This will be achieved by:

1. Driving productivity through support for the growth of internationally significant businesses, including those with sovereign / defence capabilities, attracting new investment into the city (e.g. through establishing a Marine Technology Park at Oceansgate) and encouraging all businesses to expand trading in the global market place.
2. Raising the profile of Plymouth internationally through it's Britain's Ocean City brand and Mayflower 400 in 2020 as a key catalyst and driver, and through the presence of the UK's first National Marine Park.
3. Promoting Plymouth as an internationally competitive tourist destination, with improving road, rail, air and sea and digital connectivity, providing an accessible visitor experience which capitalises on the city's world class waterfront and maritime heritage and natural and built heritage assets, and delivers a long standing economic legacy for the city.
4. Establishing Plymouth as a distinctive, vibrant, cultural city known on the international stage for its rich heritage, creative industries and unparalleled natural setting, having an equally strong appeal for residents, students, visitors and investors.
5. Providing innovative, high quality architectural development to set the city apart and create an attractive, forward looking environment.
6. Providing a full range of hotel and visitor accommodation, including new high quality provision, to ensure that there is adequate accommodation capacity for all visitors.
7. Recognising Plymouth internationally as a leading green city that has made exemplary progress on addressing its carbon footprint.
8. Further developing our universities, research institutions and knowledge based industries which are widely known for their innovation and world class assets.
9. Delivering a strong, diverse and dynamic city that welcomes new residents, students and visitors and that celebrates cultural diversity.

How we will know we have been successful - our measures of success of an international city.

- A. Plymouth continues to improve its diverse cultural and sporting experience with great venues, major events, good food and hospitality offer.
- B. Plymouth is internationally renowned as a leading UK tourist destination.
- C. Plymouth is recognised internationally for expertise in marine science and high technology manufacturing.
- D. Plymouth's reputation for world class universities and research institutions continues to grow.
- E. Plymouth's reputation is strengthened as a welcoming, multicultural city where a broad range of partners promote the benefits of diversity.

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting:	03 December 2025
Title of Report:	Plymouth Local Plan Update
Lead Member:	Councillor John Stephens (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport)
Lead Strategic Director:	Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth)
Author:	Alistair Wagstaff (Strategic Planning Manager)
Contact Email:	Alistair.wagstaff@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The primary purpose of the report is to update the Scrutiny Panel on the new Local Plan process and to provide an opportunity for the Panel to influence the proposed high-level areas of focus of the plan going forward, as plan preparation commences for the new plan.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. To note the update on the potential scope and timetable for the next Plymouth Local Plan.
Reason: To ensure that the Scrutiny Panel is kept informed of the Local Plan and its timetable going forward and has opportunity to give its early input to the issues for the plan to consider.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. To not prepare a new Local Plan at this stage and instead continue with the current Joint Local Plan (JLP) to 2034 in line with that plan's time period. However, the JLP was adopted more than five years ago and the Council is no longer able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, meaning that significant elements of the JLP are out of date and carry significantly reduced weight for planning decisions. Additionally, the Government is amending the Local Plan making process and it is important that Plymouth commence work on the new type of Local Plan to have an up-to-date Local Plan that can guide and direct growth in the city going forward. Therefore, this option has been rejected

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The new Local Plan will replace the current Joint Local Plan as the spatial expression of the Plymouth Plan. It will support particularly the growth priority of the Plymouth Plan and the Corporate Plan priority to build more homes and secure green investment and jobs.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The production of the Local Plan can be managed within existing revenue budgets and staffing structures, although there will be costs associated with the Examination in Public that is likely to be

required in 2028/29. There are significant indirect benefits of having a Local Plan, as it supports the delivery of sustainable development which brings income and economic benefits.

Financial Risks

There are no significant financial risks from the commencement of the new Local Plan.

Legal Implications

Local plans are statutory documents that all local planning authorities must prepare and maintain. Not having an up to date Local Plan would leave the city exposed to decisions being determined on the basis of national policies alone, without recourse to locally developed policies, and with increased risk of appeals against planning decisions made by the Council.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The Plymouth Local Plan provides the opportunity for the city to make clear its environmental and decarbonisation policies to guide future development in the city.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The new Local Plan will provide the opportunity for putting in place spatial planning policies that support wider agendas in the city.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Local Plan Background Paper							
B	Local Plan Presentation							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	N/A	Leg	LS/2 960(67)/J P/20 1125	Mon Off	LS/2 960(67)/J P/20 1125	HR	N/A	Assets	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Glenn Caplin-Grey											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 30/10/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor John Stephens email confirmation Date approved: 13/11/2025											

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LOCAL PLAN BACKGROUND PAPER

Natural Infrastructure & Growth Scrutiny Panel,
3rd December 2025



I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) is the current statutory development plan for the City. It was adopted by Plymouth City Council on 26 March 2019 and by South Hams District Council on 21 March 2019, and by West Devon Borough Council on 26 March 2019.
- 1.2. On 16 January 2025, the JLP Partnership Board agreed a public statement setting out the intentions of the three councils in relation to the next iteration of plan making in the area. This included the statement that: *'That the next iteration of local plan making for the JLP area will not be as a joint local plan covering Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon. Instead, Plymouth City Council will work on a new local plan based on the city's administrative boundaries'*.

2. NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 2.1. The previous government launched a process on national planning reform, which included amongst other things the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 as well as proposals to introduce National Development Management Policies (NDMPs) and set in place a new system for preparing local plans.
- 2.2. The current government has continued the process of planning reform, most particularly through further revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the standard method for calculating local housing need, both published in December 2024, but also through an increased focus on strategic planning at wider-than-local level.
- 2.3. We are currently awaiting new Local Plan Regulations, further revisions to National Planning Policy Guidance, consultation on the NDMPs, guidance in relation to strategic planning and the proposed (sub) regional 'spatial development strategies', further changes to the NPPF, and the completion of the passage of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill through the Parliament.

3. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- 3.1. In February 2025 the Council published its Local Development Scheme (LDS) and submitted it to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in line with the required government timetable. The LDS sets out a proposed 30 month timetable for producing a Local Plan, to comply with the anticipated statutory timetable to be introduced by the government (see below), and identifies a proposed high level scope of the new plan.

Stage of process	Target	Dates
Scoping	4 months	January 2026 – April 2026
Plan visioning and strategy development	23 months	May 2026 – December 2026
Evidence gathering and drafting the plan		January 2027 – November 2027
Engagement / proposing changes, submission		December 2027 – March 2028
Examination	6 months	April 2028 – September 2028
Finalisation and adoption of digital plan	1 month	October 2028

- 3.2. This timetable was always dependent on a number of factors coming into play, most particularly the publication of revised Local Plan Regulations without which we cannot commence a local plan under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act. Given that (at time of writing) these Regulations are still to be published, it is highly likely that the start of the process will need to be moved back. However, each of the stages of the process is likely to be structured as set out in the LDS given that the government has indicated its intention to continue with the proposed statutory 30 month timetable.

4. THE NEW LOCAL PLAN

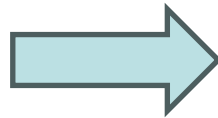
- 4.1. Plymouth's new Local Plan will, when adopted, be the primary development plan document for the city. It will cover the administrative area of Plymouth and set a clear vision and planning strategy for the city moving forward.
- 4.2. While the national changes are awaited, the Chief Planner's Planning Newsletter (Aug 2025) has encouraged local planning authorities to undertake preparatory work. As part of the preparatory work in Plymouth, officers have undertaken early informal engagement with ward councillors (September 2025) and initiated a 'call for sites' process to enable those with interest in land in the city to can let us know of the land they wish to be considered for future development.
- 4.3. The LDS identifies a proposed high level scoping of the key issues to be considered in the Local Plan (set out in the Annex), and the Scrutiny Panel is invited to give its views about whether or not these are the right issues, including identifying any gaps. This will help officers continue their preparation in advance of the awaited national changes. Officers will provide a presentation at the meeting to provide more information on these themes (a copy is included in the Agenda Pack).

**ANNEX: DRAFT LOCAL PLAN SCOPE, FROM LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
(FEBRUARY 2025)**

1. Respond to the new standard method for local housing need by identifying deliverable and developable sites for housing;
2. Align the planning strategy for the city with its economic strategy and growth plan, recognising the key economic and growth drivers and needs, and delivering strong strategic connectivity;
3. Recognise Plymouth's strategic role as a regional city within a mainly rural area, surrounded by high quality landscapes and environments and providing a service centre for a significant hinterland;
4. Support transformational change in Plymouth City Centre with a major step change of housing provision and regeneration;
5. Deliver policies and proposals for a well-connected and accessible city, with thriving well-designed communities and protection of the city's richness of environment, both marine and land;
6. Respond to the challenge of delivering a net zero and climate resilient city;
7. Plan for the infrastructure needed to deliver a sustainable city, according to forecast demographic changes linked to housing delivery and economic growth.

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Local Plan Briefing Scrutiny



Plymouth Local Plan 2026-2050



The Plymouth Local Plan - Toward 2050

What is a Local Plan

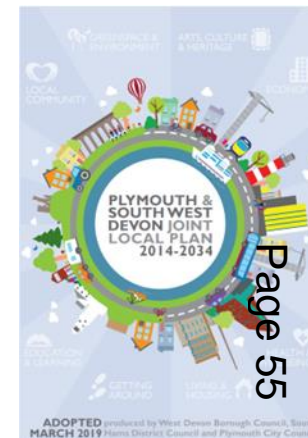


- Section 3 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) requires that each local planning authority (LPA) should prepare a Local Plan for its area.
- Local Plans are at the heart of the planning system
- The Local Plan guides decisions on future development proposals and addresses the needs and opportunities of the area.
- Set the framework in which decisions on particular proposals (planning applications) are taken locally.
- Sets out a vision and policies for future development over the Plan period

The current JLP



- Adopted in March 2019, covering period 2014 - 2034
- Covers Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon
- Meets our 'objectively assessed housing need' in full
- Monitored annually (AMR)
- Governance arrangements:
 - JLP Senior Management Board
 - JLP Partnership Board
- 5 Year Review Report published (March 2024),
- The JLP will remain in place until such a time it is replaced by the new Plymouth Local Plan



National context



National Changes and Announcements Announced

- Updated National Planning Policy Framework Dec 2024
- New Standard Method for Housing

Awaiting

- Local Plan Regulations to be able to formally start plan making, and associated updates to National Planning Policy Guidance
- Potential consultation Draft NPPF
- Consultation on Draft National Development Management Policies
- Guidance on spatial development strategies
- Regulations on new Environmental Outcomes Reports
- Planning and Infrastructure Bill

Local context



- **January 2025:** JLP Partnership Board agreed authorities progressing with individual Local Plans for Plymouth and separately South Hams and West Devon
- **Team Plymouth:** Partnership with defence, industry, academia and local and national government working together across the city and wider region
- **City Centre ‘New Town in a City’** shortlisted as potential new town (partnership work with Homes England and MHCLG)
- Need to plan for a **level of growth** not previously seen in the city to deliver Standard Method figure (1280 pa).

Sub-regional context



- Main city and focus for services in Far South West
- Existing joint approaches

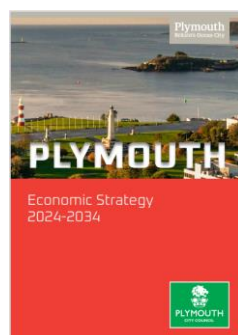
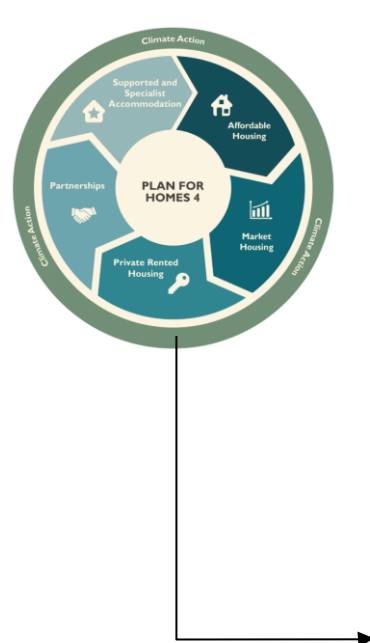


- Duty to Cooperate (or replacement)
- JLP, meeting Housing need - Woolwell and Sherford
- Connectivity and route resilience

Why is the new Plymouth Local Plan important



- Sets the spatial strategy for the city going forward
- Provides local vision, objectives, policies and allocations which can support the delivery of other Council strategies
- It is the basis that planning decisions are made on



TEAM Defence-driven growth
PLYMOUTH

Plymouth 'New Town in a City'

New Plymouth Local Plan



Local Development Scheme



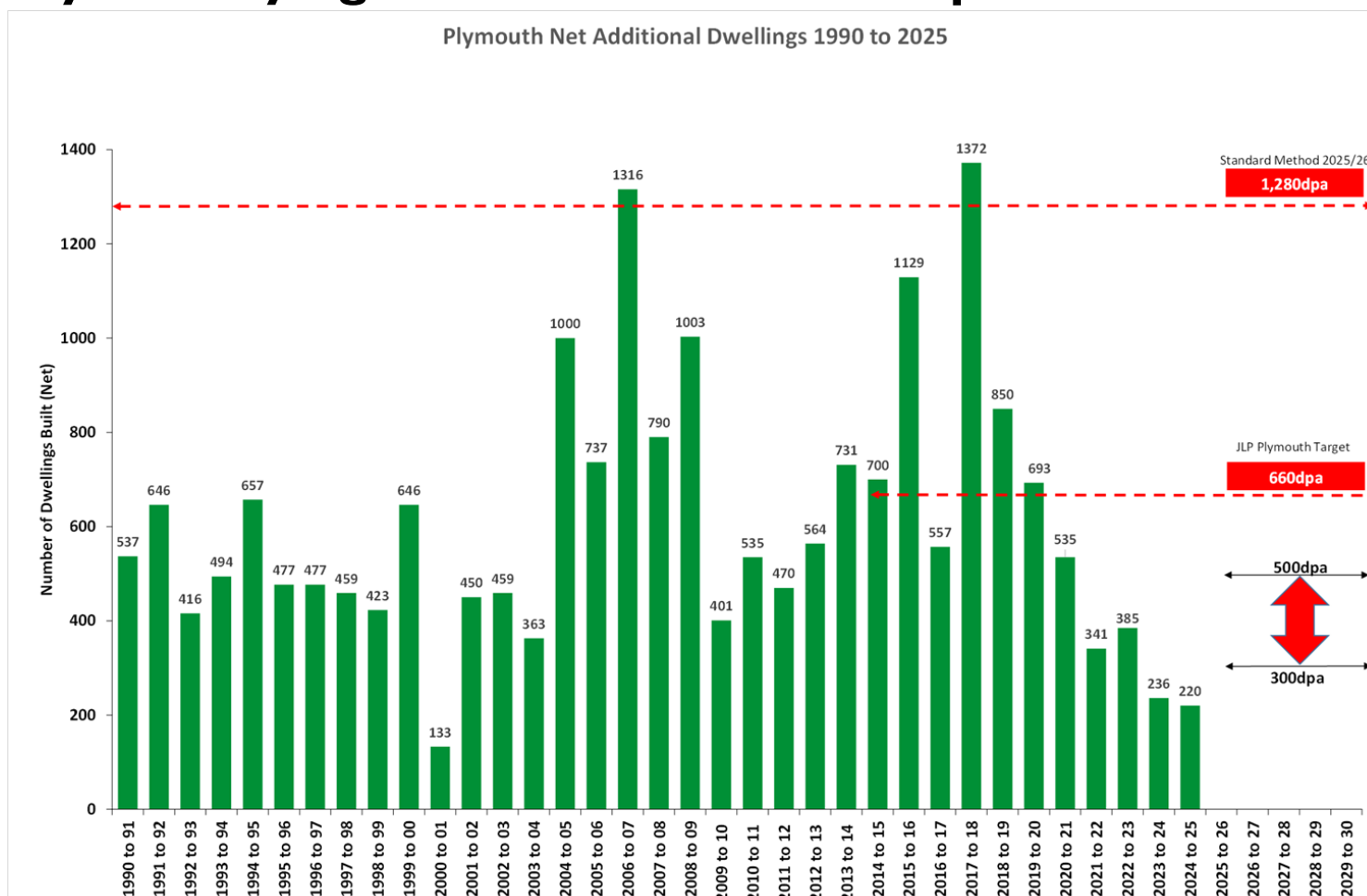
- **February 2025:** Local Development Scheme (LDS) published and submitted to MHCLG inline with required Government timetable.

