

GREENING THE TREE DESERTS

POLICY REPORT JULY 2026



WOODLAND
TRUST

FOREWORD

Darren Moorcroft

Chief Executive, Woodland Trust

Nine out of ten people agree that the sights, sounds and smells of woodland nature are good for them and make them feel better.¹ But only 14% of people have a woodland they can visit within an easy walk of their home.²

In the towns and cities where most people live,³ our deep desire to connect with woods and nature finds a home in our local trees, parks and other green spaces. A 2025 survey showed these are viewed as the most important aspect of a local area by communities across the country, consistently ranking above public services and transport.⁴

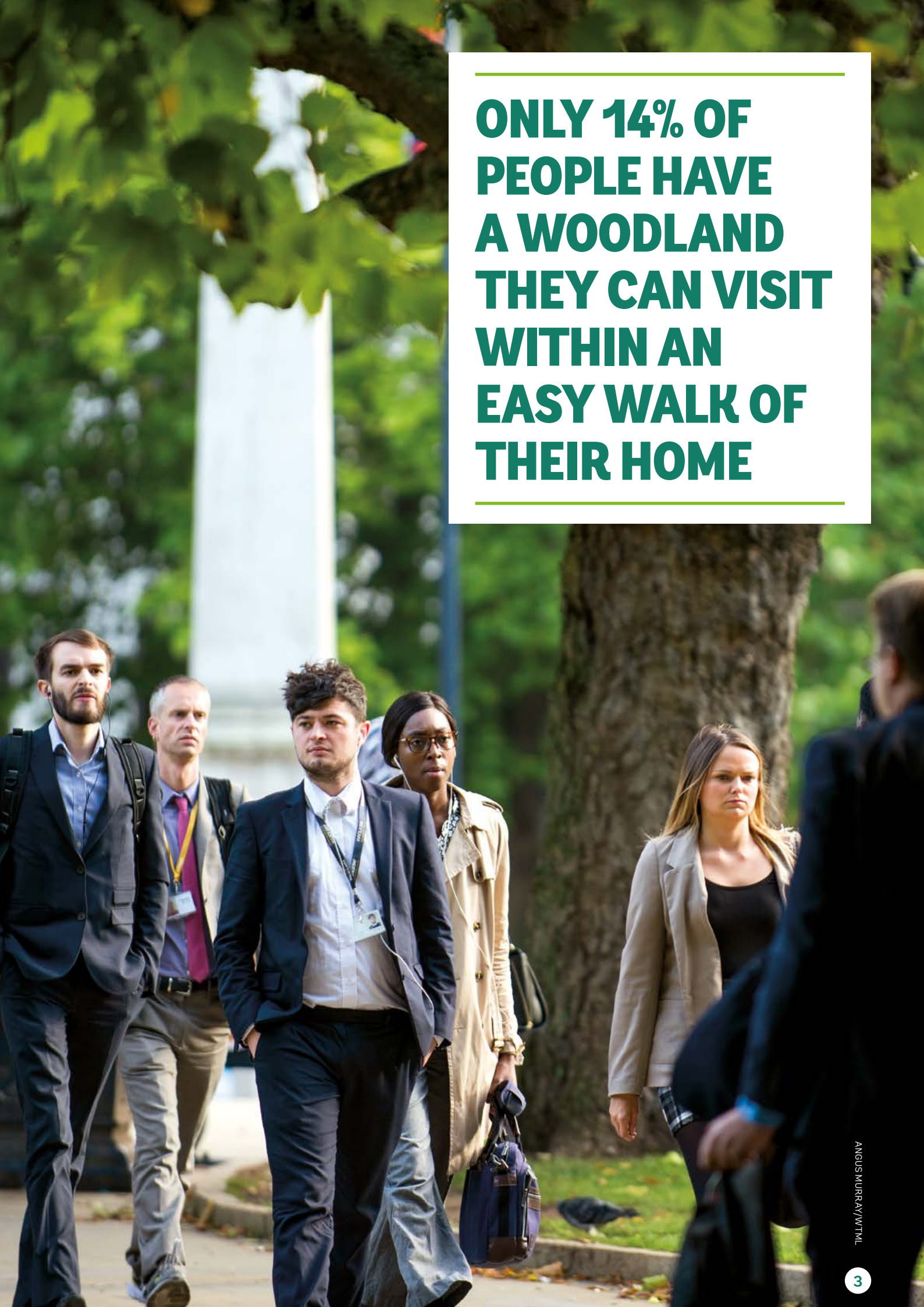
What communities recognise intuitively is supported by a growing body of evidence. Trees and green infrastructure play a significant role in shaping environmental conditions, health outcomes and the quality of everyday life, particularly in urban areas.