Stage of process	Target	Dates
Scoping	4 months	January 2026 – April 2026
Plan visioning and strategy development	23 months	May 2026 – December 2026
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Scope of the Local Plan (from LDS)



I. Respond to the new standard method for local housing need by identifying deliverable and developable sites for housing



Scope of the Local Plan



2. Align the planning strategy for the city with its economic strategy and growth plan, recognising the key economic and growth drivers and needs, and delivering strong strategic connectivity:

- Delivering sufficient employment land
- Growth in defence and marine
- Plymouth and South Devon Freeport
- Connecting people with jobs
- Delivering strategic connectivity within, from and to the city from the region and nationally

Scope of the Local Plan



3. Recognise Plymouth's strategic role as a regional city within a mainly rural area, surrounded by high quality landscapes and environments and providing a service centre for a significant hinterland:

- Developing regional role of the city, in the Southwest Peninsula
- Need for cooperation at regional level
- Plymouth as a centre for service, facilities, economy and growth
- Unique natural environment

Scope of the Local Plan



4. Support transformational change in Plymouth City Centre with a major step change of housing provision and regeneration:

- New Town proposal
- Delivering new residential community
- Homes England and MHCLG partnerships
- Building on public realm improvements
- Retail, leisure and cultural heart of the city
- Protecting heritage while embracing regeneration opportunities

Scope of the Local Plan



5. Deliver policies and proposals for a well-connected and accessible city, with thriving well-designed communities and protection of the city's richness of environment, both marine and land:

- People can connect to employment opportunities, local services and facilities, education facilities, open, natural and green spaces all through sustainable transport choices
- Well designed and healthy communities
- Connecting people with nature
- Protecting our most important environmental assets as part of a sustainable future growth strategy

Scope of the Local Plan



6. Respond to the challenge of delivering a net zero and climate resilient city:

- Meeting the impacts of a changing climate
- Increased implication of flood risk
- Resilience of built and natural environment to change
- Future proofing and adaption to ensure sustainable and resilient development and transport choices
- Positively planning for renewable energy and its delivery as part of future growth strategy

Scope of the Local Plan



7. Plan for the infrastructure needed to deliver a sustainable city, according to forecast demographic change linked to housing delivery and economic growth:

- Identifying and planning for infrastructure that is required to support future growth
- Meeting the needs and priorities for cities changing population
- Providing range of housing choices
- Updating Infrastructure Needs Assessment
- Mitigation (SI06, CIL)

Questions

Are they these right issues, are there others that should be considered?

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel



Date of meeting:	03 December 2025
Title of Report:	Tree Management Principles 2025
Lead Member:	Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change)
Lead Strategic Director:	Glenn Caplin-Grey (Strategic Director for Growth)
Author:	Chris Avent
Contact Email:	Chris.avent@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Click here to enter text.
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To brief Scrutiny Committee on the council's updated Tree Management Principles document and the process behind its review.

Recommendations and Reasons

1. Endorse the updated Tree Management Principles 2025 document.

Reason: To ensure the council has met its commitments to reviewing its approach to management of trees in the city.

Alternative options considered and rejected

1. Do nothing – this would have left the Council with out-of-date processes around tree management which did not reflect the good practice on the ground and commitments the council had made.
2. Update the document without any engagement with key partners.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan Corporate Plan

The plan sets out how we will deliver the objectives using the Corporate Principles of Democracy, Fairness, Responsibility and Co-operation as well as setting out how it supports the city vision of “One of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone.”

Plymouth Plan

Delivers against HEA7 which focuses on health and wellbeing through natural spaces and GRO6, which emphasises the delivery of a sustainable and integrated natural network.

Implications for the Medium-Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The document recognises the resource challenge that the council faces to be able to meet its standards but the framework set out is within the context of existing resource levels.

Financial Risks

The document sets out the approach to managing the council owned trees across the city within the context of reasonable practicability and within existing resource levels.

Legal Implications

The document sets out an approach and actions which ensure the Council meets all its duties under the various relevant legislation in relation to tree management.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The document supports delivery of actions set out in the Net Zero Action Plan and illustrates the approach that it will take to deliver a city-wide tree planting programme as well as managing its existing tree stock in the best possible way to retain carbon sequestration capacity and other environmental benefits that trees provide to the city and its communities.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The document sets out the approach that the council will take to fulfil its duties in managing an effective safety management system around tree safety.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Tree Management Principles 2025							
B	251203 Scrutiny committee_Briefing report_Tree Management Principles							

Background papers:

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Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

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Sign off:


Fin	N/A	Leg	LS/29 60(68)JP/2 1112 5	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Assets	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Andy Sharp											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 20/11/2025											
Cabinet Member approval: Approved verbally											
Date approved: 13/11/2025											

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Briefing Report

Tree Management Principles 2025

December 2025



I. Background

Plymouth City Council manages tens of thousands of trees across public land, including parks, highways, and open spaces. The city’s estimated 395,000 trees deliver £4.6 million annually in ecosystem services, such as carbon capture, air quality improvement, flood mitigation, and urban cooling. Trees are integral to Plymouth’s identity and resilience, but they face pressures from urban development, climate change, and limited local government resources.

In 2019, the Council adopted the Plymouth Plan for Trees, built around four principles: Care, Protect, Enhance, and Promote. The Tree Management Principles document set out the council’s approach to managing its trees in relation to that. This document and the approach it sets out has been updated during 2025, aligning with new statutory duties under the Environment Act 2021, local planning policy, and best practice guidance.

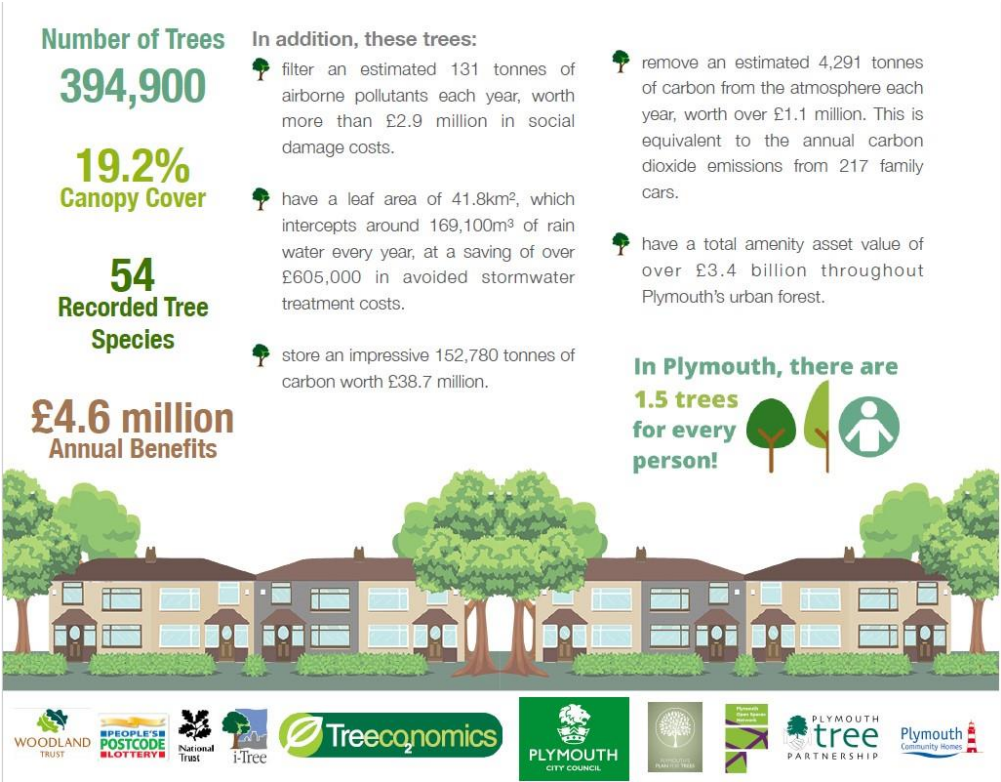


Figure I – The Value of Plymouth’s Urban Forest (Treeconomics, 2021)

2. Purpose of the Tree Management Principles

The document provides a clear framework for managing Council-owned and protected trees to:

- **Ensure public safety** through risk-based inspections and maintenance.
- **Define criteria for tree works**, including felling, pruning, and replacement.
- **Integrate tree management** with planning and infrastructure projects.
- **Promote community engagement and transparency in decision-making**.
- **Support urban forestry goals**, including canopy cover, biodiversity, and tree equity.

3. Review Process

There have been a number of key national and local drivers of this review:

- The introduction, through the Environment Act 2021, of a duty for highways authorities to consult on the removal of 'street trees' in certain circumstances and settings
- The council's commitment set out in the Armada Way Learning Review to
- The council's commitment through a motion on notice to review its processes around protected trees

The previous document was reviewed to create this updated version by an internal group of council officers from across a number of departments including Street Services (includes Highways), Strategic Planning and Infrastructure and Corporate Communications.

As per the council's commitment this draft of the document is also being reviewed by the plan for Trees Steering Group which includes partner organisations including Plymouth Tree People, Woodland Trust, National Trust, Plymouth Community Homes and Plymouth Open Space Network.

Final comments from scrutiny committee alongside that of the steering group will be incorporated in the final review of the document.

The Tree Management Principles will continue to be reviewed every five years by Plymouth City Council with partner input. Updates will reflect new legislation, emerging best practice, and local priorities. The review process includes:

- Assessment of risk-based management effectiveness.
- Evaluation of community engagement and consultation outcomes.

- Alignment with the Plan for Trees Delivery Programme and the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest Plan.

4. What Difference Will We See in Tree Management in Plymouth Between 2025–2030?

Key changes and improvements anticipated over the next five years include:

Risk-Based and Transparent Management of trees:

- Expanded use of Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) and proactive surveys.
- Clear public communication on tree works, including online updates and site notices.

Compliance with New Legal Duties:

- Full implementation of Environment Act 2021 requirements for public consultation before felling street trees.
- Strengthened processes for Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and conservation area protections.

Enhanced Urban Forestry:

- Increased tree equity through targeted planting in underserved areas.
- Delivery of 6,000 additional trees via the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest by 2030.
- Adoption of “Right Tree, Right Place” principles and feasibility checklists for street planting.

Integration with Infrastructure and Climate Goals:

- Trees embedded in highway and public realm schemes, balancing safety and canopy cover.
- Use of mitigation hierarchy in development projects to minimise tree loss.

Community Engagement and Stewardship:

- Greater involvement of residents and stakeholders in tree planting and replacement decisions.
- Development of veteran tree trails and interpretation to promote heritage and biodiversity.

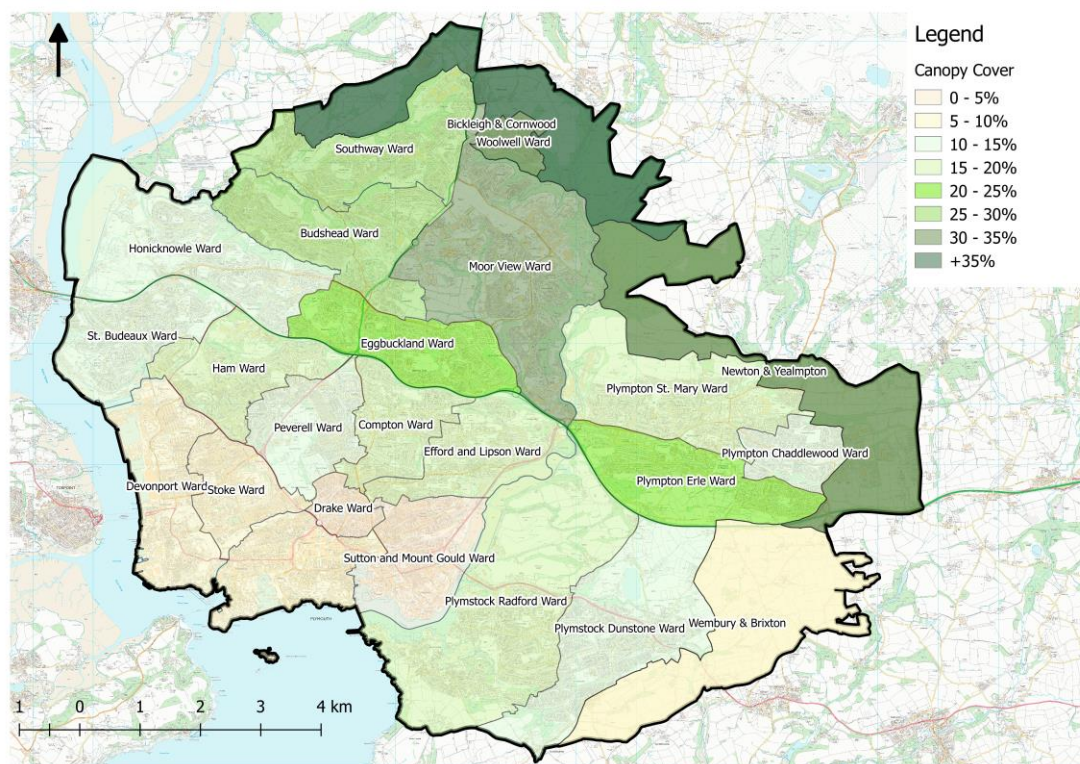


Figure 2 - Plymouth Canopy Cover across Wards

5. Conclusion

The Tree Management Principles 2025 set a robust, forward-looking framework for managing Plymouth's urban forest. By prioritising safety, transparency, and sustainability, and by embedding trees into planning and infrastructure, the Council aims to protect and enhance tree cover while meeting statutory duties and community expectations. Between 2025 and 2030, Plymouth will see more equitable tree distribution, improved resilience to climate change, and stronger public engagement, ensuring trees remain a vital asset for generations to come.



Tree Management Principles 2025

Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**
- 2. Introduction**
- 3. Management of existing Council owned and managed tree stock**
 - 3.1 Inspections
 - 3.2 Tree Works
 - 3.3 Trees on the Highway including 'Street Trees'
- 4. Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and Tree Conservation Orders (TCO)**
 - 4.1 TPOs
 - 4.2 TCOs
- 5. Managing tree impact for infrastructure projects**
 - 5.1 Infrastructure schemes delivered through Permitted Development
 - 5.2 Infrastructure schemes delivered through the planning system
- 6. Community Forest Tree establishment programme**
- 7. Plymouth Plan for Trees – Delivery programme and Steering Group**

Appendix 1 – Street Tree Removal Decision and Consultation Process

Appendix 2 – Tree Services Guide for Councillors

Appendix 3 – Plan for Trees Partnership Agreement

Appendix 4 – i-Tree Eco Survey Report

Appendix 5 – Highways Tree Planting Feasibility Checklist

Appendix 6 – Making and Confirming a TPO Flowchart

References

NB: Consultation, engagement & decision making to be referenced as explicit parts to each section as required.



I. Executive Summary

The **Tree Management Principles 2025** document sets out Plymouth City Council's updated approach to managing the city's trees, reflecting statutory duties, best practice, and the city's ambitions for a greener, healthier, and more resilient urban environment.

Plymouth's estimated 395,000 trees deliver over £4.6 million in annual benefits, including carbon capture, improved air quality, flood mitigation, urban cooling, and enhanced wellbeing for residents. The Council is responsible for thousands of trees on public land and has a duty to protect, enhance, and manage this vital asset for current and future generations. It does this in the context of a challenging local government financial position.

This document aligns with the four principles of Plymouth's Plan for Trees—**Care, Protect, Enhance, and Promote**—and provides a clear framework for:

- **Risk-based management:** Regular surveys and risk assessments ensure public safety and compliance with legal duties, using Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) and proactive maintenance regimes.
- **Transparent decision-making:** Clear criteria for tree works, felling, and replacement, with robust processes for public engagement and consultation, especially for street trees under the Environment Act 2021.
- **Sustainable urban forestry:** Guidance on planting, pollarding, and protecting trees, including root protection zones and the use of feasibility checklists to ensure the right tree is planted in the right place.
- **Integration with city planning:** Coordination with infrastructure projects, planning policy, and the Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest to maximise canopy cover, biodiversity, and tree equity across all neighbourhoods.
- **Community involvement:** Commitment to engaging residents, stakeholders, and partners in decision-making, replanting, and stewardship, ensuring that tree management reflects local needs and aspirations.

The Tree Management Principles document will be reviewed every five years, ensuring that Plymouth's approach remains responsive to new challenges, legislation, and opportunities. By managing the city's trees through these principles, the Council aims to safeguard and grow the city's urban forest, delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits for all.

2. Introduction

Plymouth City Council recognises the many benefits that trees bring to our city including capturing and storing carbon, improving health and well-being, intercepting rainwater, adding to property values, reducing the urban heat island effect and providing a sense of place and pride within communities.

We know that the estimated 395,000 trees in the city provide £4.6 million in annual benefits to the city (*i-Tree Eco Survey Report, 2021*).

Trees may take decades to grow but in urban environments have a tough life and are vulnerable to drought stress, compacted soils and development pressure. Wherever they are growing they require space for the adequate development of their root systems and canopies.

Plymouth City Council (the council) is directly responsible for many thousands of trees across Plymouth growing on public land such as highway verges, parks, open spaces and woodlands. The council also has some limited responsibilities in respect of privately owned trees which might interact with the public domain, for example when private trees are posing a risk to the Highway.

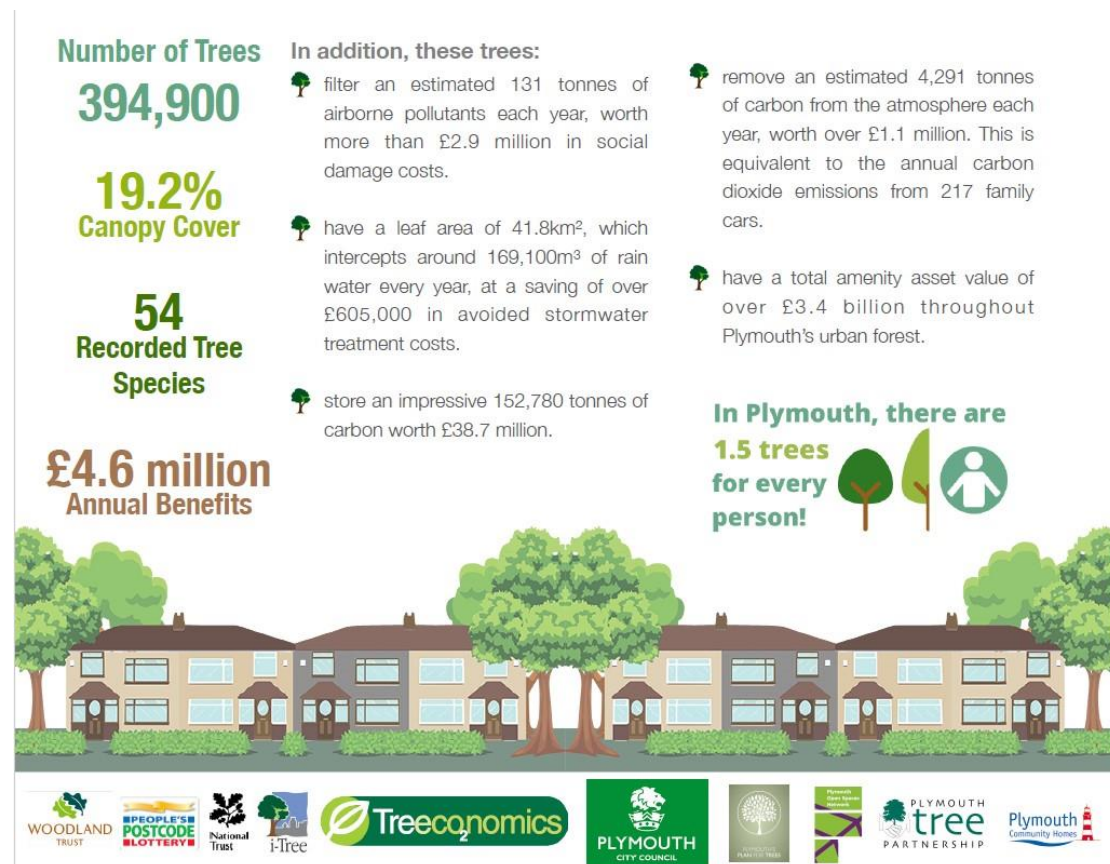


Figure 1 – The Value of Plymouth's Urban Forest (Treeconomics, 2021)



In 2019 the council and a range of partners adopted Plymouth's Plan for Trees, which set out Plymouth's vision for its trees across the city. The Plan was developed in collaboration between Plymouth City Council, Woodland Trust, Plymouth Community Homes, Plymouth Tree Partnership, Plymouth Open Space Network and the National Trust:

'Trees and woodlands within Plymouth will be valued and cared for so they can play a fundamental role in the City's future. Everyone will have more opportunities to experience the positive benefits of trees and woodlands, which enhance the beauty and unique nature of Plymouth.'

A Delivery Programme was approved as part of this plan and is overseen and reviewed by Plan for Trees Steering Group.

Part of the council's commitment included delivering a **Tree Management Principles** document to enable Plymouth City Council to deliver against the four Principles of this vision:

Care – *We will care for our trees and woods by practicing and promoting good tree and woodland management*

Protect – *We will protect Plymouth's special trees and woods for future generations*

Enhance – *We will enhance neighbourhoods by selecting, growing and planting high-quality trees that also increase canopy cover and tree diversity*

Promote - *We will promote the benefits and value of our trees and woods through education and encouraging best practice*

This was published in 2019 alongside the Plan for Trees. In 2025 the council has reviewed this document to provide an updated position and approach on management of the trees for which it is responsible, ensuring that it recognises new duties set out in the Environment Act (2021) and is reflective of the current situation and challenges of local government and needs of residents in the city.

The purpose of the document is **to set out the Council's management approach to the trees within its ownership or authority to protect, to ensure they have a positive impact on communities**. It will set out the criteria for tree management practices including defining when felling is appropriate, how we will engage with communities around this and how replacements will be planned for and delivered.

Within this it recognises that the Council has a range of duties including as a landowner, acting as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and the Highways Authority.

As landowner the Council has a duty of care to enhance biodiversity and comply with regulations set out under the Environment Act. Measures and ambition to deliver this



enhancement through tree planting and other interventions are set in the [Plan for Nature and People](#) and [Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest Plan](#).

As the Highway Authority, it has a duty to ensure the safe passage of all highway users as set under the Highways Act. This document and associated processes must also provide direction and ensure a consistent approach to managing trees that interact with highway usage.

As the LPA the Council has duties set out under the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) and is guided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). Locally the Local Plan sets out how Plymouth delivers the requirements of the NPPF.

This document will be reviewed every 5 years by the council with the support of partners to ensure that it responds to current legislation as well as new challenges and opportunities.

Under each of these areas of responsibility the Council has ways to ensure that the public are informed and engaged, and where necessary consulted about decisions that impact both positively and negatively on the trees of the city. This is set out under each section.



3. Management of existing Council owned and managed tree stock

The top priority for tree management is public safety and the principles set out here are guided by industry guidance issued by the [National Tree Safety Group](#)¹. The Council carry out regular risk assessments of trees that they maintain. This tells us where harm is most likely to occur and helps decide what action is needed to keep people and property within acceptable levels of risk. Trees that have been identified as posing high levels of risk – based on a combination of the likelihood of failure and the potential to affect high impact zones such as main roads and playgrounds - are prioritised to ensure the greatest reduction of risk is actioned.

The council allocates its finite resources to ensure it reasonably meets its duty of care and other legal responsibilities by demonstrating a defendable, proactive tree management regime. We capture and store our tree and risk management data in our tree management database to provide a robust record of inspections and tree works.

Like any landowner, the Council has a duty of care to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that cause a reasonably foreseeable risk of injury to persons or property². When assessing a tree, owners and managers need to judge whether the management measures they adopt will fulfil their legal obligations.

As an employer, the Council has a duty to ensure, '*so far as is reasonably practicable*', that, employees, contractors and members of the public are not put at risk. We are also required to '*make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking*'³. This requires us to undertake a risk assessment of the tree stock on our land.

Therefore, Quantified Tree Risk Assessments (QTRA) 'are used to quantify the risk of significant harm from tree failure, so that the degree of uncertainty around future tree failure can be maintained within the HSE's limits of tolerable and broadly acceptable risk'.

The HSE propose that:

¹ [NTSG-full-guidance.pdf](#)

² The Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 & 1984.

³ The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

³ [Quantified Tree Risk Assessment Practice Note Version 5.3.9 2025](#)



'For members of the public who have a risk imposed on them 'in the wider interest' HSE would set this limit at 1/10,000 per annum'⁴.

And, 'for trees in a frequently visited zone, a system for periodic, proactive checks is appropriate'.⁵

There is a distinction between unacceptable and tolerable risk, whereby the council may choose to raise work on tolerable risks when the benefits of risk control are sufficient to justify their cost.

3.1 Surveys

To ensure the risks and benefits of trees are balanced we undertake a regular programme of proactive tree surveys to ascertain the general condition of our tree stock and to identify those tree that may pose an unacceptable risk to people and built infrastructure. The outcomes of this survey programme inform a pro-active and risk-based tree work programme.

The council have zoned groups of trees we are required to monitor into areas called Tree Survey Units (TSUs). These are generally at street or single open space scale, with larger open spaces or streets broken down into a suitable number of TSUs. TSUs will receive inspection on 2, 3 or 6 yearly cycles. In 2024 the council completed 403 TSU surveys. Where it is recognised that a tree has a defect requiring attention a suitable job will be raised against this individual tree or group of trees to carry out tree works, regular maintenance or an increased frequency of assessment.

- **High risk areas** – those on busy routes for pedestrians/traffic or located near to playgrounds and other critical areas of increased risk are assessed **every 2 years**.
- **Regular streets and woodland fringes** are assessed **every 3 years**.
- **More remote areas** such as in woodland or away from residents and services will be inspected **every 6 years** recognising that the risk of death, serious injury or property damage from trees in infrequently used areas is low.

⁴ Health and Safety Executive (2007). Management of the risk from falling trees. HSE Sector Information Minute, SIM 01/2007/05. (Guidance for HSE Inspectors and Local Authority enforcement officers).

⁵ Health and Safety Executive (2007). Management of the risk from falling trees. HSE Sector Information Minute, SIM 01/2007/05.

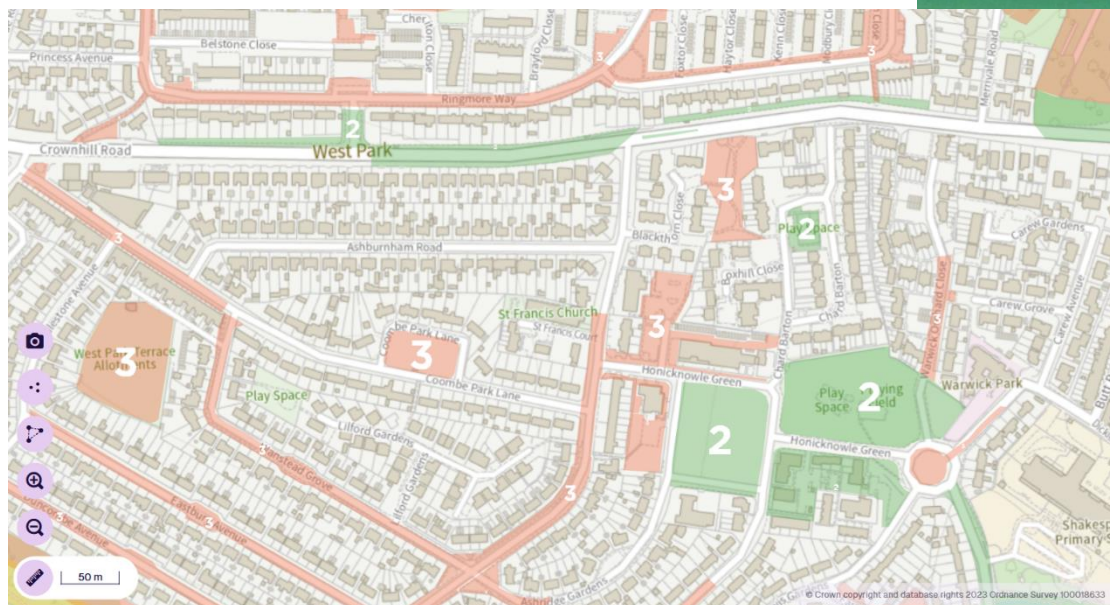


Figure 2 – an example of a neighbourhood with Tree Survey Units identified on a 2- and 3-year cycle

If concerns are raised about particular trees that triggers an individual tree survey these results will override the TSU assessment but only for that tree, unless the visiting tree officer has sufficient cause to believe that the surrounding area requires further investigation.

Reports of dangerous trees can be received from a wide range of sources and are treated as urgent. This often relates to fallen or failed trees but other concerns may also require more urgent attention. Storms and extreme weather events are likely to increase the volume of dangerous tree reports.

3.1.1. Private Trees

The duty of care to keep highways users safe under the Highways Act also applies to private landowners. Wherever private trees are in close proximity to the highway, it is the responsibility of the landowner to take proactive measures to assess and promote tree health. If a tree poses a foreseeable risk to highways users, it is the landowner's responsibility to mitigate this risk through appropriate assessment and associated remedial tree work to effectively manage any risk.

The council's officers will notify private landowners if through the course of regular inspections and surveys any hazards and risks arising from trees or vegetation are identified so that the landowner can take appropriate action. If they fail to do so, the council has the right to enter property and carry out work at the landowner's expense⁶.

⁶ Under section 154 of the Highways Act (1980) and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976



3.2 Tree Works

The Plymouth Plan for Trees provides an agreed framework for the council's tree work with a requirement to follow industry best practice in managing our trees [BS3998 Tree Works – Recommendations](#)⁷. We base work priorities on the risks posed by the trees following a survey, with the ones that pose the greatest level of potential harm being worked on first and then cascading down to those that pose a lesser risk in a practicable and efficient manner.

Decisions on the type of tree works or intervention will be made when the probability of harm from trees has been assessed and exceeds an acceptable limit. Examples of intervention include removing the 'target' (such as redirecting a path or fencing off access so reducing the likelihood that people could be harmed), carrying out tree pruning work (reducing the size of a tree so a failure would have a less severe impact) or felling a tree.

The council realises that alongside the multiple benefits trees provide they can inconvenience and lead to concerns for residents living near them. However, the council does not undertake tree works for reasons of:

- shade
- interference with TV or satellite signals
- blocked views
- overhanging gardens
- Bird droppings
- Honeydew
- Leaf litter
- Fruit / Nuts / Pine cones
- Trees too tall/ seem big
- Because they haven't been cut lately
- Blocked gutters
- Anti-social behaviour or any other issues related to inconvenience.

We do carry out tree works for reasons of:

- felling or pruning trees which are dead, dying or dangerous as quickly as reasonably practicable where it is an unacceptable risk to leave them.
- promptly responding to any insurance claim relating to one of our trees once we have thoroughly examined the circumstances.
- removing branches which obstruct free passage of roads and pavements or cause a danger, and clearing streetlights, traffic signs and signals, sightlines and crossings when a problem is reported or identified.
- trees which are being removed as part of woodland maintenance works or due to necessary ecological management will not require replacement and natural

⁷ [BS 3998:2010 | 31 Dec 2010 | BSI Knowledge](#)



regeneration will be allowed, unless the felling is necessary to create mitigation habitat for other works.

- for planned development works where suitable consideration has been given to the mitigation hierarchy (see *Section 5*).
- when other methods to manage the issue have been exhausted (in the case of root damage/subsidence).

3.2.1 Insurance claims

In cases of alleged damage caused by a tree or its roots, the burden of proof rests with the landowner or claimant. It is the responsibility of the individual making the claim to provide evidence and demonstrate that the alleged damage can be attributed to the tree or its root system. This means that the claimant must establish a clear connection between the tree or its roots and the damage in question.

In some instances, it may even be necessary for the claimant to obtain an independent assessment from a qualified professional, such as a structural engineer, to help establish the probable cause of the damage.

When consideration needs to be given to the cost:benefit of interventions then the council will proactively use a [CAVAT](#) assessment as part of its cost:benefit analysis of options.

3.2.2 Tree replacements

If trees need to be removed an assessment will be made whether felled trees should be replaced in the same location, taking into account best practice and future maintenance requirements and cost. The council will take a pro-active approach to securing funding for suitable numbers of like-for-like tree replacements.

In instances where trees are replaced the council will take a collaborative approach, where expedient, to liaise with local stakeholders to ensure trees can be replanted as close as possible to where they have been lost (e.g. within the same street or park) or where necessary we will seek other locations as close as possible to where trees have been lost to ensure there is no reduction in localised tree cover. We will aim to replant the following planting season after felling.

3.2.3 - Veteran Trees

There are currently over 150 veteran, ancient or notable trees in Plymouth⁸. Our aim is to survey, map and monitor these to understand and promote their biodiversity, conservation and social significance. While we will produce a definitive database containing all these trees, we will also seek to develop a trail incorporating a selection of these trees to allow the local community to appreciate these valuable assets and interpret their importance through on-site signage and accessible information for a range of audiences.

⁸ 153 records of Veteran trees in the city ([Plymouth Open data, 2016](#))



Where feasible these trees will have specific management plans and, if relevant, will also be incorporated into the ongoing management plans of the nature areas they grow in.

3.2.4 - Root protection zones

The council and its contractors will follow appropriate industry codes of practice and guidance such as BS5837⁹ and NJUG guidance ¹⁰when excavation works are required close to trees to avoid or minimise damage to roots. E.g. any works to first avoid impact, recognising the root protection area and applying suitable buffers during work and applying suitable methods of work. The council will also expect all utility providers and partners to follow the same NJUG guidance.

3.2.5 - Keeping the public informed

Understandably there is significant public interest in the trees of the city, they provide vital ecosystem services and are often important features in neighbourhoods of the city.

To ensure a suitable level of engagement and accountability for decision making in the management of its trees the council will implement a process to be able to share information via its website and, when necessary, through physical notices on sites, to ensure that the public have suitable information to understand the interventions required and the options considered in proposing tree removal.

3.3 Trees on or adjacent to the Highway including Street Trees

The council, acting as the Highways Authority under the Highways Act 1980 has to ensure that trees do not obstruct pedestrians or road users and has overall authority and responsibility to plant and maintain trees on the highway.

As Highways Authority for Plymouth, the council has specific duties under several sections of the Highways Act¹¹ to comply with:

- to maintain the highways infrastructure in a safe and useable condition
- to minimise disruption caused to traffic by works on the highway.
- allow for a robust defence against litigation

⁹ [BS 5837](#) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Code of practice

¹⁰ [NJUG GUIDELINES FOR THE PLANNING, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF UTILITY APPARATUS IN PROXIMITY TO TREES](#)

¹¹ Highways Act 1980 – Subsection 41 (1), Section 58, Section 96A, Section 141



- To ensure that planting of trees or shrubs in or near carriageway does not restrict the use of the carriageway.
- To consult with the public before removal of a 'Street Tree' – see *section on 'Public Engagement' below for more detail*

In response to the duties outlined above, this section sets out the council's approach to managing trees on or adjacent to the highway. This builds on the principles set out earlier in this document and aims to provide further clarification on long-term challenges that the council is faced with to balance Highways Act duties alongside providing climate resilient and attractive neighbourhoods for people to live in.

- Management of large tree canopies and basal growth in residential streets restricting footways and carriageways
- Management of tree root damage to footways and carriageways
- Management of large tree trunks restricting width of footways
- Planting of new trees in or alongside the highway

The council will have broadly two approaches to carrying out works to the highways, which are inter-related but are distinct to each other. One is through specific highways improvements schemes - this approach is covered in section 5. The section here 3.3 relates to the day-to-day work to maintain highways infrastructure.

3.3.1. Management of large tree canopies and basal growth in residential streets restricting footways and carriageways

The city has many semi-mature and mature trees planted in previous decades in streets across the city. These trees provide significant benefits to people in the city, but the council has to cost-effectively manage these trees to ensure that they are appropriate for their setting close to property and highways.

To achieve this the council uses a cyclical pruning and pollarding programme for trees within its ownership or management which are in street locations. [This programme manages over 2,800 trees in a four-year cycle.](#) In addition, the council will prune growth for the base of trees where it becomes excessive in a cyclical maintenance schedule.

3.3.2. Management of tree root damage to footways and carriageways

Trees can cause damage to footways and carriageways either through time (growth) or during exceptional weather circumstances (uprooting). The Council deals with damage caused to the highway by tree growth according to the information set out here; damage caused by trees uprooting will be dealt with in accordance with our set procedures for emergency response.

Many of the trees planted within the footways across the city are semi-mature and mature trees and provide both great benefits to streets as well as posing challenges to their growing environments – they were planted decades ago and, in some cases, have outgrown their setting.



Incremental root growth, over long periods, exerts upward and sideways force on its surroundings that can result in a deformation of the footway, kerb displacement and in exceptional circumstances deformation of the carriageway surface. For the Council to take a pragmatic and reasonable approach to dealing with trees within the Highway estate the following guidance should be followed which draws from BS5837¹² and NJUG guidance¹³.

Root damage to footways and carriageways

The space available for both trees and highways infrastructure is often very restricted, and they are frequently forced to share the available space, both above and below ground.

Where they are in close proximity, there is the potential for either to be subject to damage as is the case with lifted pavements etc. To successfully co-exist, precautions should be taken to minimise the risk of damage to both trees and highways infrastructure based upon technical guidance and where appropriate further advice from Council Tree Officers.

Tree roots can cause damage to pavements and kerbs but prioritised attention should be focused on the carriageway. Where the damage results in rocking slabs, trips and undulations to the footway which meet the criteria defined as a safety defect in the [Highways Inspection Manual](#)¹⁴, the damage is considered a safety defect and action has to be taken in accordance with this guidance. However, in line with relevant legislation no tree should be felled prior to considering appropriate options and mitigation.

The council will consider these cases with a multi-disciplinary¹⁵ approach to attempt to address the issue permanently and sustainably, without causing significant detriment to the amenity of the area or creating future maintenance issues. The aim will be to achieve acceptable levels of highways safety whilst ensuring as far as reasonably practicable tree canopy in the local area is retained without causing future maintenance concerns

In streets where pavement issues have resulted in the loss of trees over time the council will consider the location of tree stumps in this approach and as requiring attention and opportunity for replanting.

¹² [BS 5837](#) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Code of practice

¹³ [NJUG GUIDELINES FOR THE PLANNING, INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE OF UTILITY APPARATUS IN PROXIMITY TO TREES](#)

¹⁴ [Highway Inspection Manual 2018.pdf](#)

¹⁵ Cross departmental working for trees will most likely involve the following stakeholders: Council Natural Environment, Environmental Operations and Highways teams. However other partners might be involved depending on the location of the trees affected by the works.



This approach will recognise a range of factors in considering each case:

- highways safety,
- maintenance requirement,
- tree health,
- tree canopy cover in the local area.
- retaining or re-creating the aesthetic of the street,
- future resilience.

In considering solutions to the issues a variety of options will be considered including:

1. Changes to how the highway is laid out
2. Using alternative surfaces
3. Changes to how the highway functions
4. Installation of underground interventions such as root bridges or root barriers
5. Felling and replanting of trees

Wherever this approach is taken and the only feasible outcome is to remove trees which are not exempt under the Highways Act, residents will be engaged and consulted in line with the council's duty to consult process set out below in 3.3.5.

Overall, where it is concluded felling is the only viable, cost-effective option, the number of trees to be replanted will follow a ratio and specifications as set out in the Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document, with at least one tree being planted in close proximity to the location of the tree lost whenever possible.

The selection and implementation of the chosen approach will be dependent on available budgets and arboricultural expertise. We will proactively secure suitable funding in line with the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to support the delivery of the above set-out approach in order to provide PCC with a resilient succession planting plan working towards achieving tree canopy and equity goals.

Footways – tree roots

Growth of the tree roots can cause uneven paving slabs or varying degrees of undulation on a bitumen macadam surfacing. Rocking slabs, trips and undulations which meet the level identified in the safety inspection manual may constitute a safety defect. Solutions will be considered in the following order of priority:

1. the existing surfacing material will be removed and replaced with suitable new surfacing over the tree roots, providing sufficient clearance at the base of the stem to reduce stress on the tree.
2. alternative surfaces such as rubber pavers will be considered



3. if no viable option can be resourced cost effectively then, the tree will be considered for removal and replanting as per section 3.2.5. If a replacement tree cannot be planted in the same location then the footway will be reconstructed and finished with a material sympathetic to the area where reasonably practicable.

Kerbs – displaced by tree root growth

Kerbs can be displaced in both a vertical and horizontal plane by the force exerted by tree roots. Though kerbs are technically part of the footway and are subject to the same intervention levels, a risk-based approach should be made to determine the course of action. Options that will be considered are:

1. the removal of kerbs and replacement with a slim line kerb (for horizontal movement)
2. ramping off with sand/cement (for vertical movement)
3. a kerb stone may be removed and not replaced,
4. It may also be possible to reset a displaced kerb by cutting back the offending tree roots, though advice must be sought from a Tree Officer prior to the works commencing.

Kerbs – drop kerb installation

The Council does not remove trees, established tree pits or highway verges with opportunity for replanting for the purposes of installing new dropped kerbs or vehicle cross overs.

3.3.3. Management of large tree trunks restricting width of footways

There are instances where the growth of a tree causes an obstruction to pedestrians by reducing the available width of the footway. This can force pedestrians to walk along the carriageway. According to the Department of Transport [“Inclusive Mobility Guidance”¹⁶](#) the minimum width required for a wheelchair user and an ambulant person side by side is 1500mm. The minimum width required for a visually impaired person being guided is 1200mm. Plymouth City Council has taken the position of two people walking side by side as being more commonplace therefore will adopt this as the intervention level.

Therefore, should the growth of a tree reduce the footway width to below 1200mm, a Street Tree Options Assessment Report will be undertaken to recommend what action should be taken considering options such as tree removal and replacement or if a build out can be installed.

¹⁶ [Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians - GOV.UK](#)



In exceptional circumstances this width could be reduced to 1000mm as an absolute minimum where no feasible alternative exists, but any restricted width should not be repeated within another 6 metres.

3.3.4. Planting of new trees in or alongside the highway

It may be possible to replant trees on or adjacent to a footway but must be in accordance with the Department for Transport [Manual for Streets](#)¹⁷ and [Tree Design Group guidance](#)¹⁸.

To balance the requirements of access, safe highways management, and a city commitment to enhancing tree equity and ensuring climate resilience, the following principles enables street tree placement in the right place, under one of the following three conditions:

Optimal practice – full spatial allocation for all requirements with no feasibility requirement:

No tree or shrub shall be planted within 2675mm from the kerb line of a standard 7300mm carriageway, with additional widths required above 2675mm to account for any additional street furniture incl. signs, bollards, guardrail, above ground utility apparatus etc. Footpaths should be made as wide as is practicable, and under normal circumstances a width of 2000mm is the minimum that should be provided.

Viable practice – existing physical constraints:

Where the above is not achievable due to existing physical constraints, a minimum footpath width of 1200mm and 450mm kerbside to street furniture easement can be regarded as acceptable when pedestrian volumes and composition (e.g. near schools or shops) have been considered. In this circumstance footpaths should be a minimum of 2000mm wide (1200mm path + 450mm + 350mm diameter trunk).

Extraordinary practice – Urgent requirement for tree equity enhancements in highly constrained areas:

Where tree placement cannot be met in a street by the above criteria but delivery of tree equity is an urgent need evidenced by a Tree Equity Score¹⁹ (TES) below 75, then extraordinary footpath widths of an absolute minimum 1000mm are justified, in

¹⁷ [mfssummary.pdf](#)

¹⁸ [Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery - Trees and Design Action Group](#)

¹⁹ Tree Equity Score map - [Tree Equity Score UK](#). *Tree Equity Score UK is a map-based application that was created to help address disparities in urban tree distribution.*



exceptional circumstances and must be caused by single trees only, spaced a minimum of 6m apart. This placement enables sporadic 'passing places' for footpath traffic. In these instances, footpath width and kerbside to street furniture easement equate to 1450mm as an absolute minimum.

The minimum width of 1200mm takes into account of the Inclusive Mobility guidelines and new trees would follow the 'Right tree, Right place' principle so trees that produce growth at their base would not be planted in these locations.

Where the width of the footway does not allow for the replanting of trees, consideration will be given to the construction of carriageway buildouts to provide a planting area. This will be subject to consideration using feasibility criteria on a case-by-case basis. These criteria will cover safety, social, economic and environmental factors. Consideration will be given to plant trees elsewhere in the nearby area should it not be possible to build such a planting area within that street. The council will scope sites based on its feasibility checklist (Appendix 5) to pro-actively build a pipeline of future tree planting locations.

3.3.5. Public engagement and consultation

Understandably there is significant public interest in the trees of the city, they provide vital ecosystem services and are often important features in neighbourhoods of the city.

The Environment Act 2021, set out a new duty for Local Highways Authorities to consult with the public before felling a tree on an urban road (a "street tree"). Details of the specific requirements and exempt situations for this duty are set out in Appendix 1.

In general terms the council will consult with residents if removing a street tree from a residential street unless it is:

- less than 8 centimetres wide i.e. very small,
- the tree is dead or dangerous,
- the tree is causing an obstruction in line with the Equality Act,
- required for the purpose of carrying out development authorised by a planning approval.

A local authority **must ensure that it has sufficient evidence to prove that a street tree is exempt** from the duty to consult. Non-compliance with the duty to consult could lead to legal challenge, it is up the local highways authority to ensure it has sufficient evidence to defend against a legal challenge.

To ensure a suitable level of engagement and accountability for decision making in the management of its trees in relation to this duty the council has defined a process to be able to determine objectively and, where necessary, with appropriate public consultation in decisions to remove and replant street trees. Council officers will use



this process where there is a duty to consult the public in the proposed removal of street trees. By sharing this information via its website and in physical notices we aim to ensure that the public have suitable information to understand the interventions required and the options considered in proposing tree removal.

The details of this process are set out in **Appendix I**, but the summary is set out here:

1. Tree assessed using Street Tree Condition Impact Matrix
2. Where tree removal is considered necessary, a Street Tree Options Assessment Report should be completed.
3. Information published to the council website on proposed tree removal, reasons for that decision and confirmation if consultation is required.
4. If formal consultation required, site notices erected and consultation open for 28 days, including with councillors and the Plymouth Plan for Trees Steering Group as a key advisory group with local and national stakeholder representation.
5. Decision taken on tree removal and replanting proposal by Service Director for Street Services in consultation with Cabinet Members and decision published.



4 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and Trees in Conservation Areas (TCO)

4.1 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)

A Tree Preservation Order is an order made by a local planning authority in England to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of amenity. An Order prohibits the:

- cutting down
- topping
- lopping
- uprooting
- wilful damage
- wilful destruction

of trees without the local planning authority's written consent. If consent is given, it can be subject to conditions which have to be followed.

The Council follows [national guidance on the making of TPOs](#), which sets out that local planning authorities can make a [Tree Preservation Order](#) if it appears to them to be '[expedient in the interests of amenity to make provision for the preservation of trees or woodlands in their area](#)'. Trees may be protected for a wide range of reasons including their contribution to public visual amenity, if they are unusual or rare specimens, they may have strong historical associations with a property, etc. We consider each request to protect a tree/s on its individual merit and therefore no exhaustive list has been prepared.

Authorities can either initiate [this process](#) themselves or in response to a request made by any other party. When deciding whether an Order is appropriate, authorities are advised to take into consideration [what 'amenity' means in practice](#), what to take into account when assessing [amenity value](#), [what 'expedient' means in practice](#), [what trees can be protected](#) and [how they can be identified](#). The serving of any new TPO is a matter of great significance both in terms of the cost to the council and in terms of the constraints it imposes upon the owner of the tree. The council will only consider those trees of most present or future visual amenity value for protection.

There are currently 547 TPOs across the city. The majority of these TPOs are on trees on third party land i.e. not Council owned but some do exist on Council owned land where there has historically been a reason to create one. TPO requests for trees on land owned by PCC will be considered in the same way as trees on private land.

The Council has a [webpage summarising the approach to TPOs](#) and new TPO requests can be submitted by a dedicated email address newtporequests@plymouth.gov.uk. Any new requests will be assessed and considered by Officers against government legislation and guidance and will be responded to within 30 working days in which we will set out the decision and the reason for it. This process will involve completing a amenity evaluation assessment (Tree Evaluation Method for Protection Orders) to



provide an objective assessment of the factors requiring consideration for the potential serving of an order.

If the tree/s score is above the minimum threshold a report is completed and submitted for approval by the delegated officer. This is then sealed by the legal department if approved and the TPO is served with immediate effect.

Affected parties are notified and a site notice is displayed on site. The TPO is registered against the properties involved and there is a twenty-eight-day period for comments to be received commencing from the date of serving. This process is summarised in Appendix 6.

4.1.1 Tree works request to a TPO tree

Anyone wanting to cut down, top, lop or uproot trees subject to a TPO must first apply to the local planning authority for its consent and apart from those limited exceptions, such as if a tree is dead or imminently dangerous, permission must be sought from the local planning authority by submitting a standard application form. The form is available through the Plymouth City Council website [Apply to work on a protected tree | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#) and then the Planning Portal.

The Council publishes a weekly list of TPO works request applications [View the weekly list of tree applications | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#) for the public to review and comment on. These comments are considered by Officers when determining the works request.

Anyone undertaking works to protected trees should take care not to exceed an exception. Before carrying out work they believe is exempt, they may wish to obtain advice from a qualified arboriculturist and/or confirmation from the authority of what is and what is not required.

If a local planning authority receives notice of work – called a 5 Day Notice - under any case it may decide to inform the notifier that it considers the exemption does not apply which would prevent the works from being progressed.

In addition, the authority's consent is not needed in certain specific circumstances for instance, in respect of anything done by, or on behalf of, the Forestry Commission on land it owns or manages or in which it has an interest or for those complying with an Act of Parliament.

4.2 - Tree/s in a Conservation Area

Trees in a conservation area that are not protected by a TPO are protected by the provisions in section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These provisions require people to notify the local planning authority, using a 'section 211 notice', 6 weeks before carrying out certain work on such trees, unless an exception applies. Works requests can be submitted through the Planning Portal reached through the Council website [Apply to work on a protected tree | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)



The work may go ahead before the end of the 6-week period if the local planning authority gives consent. This notice period gives the authority an opportunity to consider whether to make a Tree Preservation Order on the tree.

There are currently [15 conservation areas in Plymouth](#), each of which is valued for its special unique character. We protect and work towards enhancing these areas, through creation of management plans.

4.3 - Enforcement

Enforcement under Tree Preservation Orders is guided by National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which emphasizes that enforcement action should be proportionate to the breach and taken when expedient to do so, with decisions varying by case and public interest. Breaches can lead to offences with penalties, duties to replace felled protected trees, and a range of limitation periods.



5 Managing tree impact for infrastructure projects

5.1 Infrastructure schemes delivered as Permitted Development

As the city grows and evolves there are a range of infrastructure schemes that will require delivery in line with the Local Plan. The council will be responsible for delivering a number of these, particularly transport, public realm and highway improvement schemes.

Not all of council delivered schemes are subject to planning approval, some are delivered as permitted development schemes. Where planning consent is not required, the Council recognises that some of these schemes will have an impact on trees as well as wider environmental impacts. In developing and delivering these schemes the Council will follow key principles:

- Schemes will follow the mitigation hierarchy²⁰ through the design process to reduce and mitigate impacts.
- Where trees are present an appropriate arboricultural assessment will be undertaken to the required national standards.

The decision to authorise a capital scheme currently passes through relevant internal officer and member decision gateways where environmental and climate impacts will be scrutinised as part of a consideration of the options open to the council.

Keeping the public informed – Engagement and Consultation

The council will ensure that at suitable stages of scheme development the public are kept informed of and engaged and consulted on potential impacts on trees and the steps that they are taking to avoid, reduce and mitigate this impact.

5.2 Infrastructure schemes delivered through planning system

All infrastructure schemes coming through the planning system will follow the relevant national and local planning policy which will include the material consideration of environmental and climate impacts, which recognise the important role that trees play in a climate-resilient and well-planned and designed neighbourhoods.

Keeping the public informed – Engagement and Consultation

The Local Planning Authority has a statutory requirement to undertake a formal period of public consultation, prior to deciding a planning application. This is

²⁰ The mitigation hierarchy is a widely used good practice framework that guides users towards limiting as far as possible the negative impacts on biodiversity from development projects. It can be applied to projects in any sector and is based on a sequence of four iterative actions: avoiding and minimising any negative impacts (prevention), before restoring and finally offsetting residual impacts (remediation) [Mitigation Hierarchy - The Biodiversity Consultancy](#)



prescribed in Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 (as amended). There are different requirements for applications for permission in principle, listed building consent and prior approval applications. Applications for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a Proposed Development, which is a formal determination that planning permission is not required, would not be subject to formal consultation.

The public consultation will involve publishing the application on our weekly list. This is published on our website and outlines all planning applications validated during the previous week.

Any individual or organisation can register online to receive notifications of applications in a particular ward, for example, using our public access system. In addition to viewing applications on the weekly list, publicity will also consist of the erection of at least one site notice in close proximity to the site. A more limited number of applications will also be advertised in the local press.

Representations received during the public consultation period will be reviewed and summarised in the Planning Officer's report. Any material planning considerations raised will be fully considered.

Some planning applications are referred to the Planning Committee for a decision. If we have received a representation from members of the public about a planning application that is being referred to Planning Committee, they will receive an email notifying them of the date, time and venue of the meeting, plus a web link with other relevant information (for example opportunities to speak at Planning Committee).



6 Community Forest Tree establishment programme

6.1 Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest

Since 2021, Plymouth City Council is the lead partner of Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest (PSDCF), a partnership consisting National Trust, Woodland Trust, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon County Council, and South Hams and West Devon District and Borough Councils.

PSDCF, as part of the England's Community Forests network, supports tree planting and woodland creation across Plymouth and South Devon through the delivery of central government funding and third-party funding. The facilitation of external funding enables street trees, parkland planting, and large-scale woodland to be created in the region, with ongoing establishment costs provided to ensure the survival of newly planted trees.

Since 2021, the majority of Plymouth's newly planted trees that are not associated with mitigation or development obligations have been funded by Defra's Trees for Climate Fund and delivered by PSDCF in collaboration with Plymouth City Council. PSDCF supports Plymouth City Council with the design of tree planting schemes, and the logistics and administration of delivering tree planting, but does not interact with PCC's statutory obligations towards the management of trees.

6.2 Establishing trees in Plymouth 2025-2050: The Community Forest Plan

PSDCF has developed a 25-year plan (2025-2050), adopted by all members of its partnership. Within the 25-year plan, PSDCF commits to supporting further tree planting and enhancement in Plymouth, alongside the appropriate management and maintenance of existing trees and woodlands.

The Community Forest Plan can be viewed here: [PSDCF | Home](#)

In Plymouth, PSDCF has developed objectives to increase tree equity in the city to ensure that by 2050, each neighbourhood scores at least 75 on Woodland Trust's tree equity score. The tree equity score is a tool which analyses the level of canopy cover in each neighbourhood alongside various health, income, and environmental determinants to provide a score regarding how equitable tree cover is in an area, and how equitable the benefits of trees are for individuals and communities living in those neighbourhoods.

The tree equity tool can be used here: [Tree Equity Score UK](#)

To deliver PSDCF's 25-year tree establishment target in Plymouth, it is anticipated that a further 6,000 medium-sized trees will need to be planted in the city supplementary to existing trees. Delivery of this number of trees requires robust scoping, feasibility and design protocols in adherence with existing policy and legislation and ensuring that the right tree is planted in the right place.



6.3 Establishment and planting processes

To ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place, PSDCF and Council teams undertake scoping and feasibility exercises which ensure there a site is suitable for a tree, and that interference with other authority and community processes is eliminated.

All tree planting sites are subject to the following process:

- Receipt of a tree planting request and site suggestion from either residents, community groups, wider council teams, or developers.
- In person site visit to assess initial suitability of site.
- Survey of the site inclusive PCC's own internal highway planting feasibility checklist, review of utilities plans to evaluate underground services, and a review land title and registry information to establish ownership of the site and any covenants and obligations.
- If suitable, internal consultation across Plymouth City Council ensures all appropriate departments and teams are notified of a prospective tree planting site, and have time to comment on proposals.
- Subject to internal consultation approval, wider local community members and residents are consulted with feedback and responses collated by project team. All objections are assessed by the PSDCF team and residents are approached to engage with mitigating concerns or objections.
- Subject to community consultation approval, detailed design and planning of the planting scheme commences, utilising the principles and criteria of Plymouth's Plan for Trees

Keeping the public informed – Engagement and Consultation

At all points through the process of identifying potential planting sites, co-designing schemes and co-delivery the PSDCF team will actively engage with community groups and residents to ensure that the plans align with community need and importantly build a sense of stewardship of the trees for people in their communities.

[Community groups can apply for funding here](#) and opportunities to get involved with the programme are [available here](#).



7 Plymouth Plan for Trees

In 2019 the council and a range of partners adopted [Plymouth's Plan for Trees](#), which set out Plymouth's vision for its trees across the city. The Plan was developed in collaboration between Plymouth City Council, Woodland Trust, Plymouth Community Homes, Plymouth Tree Partnership, Plymouth Open Space Network and the National Trust:

'Trees and woodlands within Plymouth will be valued and cared for so they can play a fundamental role in the City's future. Everyone will have more opportunities to experience the positive benefits of trees and woodlands, which enhance the beauty and unique nature of Plymouth.'

The four Principles of this vision are:

- *Care – We will care for our trees and woods by practicing and promoting good tree and woodland management*
- *Protect – We will protect Plymouth's special trees and woods for future generations*
- *Enhance – We will enhance neighbourhoods by selecting, growing and planting high-quality trees that also increase canopy cover and tree diversity*
- *Promote - We will promote the benefits and value of our trees and woods through education and encouraging best practice*

The plan recognises that realising all of the benefits of urban trees will require significant effort and investment over a prolonged period of time from all partners and stakeholders. It is accompanied with a detailed delivery programme developed to support Plymouth's Plan for Trees, setting out how each of the principles will be taken forward and achieved.

The delivery programme has been produced, and will be driven forward, monitored and adapted by the same multi-disciplinary Steering Group that developed this Plan. this programme will be reviewed every three years by the group with actions updated accordingly.

The Steering Group has a Partnership Agreement to guide the activity of the group and which all members sign up to – Appendix 3.



Appendix I

Tree removal decision and consultation process

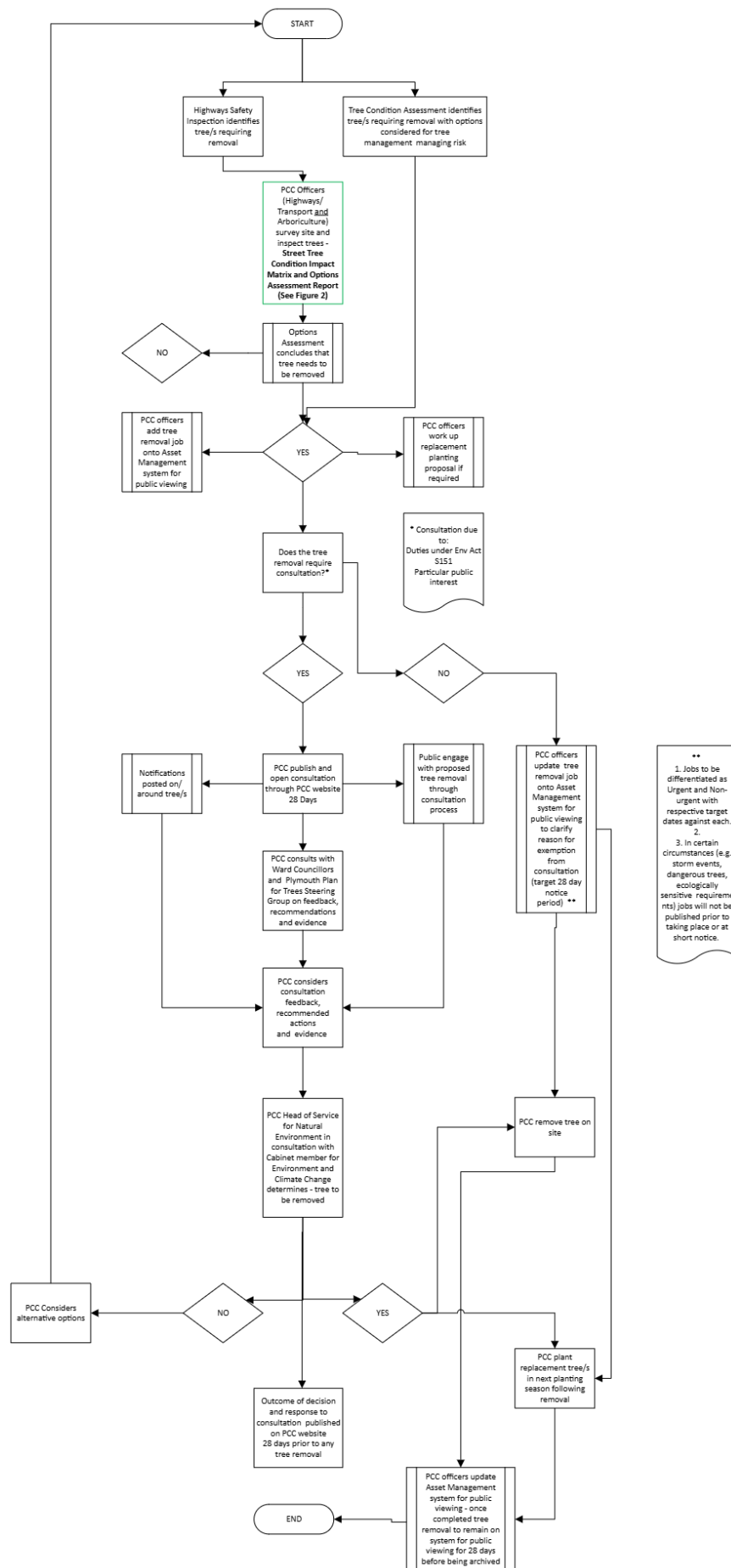


Figure 1 - Decision Process for proposed removal of Council-owned trees

This flow chart summarises the process used by the Council to review the evidence supporting any recommendation to remove and replace a street tree, including the consultation process using the Council's website

On receiving the PCC Officer recommendation, the Council's Head of Service for Natural Environment (or their nominated deputy) in consultation with Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change has the following options:

- 1
Council not satisfied with the evidence supporting the recommendation to remove and replace a tree.
Council returns to PCC Officers with reasons and a request for more information.
PCC Officer provides more information to the Council in support of the recommendation.
Council considers new information to determine if evidence is satisfactory.
- 2
Council satisfied with the evidence supporting the recommendation to remove and replace a tree.
Council considers the recommendation and alternatives to removal and replacement.
Council rejects the recommendation to remove and replace tree.
Council undertakes to find an alternative solution and the recommendation to remove and replace the street tree is dismissed.
In cases where the recommended tree removal and replacement is considered essential and the Council disagrees, a view would be sought from a third-party independent tree surveyor and/or further evidence would be examined.
- 3
Council satisfied with the evidence supporting the recommendation to remove and replace a tree or trees.
Council considers the recommendation and alternatives to removal and replacement.
Council accepts the recommendation to remove and replace the tree.
Council opens a public consultation on PCC website on the recommendation to remove and replace the street tree. Council posts a notification on the street tree informing the public of the consultation (and letters are sent to residents living in the vicinity of the tree under consultation?). The consultation runs for 28 days. The feedback from people living near the tree under consultation, or who are directly affected by it, will have greater influence on the final decision than people living in a different part of Plymouth, in another part of the UK, or abroad.
Once the consultation closes, the Council has 28 days to consider the recommendation, the consultation feedback, and to seek a view from the **Plymouth Plan for Trees Steering Group members** on possible alternatives to removal and replacement, or specific conditions for carrying out removal and replacement.
Following the consultation:
— If the decision taken is not to remove and replace the street tree, this is published on the Council website. The Council undertakes to seek an alternative solution.
- If the decision taken is to remove and replace the street tree, this is published on the Council website. A tree will not be removed until the decision has been published for a further 28 days. The Council programmes the work. The Council publishes the date for replacement, removes the street tree, procures the replacement tree which is planted in the following planting season, and the inventory is updated.



Figure 2 - Process for Street Tree Condition Impact Matrix and Options Assessment Report

IMPACT OF TREE	Impact or extent of damage	Cost to remediate	Impact score	CONDITION OF TREE					Tree quality	
				High, Category A		Moderate, Category B		Low, Category C		Nil, Category U
				Good		Fair		Poor		Dead
				40 years +		20-40 years		10-20 years	5-10 years	<5 years
				5		4		3	2	1
IMPACT OF TREE	Nil	Nil	6	6 x 5 = 30 Retain	6 x 4 = 24 Retain	6 x 3 = 18 Retain	6 x 2 = 12 Retain, enhanced inspection frequency/ detailed investigation	6 x 1 = 6 Retain, enhanced inspection frequency/ detailed investigation		
	Low	Low	5	5 x 5 = 25 Retain	5 x 4 = 20 Retain	5 x 3 = 15 Retain	5 x 2 = 10 Retain, enhanced inspection frequency/ detailed investigation	5 x 1 = 5 Recommendation to Remove and Replace		
	Moderate	Moderate	4	4 x 5 = 20 Retain	4 x 4 = 16 Retain	4 x 3 = 12 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	4 x 2 = 8 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	4 x 1 = 4 Recommendation to Remove and Replace		
			3	3 x 5 = 15 Retain	3 x 4 = 12 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	3 x 3 = 9 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	3 x 2 = 6 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	3 x 1 = 3 Recommendation to Remove and Replace		
	High	High	2	2 x 5 = 10 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	2 x 4 = 8 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	2 x 3 = 6 Cost/Benefit Analysis and Risk Assessed Solution	2 x 2 = 4 Recommendation to Remove and Replace	2 x 1 = 2 Recommendation to Remove and Replace		
	Unacceptable	Unacceptable	1	1 x 5 = 5 Recommendation to Remove and Replace	1 x 4 = 4 Recommendation to Remove and Replace	1 x 3 = 3 Recommendation to Remove and Replace	1 x 2 = 2 Recommendation to Remove and Replace	1 x 1 = 1 Recommendation to Remove and Replace		

Indicative scores given for tree condition or value vs the impact of the tree on infrastructure.

Values and boundaries
Outcome score: > 15 retain tree 14-6 tree subject to enhanced inspection and/or cost benefit analysis < 6 Remove and replace
For scores 14-6 follow decision tree

Guidance only, to aid a decision

Assessment of a street tree

The first step in assessing a street tree is for a qualified tree inspector to conduct a thorough inspection to gather information about the tree quality, overall condition and SULE. Based on this information, the street tree is given a condition score from 5 to 1 (horizontal axis of the Street tree condition-impact matrix). This is the arboricultural input into the assessment. In addition, Highways Inspectors will assess the impact of the tree on Highway features (the vertical axis of the matrix), classifying the impact and extent of damage and the cost to remediate. The Council team who inspect street trees are experienced and qualified in tree assessments and are required to hold at least a minimum level of relevant arboriculture qualifications, e.g., Lantra25 Professional Tree Inspection (PTI), level 3 or higher qualification in arboriculture.

If a street tree is assessed as immediately dangerous to life and/or property, the Council or its contractors must attend and make the tree safe as an urgent defect. The street tree will be removed from the highway to prevent the tree or its branches falling and injuring people or damaging property. In these instances, or during storm and high wind events, no consultation takes place as the primary duty is to keep members of the public and property safe.

Street tree condition-impact matrix (STCIM)

For trees that are not determined as immediately dangerous to life and/or property, the street tree condition-impact matrix (figure 2) is used as a guide by the Council to help assess:

- The likely impact or extent of damage to people or property by a street tree
- Whether the likely impact or extent of damage can be remediated or mitigated, either through arboricultural or engineering means
- The likelihood of repetitive repairs within a five-year period
- The safe useful life expectancy (SULE) of the tree
- Options for retaining the tree and carrying out a risk assessment on each option
- Relative costs of repair compared to all the benefits that flow from the tree.

For the street tree being assessed, the matrix generates a score from 1-30:

- A score <6 (denoted by the red squares). Street tree is dead or in poor condition and unsafe. Recommendation is to remove and replace. This represents most of the tree replacements that are carried out.
- A score between 6-14 (denoted by yellow and orange squares). Street tree is in poor, fair or good condition but may be causing significant direct or indirect damage to highway infrastructure or third-party structures, e.g., subsidence, root pressure. Assessment of this damage is carried out in line with guidance in the Code of Practice for Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure (Produced by the UK Roads Liaison Group (URLG)) which brings together national and local government from across the UK to consider roads infrastructure engineering and operations matters: <http://www.ukroadsliagroup.org/>. Recommendation may be enhanced inspection frequency, detailed investigation, or cost benefit analysis with a risk-assessed solution. This provides scope to find out if the likely impact or extent of damage can be remediated or mitigated through either arboricultural or engineering means.
- A score 15+ (denoted by green squares). **Tree is retained.**

The score for a street tree derived from the matrix is used for guidance only to aid decision-making and to plan next steps. It is not prescriptive and in some cases street trees will fall between scores. Only through a considered assessment and open dialogue with all involved, including affected parties, can a decision or resolution be found, whether that is tree retention and repairs to structures or tree removal and replacement.

With the passing of the Environment Act 2021 its provisions gained statutory status and so its provisions must now be complied with. Regarding arboricultural management a new Duty has been placed upon Councils to consult with the public prior to the removal of street trees. This Duty came into force on 30th November 2023.

The Duty relates only to specific trees in specific areas, and the intention seems to be to ensure that situations do not arise in residential areas where Councils might remove trees without the prior knowledge of the residents.

Those streets where consultation is required are:



Urban roads, other than trunk or classified roads, which:

- are restricted for the purposes of section 81 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (30 miles per hour speed limit);
- are subject to an order made by virtue of section 84(1)(a) of that Act imposing a speed limit not exceeding 40 miles per hour; or
- are otherwise a street in an urban area.

The Duty itself is that Local highway authorities in England must consult before felling street trees and this has led to an amendment of the Highways Act 1980 so that it now reads:

Section 96A- Duty of local highway authorities in England to consult before felling street trees

(1)A local highway authority in England must consult members of the public before felling a tree on an urban road (a “street tree”).

(2)A local highway authority must have regard to any guidance given by the Secretary of State to local highway authorities about how to discharge the duty under subsection (1).

There are exemptions from the need to consult and those are listed in the primary legislation as:

- the street tree has a diameter not exceeding 8 centimetres (measured over the bark, at a point 1.3 metres above ground level),
- the authority considers that the street tree is dead,
- the authority considers that the street tree is required to be felled:
 - by virtue of an order under the Plant Health Act 1967, or
 - under any enactment on the basis that the tree is dangerous,
- the authority considers that the street tree is required to be felled in order to comply with:
 - a duty to make reasonable adjustments in the Equality Act 2010 because the tree is causing an obstruction (see section 20 of that Act), or
 - a duty in section 29 of that Act (prohibitions on discrimination etc in the provision of services) because the tree is causing an obstruction, or
- the felling of the street tree is required for the purpose of carrying out development authorised by:
 - planning permission granted under section 70, 73, 76D, 77 or 79 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or
 - outline planning permission granted under section 92 of that Act.

Plymouth City Council are then required under a statutory duty to consult with the Public when removing a street tree on an unclassified urban road that is not a trunk road where an exemption does not apply.



Street Tree Options Assessment Report

(Template – aligned with Tree Management Principles 2025)

1. Site and Tree Details

- Location:
- Tree Species:
- Tree ID/Reference:
- Ownership:
- Survey Date:
- Surveyor:

2. Reason for Assessment

- ☐ Routine inspection
- ☐ Reported damage/defect
- ☐ Highway obstruction
- ☐ Development proposal
- ☐ Other (specify):

3. Tree Condition and Risk Assessment

- Health and Structural Condition: (Summarise findings from QTRA/VTA or other assessment)
- Risk to Public/Property: (Likelihood of failure, potential impact, HSE risk thresholds)
- Legal/Statutory Considerations:
 - TPO/Conservation Area status
 - Highways Act compliance
 - Environment Act duties
 - Street Tree Impact Assessment Matrix score
 - Red/ Amber/ Green

3.1 - Consultation and Engagement

- Is statutory consultation required?
 - ☐ Yes (Environment Act/Highways Act triggers met)
 - ☐ No (exemption applies – specify)

4. Site Constraints and Opportunities

- Footway/Carriageway Width:
- Proximity to Utilities/Services:
- Visibility Splays:

- Proximity to Buildings/Boundaries:
- Drainage Issues:
- Other Trees/Vegetation:
- Street Furniture/Lighting/Signage:
- Accessibility (Equality Act):
- Tree Equity/Canopy Cover Considerations:

5. Environmental Impact Assessment

Consider and summarise the following:

- Biodiversity Value:
 - Presence of nesting birds, bats, or other protected species
 - Contribution to local habitat connectivity (green corridors, pollinator routes)
- Ecosystem Services Provided:
 - Carbon sequestration (reference i-Tree Eco data if available)
 - Air quality improvement
 - Rainwater interception and flood mitigation
 - Urban cooling/shade provision
- Amenity and Landscape Value:
 - Visual contribution to streetscape/character
 - Contribution to canopy cover and tree equity targets
 - Social and health benefits (wellbeing, noise reduction)
- [CAVAT valuation](#)
- Potential Negative Impacts of Removal:
 - Loss of shade, increased surface temperatures
 - Reduced air quality or increased runoff
 - Impact on local wildlife
- Mitigation/Enhancement Measures:
 - Replacement planting (species, location, timing)
 - Habitat creation/enhancement (e.g., deadwood retention, wildflower planting)
 - Community engagement in replanting or stewardship

6. Options Considered

Tick and describe all that apply, referencing the Principles document and Feasibility Checklist.

Option	Description	Feasibility	Pros	Cons
Retain and monitor				
Prune (specify works)				
Install root barrier				
Footway build-out				

Reconstruct footway/kerb				
Remove and replant (same site)				
Remove and replant (nearby)				
Other (specify)				

7. Consultation and Engagement

- Is statutory consultation required?
 - ☐ Yes (Environment Act/Highways Act triggers met)
 - ☐ No (exemption applies – specify)
- Stakeholders Consulted:
 - Residents
 - Ward Councillors
 - Plan for Trees Steering Group
 - Others (specify)
- Consultation Method:
 - Website notice
 - Site notice
 - Letters
 - Meetings
- Consultation Period:
- Feedback Summary:

8. Officer Recommendation

- Preferred Option:
- Justification: (Reference to risk, legal duties, public feedback, environmental/social/economic factors)
- Replacement Plan: (Species, location, timing, community involvement)

9. Decision and Sign-off

- Decision Maker:
- Date:
- Decision:
- Publication/Notification Details:



10. Appendices

- Site photos
- Tree survey data
- Consultation responses
- Maps/plans
- Relevant correspondence



Appendix 2 – Tree Services Guide for Councillors



230131 Tree Services
guide complete.pdf



Appendix 3 – Plan for Trees Partnership Agreement

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) – Plymouth Plan for Trees Partnership

PURPOSE OF THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Plymouth's trees and woods form the green framework to the city and beyond, bringing beauty and character to deliver a wide range of other benefits including:

- Quality of life (tackling poor air quality, promoting physical and mental health, exercise, amenity and recreation).
- Landscape, Streetscape and biodiversity (framing streets, views and vistas. Helping habitats become more robust to adapt to climate change, buffering and extending fragmented ancient woodland).
- History and culture with many trees dating from the Victorian era and before - and now requiring management.
- Mitigating climate change (flood amelioration, urban cooling).
- Supporting the local economy (timber, craft and wood fuel markets).

However, these trees and woods are under pressure from development, neglect, old age, climate change and budgetary pressures. They are appreciated by many but the responsibility of a few – and are thus at risk of gradual loss and decline at a time when there is a demonstrable need to *increase* canopy cover in urban areas, for people and for nature.

Plymouth's Plan for Trees will drive changes that will ensure that trees in our urban areas become a benefit for present and future communities, resilient to the challenges of climate change and disease, and adaptable to whatever new challenges the future may hold.

This non-exclusive, mutually beneficial agreement is made on [10/07/2025] between Plymouth Tree People, Plymouth City Council, Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest, Plymouth Community Homes, Plymouth Open Spaces Network, Woodland Trust and National Trust (the "**parties**"). The parties wish to record the basis on which they will extend their collaboration with each other to work together to support the development and delivery of the Plymouth Plan for Trees and the vision and principles which will underpin this work as well as the Plan for Trees Delivery Programme (as defined in separate document), inclusive stakeholders beyond the programme membership. This MoU sets out the intended objectives of the Programme, the principles of collaboration and the parties' respective responsibilities and activities. It will provide a reference point throughout the Programme.



This MoU does not imply any legal partnership, joint venture, or contract, nor does it affect each party's ability to work with other parties. Neither party shall hold itself out as agent for the other party and neither party shall have authority to enter into any agreement or incur any liability or obligations on behalf of the other party at any time.

**PARTIES**

Name, Registered Name and short name:	Plymouth Tree People (" PTP ")	Plymouth Open Space Network (" POSN ")	Plymouth City Council (" PCC ")
Registered Number:	Registered Charity no: 1161565	TBC	NA
Description:	PTP is a membership organisation dedicated to furthering the value of trees in the city of Plymouth and registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation	TBC	Plymouth City Council is a unitary authority
Property/Location:	Poole Farm, Blunts Lane, Estover, Plymouth, PL6 8NF	TBC	Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth

Name, Registered Name and short name:	Plymouth Community Homes (" PCH ")	Woodand Trust (" WT ")	National Trust (" NT ")
Registered Number:	TBC	TBC	TBC
Description:	TBC	TBC	TBC
Property/Location:	TBC	TBC	TBC



Name, Registered Name and short name:	Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest		
Registered Number:	N/A		
Description:	PSDCF is a Joint Venture partnership comprising; Plymouth City Council as lead partner; National Trust; Woodland Trust; Devon County Council; South Hams and West Devon Councils; Dartmoor National Park Authority		
Property/Location:	Ballard House, West Hoe Road, Plymouth		

OUTLINE OF THE PARTIES' INTENTIONS

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	<p>Our collaborative approach seeks to build and expand on existing good practice in Plymouth, as set out in the Plymouth Plan for Trees under the four key principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote – To <i>promote</i> the benefits and value of our trees and woods through education and encouraging best practice. 2. Protect - To <i>protect</i> Plymouth's special trees and woods for future generations. 3. Care - To <i>care</i> for our trees and woods by practising and promoting good tree and woodland management.
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	<p>4. Enhance - To enhance neighbourhoods by selecting, growing and planting high-quality trees that also increase canopy cover and tree diversity.</p> <p>Each party agrees to support Plymouth's Plan for Trees vision and core principles set out above. We will work in collaboration and with a spirit of openness and trust to produce and promote Plymouth's Plan for Trees and associated Delivery Programme and to deliver this vision in accordance with these principles. We will endorse the Plan and act as members of the Plymouth Plan for Trees Steering Group to monitor, review and advise on the delivery of Plymouth's Plan for Trees in accordance with the terms of this MoU.</p>
TERM AND TIMINGS	<p>The proposed start date of the Programme is 10th July 2025.</p> <p>The proposed end date of the Programme is 30th April 2030</p> <p>An annual review of group membership will take place, at agreed meeting dates in the Summer of each year</p> <p>A full review will take place every three years into the Programme to assess how partners are delivering against the Programme aims and objectives and report to respective Leadership Teams of each of the Parties.</p> <p>This will give partners the options to refine and recommit to another three-year period.</p> <p>Programme delivery will be monitored by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for Trees Steering Group. • Highlight report to Leadership Teams in respective bodies on annual basis.
PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION	<p>The parties agree to the following principles of collaboration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver solutions at scale and be ambitious for the future of the city of Plymouth, its citizens and its urban forest.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Enable innovation: pioneer new models of delivery and act as a catalyst for change across Plymouth, the region and the UK. 3. Combine strengths: to deliver more together than we can alone and combine resources, capacity and expertise to increase our collective impact. 4. Act as a critical friend, champion and advocate, mitigating risks, overcoming barriers and pursuing opportunities. 5. Build trust and act in good faith, fostering mutual confidence between teams and presumption of sharing relevant data and information. 6. Strive for continual improvement, through a learning and sharing mentality and a working culture that is agile, iterative and fast-paced and appropriately risk taking. 7. Protect the partners: Adhere to statutory requirements and best practice: comply with applicable laws and standards including in respect of health and safety, data protection and processing. 8. Ensure that working practices are inclusive, enabling organisations and communities to be fully engaged and can participate with the delivery of the programme.
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INTENDED DELIVERABLES

DELIVERABLES	<p>Through the Programme, the Partners will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver the objectives set out in the Plan for Trees delivery programme. 2. Support the activities of Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest 3. Shared communications activities and plans related to the aims and objectives, enabling full visibility and preparation of public communications and engagement materials
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Act as a critical friend for proposed development activity to be delivered by any of the parties 5. Map existing resources and investment programmes and seek additional resources to close the gaps and robustly meet the challenges facing all the organisations. 6. Deliver a programme that collectively improves tree equity of the city at an accelerated pace. 7. Utilise the enhanced collaboration to seek new opportunities for skills development and development of green jobs in the City. 8. Design and deliver interventions in a manner which maximises the impacts for other aligned programmes of work including specifically climate resilience (drought and flood) and delivering the greatest benefits for people and nature. 9. Attendant projects and activities related to the aims and objectives the Steering Group
FINANCING OF THE PROJECT	<p><i>The partnership will utilise existing resources to develop and deliver the Plan for Trees Delivery Programme detailed in this agreement. The greatest benefit will be the alignment of these existing resources. Delivery and innovation of approach will require funding. This will be drawn from existing programmes, but better alignment will ensure added value. In addition, the partnership will work collaboratively to secure further funding for innovations in approach.</i></p>
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	<p>All Intellectual Property Rights developed or created by respective parties pursuant to the Programme shall be owned by respective parties.</p> <p>Each party grants to the other party a non-exclusive, personal, royalty free licence during the Term of the Programme to use Intellectual Property generated for the purposes of the Programme.</p> <p>All Intellectual Property Rights not developed or created by a party pursuant to the Programme but owned or controlled by a party and made available by such party to the other for use in relation to the</p>

	<p>Programme (“Background IPR”) shall remain in the ownership of the relevant party.</p> <p>Each party shall immediately give written notice to the other party of any actual, threatened or suspected infringement of any party's Intellectual Property Rights used in connection with the Project of which it becomes aware.</p> <p>“Intellectual Property Rights” means all patents, rights to inventions, copyright and related rights, moral rights, trademarks, trade names and domain names, rights in get-up, rights in goodwill or to sue for passing off, rights in designs, rights in computer software, database rights, rights in confidential information (including know-how and trade secrets) and any other intellectual property rights, in each case whether registered or unregistered and including all applications (or rights to apply) for, and renewals or extensions of, such rights and all similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection which may now or in the future subsist in any part of the world.</p> <p>If valuable intellectual property is to be produced by the parties as part of joint commission, a binding contract with specific IP provisions could be explored.</p>
ORGANISATIONAL SPONSORS	<p>PCC Sponsor: Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change (Cllr Tom Briars-Delve at time of signing)</p> <p>PTP Sponsor: Chair of PTP, Penny Tarrant</p> <p>...</p>
KEY CONTACTS	<p>The key contacts shall be responsible for the day-to-day running of the Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCC: Chris Avent, Green Estate Manager, Plymouth City Council Email chris.avent@plymouth.gov.uk • PTP: penny.tarrant@plymouthtrees.org • NT: laura.jones3@nationaltrust.org.uk • WT: rosiewalker@woodlandtrust.org.uk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POSN: Dave Curno • PCH: Joe berryman • PSDCF: Peter Hawking-Sach, Manager Email peter.hawking-sach@plymouth.gov.uk
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	<p>If any party has a conflict of interest, then they should declare this to the partnership group in the spirit of transparency.</p> <p>A conflict of interest in the context of this group is any professional, private or personal interest that could affect a member's ability to deal with a particular matter in accordance with the principles set out in this MoU.</p> <p>How an interest should be managed depends on three factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the degree of involvement of the individual in the decision or discussion • how directly related the interest or relationship is to the decision or discussion in question • how significant the interest or relationship is to the individual <p>Where these factors are minor, then simply declaring the interest may be sufficient. Where the factors are significant, an individual should not deal with the matter for the council and might have to pass over any decision-making responsibilities to someone else.</p>
ESCALATION	<p>If either party has any issues, concerns or complaints about the Programme, or any matter in this MoU, that party shall notify the other party's key contacts and the parties shall then seek to resolve the issue by a process of consultation. If the matter cannot be resolved by the key contacts within 14 days, the matter may be escalated to the Sponsors for resolution.</p>
ANNOUNCEMENTS	<p>The parties when making any public announcement or communication concerning the Programme (an "Announcement") shall consult together on the timing, contents and manner of release of any Announcement, and put in place communications protocols and joint working between our teams to support this. When making any public announcement or communication on matters outside of the Programme across the range of work that both Partners do separately,</p>

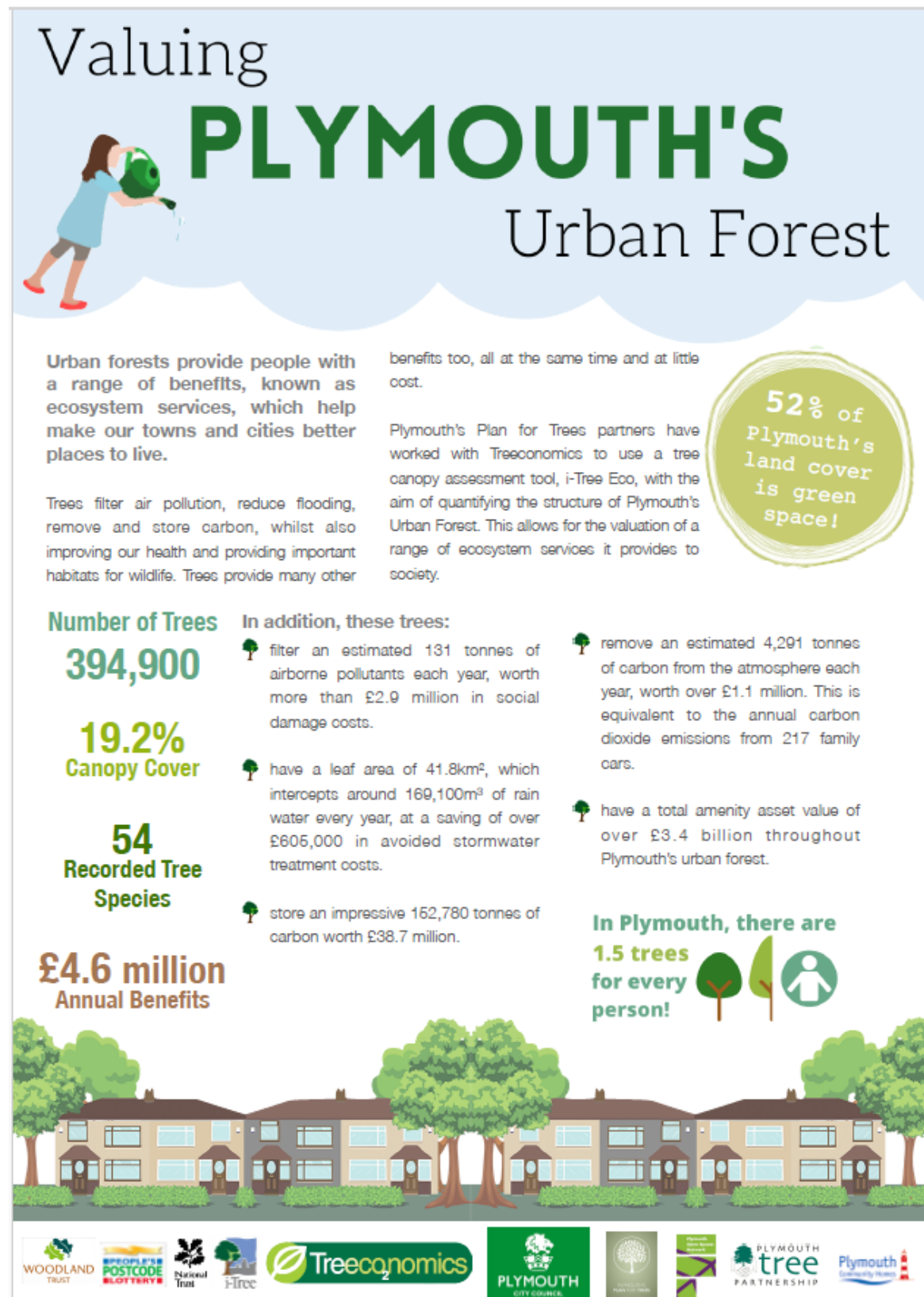
	<p>the Partners will give prior notice and ensure a transparent and effective flow of communications, particularly where it may impact on the other Partner in terms of reputation or brand.</p> <p>Wherever possible the parties shall agree the content of such Announcements prior to publication.</p> <p>Neither party shall use the trade marks of the other party without that party's prior consent.</p>
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MISCELLANEOUS

TERMINATION & REVIEW	<p>Whilst this Programme is ongoing, this MoU and membership of the group will be reviewed on an annual basis on or around its anniversary to ensure that it is still fit for purpose by the Steering Group.</p> <p>The terms of this MoU may be amended at any time by mutual written consent.</p>
DATA PROTECTION	<p>a) Each party shall ensure that it and its contractors and staff engaged in the Programme do not cause the other party to breach any laws relating to personal data or privacy in force from time to time ('Data Protection Laws') and that it complies with those Data Protection Laws.</p> <p>b) The Parties do not expect that the Partners shall process personal data on behalf of the other Partner in connection with the Programme. In the event that a Partner does process personal data on behalf of the other Party, the Partner shall notify the other Party immediately in writing and shall enter into a data processing agreement, and where necessary complete a Data Protection Risk Assessment.</p>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	<p>Each party acknowledges that PTP is a registered charity and membership organisation and is obliged to operate within its charitable objectives.</p> <p>Each party acknowledges that PCC is an upper-tier local authority and is obliged to operate within its powers and apply its resources in accordance with its statutory objects.</p>
GOVERNING LAW	<p>This MoU shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law.</p>

Appendix 4 – i-Tree Eco Survey Report or Summary



What Is i-Tree Eco?

A state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software suite from the US Department of Agriculture Forest Service. i-Tree Eco quantifies the structure and functions of community trees & urban forests.

It is adaptable to multiple scales from a single tree to area-wide assessments. It's also open source and free to use.



How?

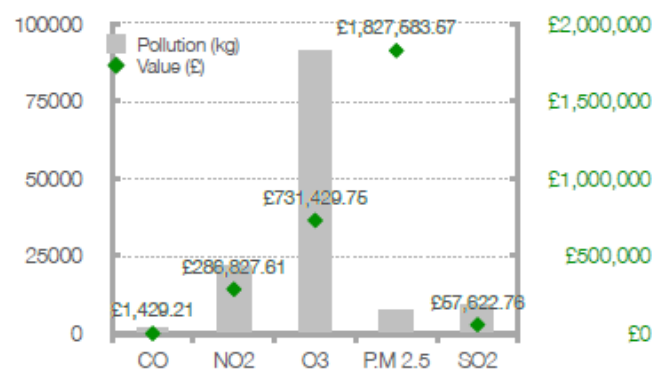
To gather a collective representation of Plymouth's urban forest across both public and private land, a field-based assessment was undertaken using i-Tree Eco. 280 randomly allocated plots were surveyed, representing 0.14% of the total study area.

Information on the plot was recorded, including land use, ground cover, % tree cover, % shrub cover, % plantable space, and % impermeable ground. Within the plot, tree information was also recorded. This includes tree and shrub species, height, trunk diameter, canopy spread, health and fullness of the canopy, light exposure and life expectancy.

This data was then scaled-up across the study area to give a representative estimation of the structure of Plymouth's urban forest and the benefits it provides.

Ecosystem services are directly related to photosynthetic area. Trees with a larger surface area can hold greater amounts of air pollution or rainfall within the canopy.

The chart below illustrates the quantity and value of individual pollutants removed by Plymouth's trees.



Plymouth's Most Common Tree Species:
Oak, Sycamore and Ash

Conclusions

Plymouth's trees provide a valuable benefit to its community through the delivery of ecosystem services.

However, there are challenges too. For example, the Acute Oak Decline disease threatens around 17% of Plymouth's tree resource, and this could have a devastating effect on the provision of tree benefits.

Understanding urban forest composition is the first step in the proactive management of this important resource.

What Next?

Now we can begin to strategically plan to improve and maintain our urban forest. Through targeted planting, diversifying, monitoring, community engagement, training and a whole range of other activities, we can ensure that Plymouth's urban forest continues to provide benefits long into the future.



Treeconomics Limited is a social enterprise, an organisation that applies commercial strategies to maximise improvements in human and environmental wellbeing, rather than growing profits for external shareholders.



Appendix 5 – Highways Tree planting feasibility checklist

Key:

**Non-
negotiable**

**Other
Consideration**

Step	Consideration	Description/Rationale
1	Can you see any overhead power cables?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although the easements needed for each respective service providers differ, we would generally avoid planting trees close enough to overhead cables where their canopy expected at maturity would interfere
2	Is the pavement more than 2m wide?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 120cm retained on the footpath side of planting and 45cm retained from the kerbside to the kerbside face of the tree trunk, taking several factors into consideration including tree size at maturity, therefore standardising a 35cm tree stem diameter at ground level at maturity, 120cm + 45cm + 35cm, the footpath must be 2m+ wide
3	Visibility splay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provision of adequate visibility for all highway users is essential for their safety. If your site is adjacent to a carriageway, standing in the middle of the highway 2.5m away from the give way line. If the extent of your site is within the splay where trees would block the view when checking for oncoming traffic, pedestrians etc., then tree planting is not feasible
4	How close is the site to the nearest building, wall etc?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility of damage and considerations around trees growing irregularly due to excessive shading. If your site is within 5m of the nearest building, retaining or boundary wall etc. then tree planting is not feasible
5	Is there evidence of existing blocked drainage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debris from trees can negatively impact the function of drainage systems, however opportunities might also exist for some of the drainage and water management needs of the site to be fully or partially involved through the integration of the trees with sustainable urban drainage (SUDS) components
6	What is the width of the whole highway incl. pavements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although site specific and based on a number of factors incl. aspect, direction of prevailing wind, tree characteristics, and tree management regimes, the total width of the highway should be considered when designing a scheme to reduce the likelihood of a street canyon effect.

7	Desire Lines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire lines are informal footpaths created by foot fall, showing a want by site users to follow a particular route which isn't formally maintained as a path. Trees can be used to enhance these desire lines or create a new route/ point of interest
8	How busy would you say the highway is?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On busy streets traffic can quickly increase the decomposition time and blow falling leaves aside, limiting the risk of slippery surfaces due to compacted wet leaves on hardstanding. On smaller streets and cycle paths this will be different, and pedestrians as well as 'lighter' traffic such as cycles and scooters can be at a higher risk of slipping
9	Are there any solar panels next to the site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't want to block light from solar panels, consider aspect, shading at peak times of the day
10	Are there other trees close to the site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management prescriptions of adjacent assets, assess health of existing tree stock, presence of pests and diseases, funding eligibility etc.
11	Are there any commercial signs and store fronts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies show that trees in retail area positively affect shopper perception and increased time spent in the retail area. However, trees could block store fronts and reduce visibility of signs and shop windows.
12	Are there security cameras on site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees have a potential to obstruct visibility lines of security cameras, reducing public safety.
13	Are there streetlights on site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees have a potential to obstruct light splay from streetlights, security lights etc, reducing public safety.
14	What is the highway speed limit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence shows that trees are one of the three main traffic calming measures. Trees, especially when planted on both sides of the street create a sense of enclosure that discourages drivers from speeding
15	Line of sight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely not a major consideration in heavily built-up areas we will be targeting, however viewpoints and sightlines towards aesthetically pleasing vistas, memorial/commemorative statues, murals etc. should be noted

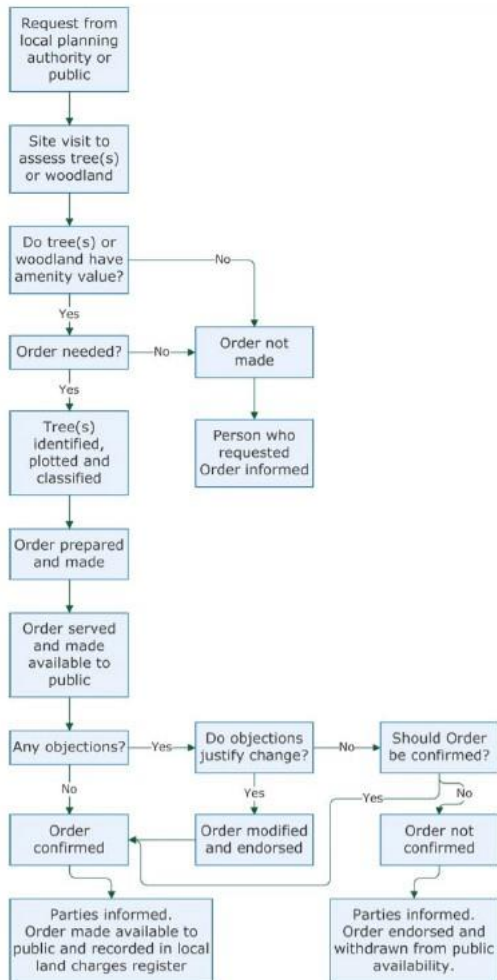
16

Does the scheme propose to replace bollards or other road traffic management equipment?

- Trees cannot be used in lieu of bollards if this puts them closer than 45cm of the highway

Appendix 6 – Making and Confirming a TPO Flowchart

Flowchart 1: Making and confirming a Tree Preservation Order



Tree Management Principles 2025



Background



- Plymouth City Council manages ~70,000 trees across public land.
- Trees in the city deliver £4.6M annually in ecosystem services (carbon, air quality, flood mitigation).
- Integral to identity and resilience but face urban development and climate pressures.
- Updated in 2025 to align with Environment Act 2021 and best practice.

Tree Management Principles 2025

Purpose of the document



Ensure public safety via risk-based inspections and maintenance.

Define criteria for tree works (felling, pruning, replacement).

Integrate tree management with planning and infrastructure projects.

Promote community engagement and transparency.

Support urban forestry goals: canopy cover, biodiversity, tree equity.

Tree Management Principles 2025



Review process



- Driven by Environment Act 2021 and local commitments (Armada Way Review).
- Internal review by council officers across departments.
- External review by Plan for Trees Steering Group (partners: Woodland Trust, National Trust, etc.).
- Final comments from scrutiny committee to be incorporated.
- Ongoing 5-year reviews with partner input and legislative updates.

Tree Management Principles 2025



Key Changes for 2025–2030



- Risk-Based Management: Expanded QTRA use and proactive surveys.
- Compliance: Full implementation of Environment Act 2021 duties.
- Urban Forestry: 6,000 new trees via Community Forest by 2030.
- Integration: Trees embedded in highways and public realm schemes.
- Community Engagement: Greater involvement and heritage promotion.

Tree Management Principles 2025



Summary



- Framework prioritises safety, transparency, and sustainability.
- Trees embedded in planning and infrastructure projects.
- More equitable tree distribution and climate resilience.
- Stronger public engagement ensures trees remain vital assets.

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Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel

Work Programme 2025/26



Please note that the work programme is a ‘live’ document and subject to change at short notice. The information in this work programme is intended to be of strategic relevance.

For general enquiries relating to the Council’s Scrutiny function, including this Committee’s work programme, please contact Hannah Chandler-Whiting (Democratic Advisor) on 01752 305155.

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for Consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member/Lead Officer
09 July 2025	Plan for Homes 4: Year 1 Progress Report	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Penberthy/Matt Garrett/Nick Carter/Neil Mawson
	Economic Intelligence and Insight	Standing Item	Standing Item	David Draffan/Amanda Ratsey/Lauren Paton
	Productive Growth and High Value Jobs (Economic Strategy Pillar 1)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Evans OBE/David Draffan/Amanda Ratsey/Richard Davies
	Freeport Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Evans OBE/Richard May/Ian Cooper
Site Visit 15 August 2025	Naval Base Tour			
10 September 2025	Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5)	4	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Cresswell/David Draffan/Tina Brinkworth/Amanda Davis
Site Visit 07 October 2025	Tinside Tour			

15 October 2025	Inclusive Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 2)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Penberthy/Anna Peachey/Amanda Ratsey/Lindsey Hall
	Plan for Nature and People	4	Added at agenda set 10 Sept 2025	Cllr Briars-Delve/Kat Deeney
	Brand Strategy	3	Added by Chair 18 Sept 2025	Cllr Evans OBE/Amanda Lumley
	The Box Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Laing/Victoria Pomery/Rebecca Bridgman
03 December 2025	Sustainable Growth (Economic Strategy Pillar 3) (To include Economic Intelligence and Insight)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Briars-Delve/Amanda Ratsey/Richard Stevens
	Tree Management Principles Document	5	As part of a Council Motion/pre-decision scrutiny	Cllr Briars-Delve/Kat Deeney
	Plymouth Plan Update and Review	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Stephens/Paul Barnard/Jonathan Bell/Rebecca Miller/Sarah Gooding
	Plymouth Local Plan: Next Steps and Timetable	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Stephens/Paul Barnard/Jonathan Bell/Rebecca Miller
	Civic Pride and Regeneration (Economic Strategy Pillar 4)	4	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Evans/Matt Ward/Victoria Pomery/Chris Duggan/Sheila Nethercott

04 February 2026	Visitor Plan/Culture Plan Annual update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Laing/Hannah Harris/Amanda Lumley/James McKenzie Blackman/Paul Fieldsend-Danks
	Chelson Meadow Solar Farm	5	Agreed via recommendation at the March 2023 meeting that there would be an update. Officers confirmed June 2025 that there was an update.	Cllr Briars-Delve/Kat Deeney
	Port Strategy	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Evans/Amanda Ratsey
	National Marine Park Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Evans/Cllr Briars-Delve/Elaine Hayes/Kat Deeney
	Plymouth Waterfront Partnership - 2027-32 Business Improvement District	4	Suggestion by officers November 2025	Cllr Evans/David Draffan/Patrick Knight
Items to be scheduled for 2025/26				
2025/26	Plymouth Plan Full Council Motion (To ensure that play was embedded into the plan and that it set a framework for a play delivery plan		Action from City Council 18 September 2023. Officers have committed to covering this during items at December 2025 meeting.	Cllr Stephens/Jonathan Bell

	with targeted interventions)			
Items to be scheduled for 2026/27				
July 2025	Draft Net Zero Action Plan 2026-29 & Draft Net Zero Route Map (Move to July)	3	Added for 2025/26	Cllr Briars-Delve/Paul Barnard/Jonathan Bell
2026/27	Freeport Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Evans OBE/David Draffan/Ian Cooper
2026/27	Update on Plan for Homes inc modelling on long term impact new homes/jobs impact will have on rent	4	Action from 09 July 2025 Panel meeting. To include Min 4ll	Cllr Penberthy/Paul Barnard/Nick Carter
2026/27	Strategic Heat Network Procurement	5	Identified for consideration at the October 2024 meeting.	Cllr Briars-Delve/John Green/Jonathan Selman
2026/27	The Box Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Laing/Victoria Pomery
2026/27	Plymouth Plan for Nature and People Action Plan Annual Update	3	Annual Update	Cllr Briars-Delve/Chris Avent/Kat Deeney
2026/27	Civic Centre	5	Added following Cabinet action March 2025	Cllr Evans OBE/David Draffan
2026/27	City Centre Master-planning	4	Added following a work programming session with SMB in Aug 2025	Cllr Evans OBE/Stuart Wingfield/Emma Wilson
2026/27	Co-op Strategy	4	Added prior to pre meet on 10 June 2024.	Cllr Penberthy/Anna Peachey/ Amanda Ratsey
2026/27	Commercial Estate	4	Identified for consideration by the	Cllr Penberthy/David Draffan

			Committee at the February 2022 meeting.	
Items Identified for Select Committee Reviews				
2026/27	Water/Flooding		Identified for consideration at the 15 October 2025 meeting	

Scrutiny Prioritisation Tool

		Yes (=1)	Evidence
P ublic Interest	Is it an issue of concern to partners, stakeholders and/or the community?		
A bility	Could Scrutiny have an influence?		
P erformance	Is this an area of underperformance?		
E xtent	Does the topic affect people living, working, or studying in more than one electoral ward of Plymouth?		
R eplication	Will this be the only opportunity for public scrutiny?		
	Is the topic due planned to be the subject of an Executive Decision?		
Total:			High/Medium/Low

Priority	Score
High	5-6
Medium	3-4
Low	1-2

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel – Action Log 2025/26

Key:	
	Complete
	In Progress
	Not Started
	On Hold

Minute No.	Resolution	Target Date, Officer Responsible and Progress
Minute 63 City Centre Update 10 October 2022	Full report regarding for the aborted start to the Old Town Street and New George Street project.	Date Due: 30 November 2025 Officer: Nick Carter Progress: COMPLETE. Briefing note circulated 24 November 2025.
Minute 90 Tracking Decisions 1 March 2023	Request for regular updates on the Habitat Banking Vehicle.	Date Due: Ongoing Officer: Chris Avent Progress: Agreement to provide updates to Committee Members via Democratic Support at suitable milestones for the project. Latest update shared with members February 2025. Asked for update 13 August 2025.
Minute 34 Draft NZAP 2025-2028 12 February 2025	The Panel recommended developing a Climate Communications Plan to include making information more accessible via the Plymouth City Council Website.	Date Due: December 2025 Responsible Officer: Christopher Parsons Progress: This recommendation is currently under active consideration by the Net Zero Delivery Team and the Corporate Communications Team. Update August 2025: Teams from Net Zero and Corporate Communication continue to work together closely on planning and executing communications around a number of important

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel – Action Log 2025/26

		NZAP actions. Conversations on producing not just a plan, but also an overarching strategic narrative to determine how we talk about, include and engage our residents on net zero have been fruitful and the drafting is ongoing. Alongside this, and to ensure we get this right, we are engaging partners to ensure that any potential messaging resonates and can be effectively rolled out. Meanwhile, Climate Connections continues to be a busy online hub for Plymouth's climate endeavours and has been prolific in terms of raising awareness of and promoting pro-climate messaging from the Council and its partners.
Minute 34 Draft NZAP 2025-2028 12 February 2025	The Panel recommended that the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change seek to secure ratchet funding in future years and to ask Finance to review any future caps to ensure the money was set aside and could be added to.	Date Due: March 2026 Responsible Officer: Paul Barnard/Emmanuelle Marshall Progress: This recommendation is currently under active consideration by the Net Zero Delivery Team and the Finance Department. Following the consideration of options, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change and Cabinet Member for Finance will review the position ahead of the 2026/2027 budget setting process.
Minute 13o Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5) 10 September 2025	A written response would be provided about whether military communications were to be improved within Devonport dockyard.	Date Due: 31 December 2025 Responsible Officer: TBC Progress: Advised 24 November 2025 that the team could not respond and it would be best if the Councillor raised it direct to MOD. Awaiting confirmation of way to do this.
Minute 13p	More information would be provided with regards to data on the specific job roles that would make up the 25,000	Date Due: 28 February 2026 Responsible Officer: Toby Hall

Natural Infrastructure and Growth Scrutiny Panel – Action Log 2025/26

Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5) 10 September 2025	additional workers needed in Plymouth within the next 10 years.	Progress: Data won't be ready for some months. Catch-up with officers scheduled for February 2026.
Minute 13ccc Skills (Economic Strategy Pillar 5) 10 September 2025	Data would be provided on how many Councils had chosen to deliver the [Connect to Work] programme in-house and how many had commissioned, but most had chosen to take a blended approach.	Date Due: February 2026 Responsible Officer: David Wales Progress: Data won't be ready for some months. Catch-up with officers scheduled for February 2026.
Tinside Site Visit 07 October 2025	It was agreed that information on Tinside's features on Countryfile and Spotlight would be shared, along with more information on blue therapy.	Date Due: 21 October 2025 Responsible Officer: Tors Froud Progress: Information sent to Panel members via email 15 October 2025.
Minute 21j The Box Update 15 October 2025	Enquired how many visitors to Plymouth had visited The Box which the team explained they did not have to hand but could provide through Destination Plymouth	Date Due: 10 November 2025 Responsible Officer: Amanda Lumley Progress: Informationsent to Panel members via email 04 November 2025.
Minute 21k The Box Update 15 October 2025	Asked whether local visitor travel area was beyond the boundary of the travel to work area.	Date Due: 13 November 2025 Responsible Officer: Victoria Pomery/Abigail Netcott Progress: Response sent to Panel members via email on 13 November 2025.

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