At the Woodland Trust we believe that everyone should have access to the benefits of trees, whatever their background. Trees and woods do not just make us feel good. Neighbourhoods that are rich in trees are better able to cope with the impacts of climate change, like flooding and extreme summer heat.^{5/6} And the more trees there are in the area you live, the better your physical and mental health are likely to be.⁷

Our urban treescapes can be a mirror of social divides and injustice. On average the most affluent neighbourhoods in England have double the number of trees compared to the least affluent.⁸ And data on tree cover tends to intersect with and follow the data on public health and ethnic diversity. On average, England's towns and cities have a third less tree cover than the rest of Europe.⁹ We do not have enough urban trees,¹⁰ and disadvantaged communities are missing out the most.

The fight for tree equity needs support at national, local and community level. Allocating just 20% of promised national investment in trees to urban areas, and focusing this in the 'tree deserts' where canopy cover is scarce, would be transformative. We are calling for a national action plan to green our tree deserts.

Tree Equity Score UK means anyone can now access data on tree cover, heat, and air pollution. This data tells us where trees are most needed. But it's critical to involve communities so that trees are planted where they are wanted too.



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Birmingham. On many streets trees and cars need to be integrated to ensure there is room for both.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	6
INTRODUCTION	12
TREE DESERTS AND AN UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENT	14
HOW TREES REDUCE FIVE KEY RISKS FOR COMMUNITIES	16
TAKING ACTION	21
CASE STUDIES	27
FURTHER READING AND LINKS	31
REFERENCES	33

SUMMARY

Urban trees and woods are vital infrastructure that we can't live without. But millions of people have to.

Like other infrastructure, trees provide the things we need for daily life – shade on hot days, a barrier against air pollution, privacy and screening, contact with nature; all benefits that improve mental and physical wellbeing.

Many of these benefits rely on the trees' proximity. But the number of trees that people live with varies hugely from place to place and trees tend to be concentrated in wealthier areas. In England the average neighbourhood level urban canopy cover is 19.5% but this ranges from just a few percent in some neighbourhoods (for example, in Hartlepool) to more than 40% (for example, in Hampstead, north London).

The Tree Equity Score measures tree cover and a range of other economic, social and environmental metrics to assess every urban neighbourhood in the country for provision of the benefits of trees. A clear picture emerges, where neighbourhoods with lower tree canopy cover are likely to have worse physical and mental health outcomes, lower incomes and poorer living environments.¹¹ Across almost every measure – income, deprivation, health, crime, employment and job stability – areas with fewer trees face higher structural disadvantage.¹²

We know about the leafy suburbs: places where the benefits of trees go hand in hand with higher levels of affluence. But in England 11 million people live in neighbourhoods that have less than 10% canopy cover. These are the tree deserts, where access to the multiple benefits of trees is limited.

Everyone should have access to an environment that supports their health and wellbeing. Increasing tree cover and improving tree equity should be a central part of providing this to the 50+ million people who live in urban areas in England.



Volunteers with Birmingham Tree People, one of the UK's leading community forestry organisations.

IN ENGLAND 11M PEOPLE LIVE IN NEIGHBOURHOODS THAT HAVE LESS THAN 10% CANOPY COVER.

Starting with the most disadvantaged areas, a concerted programme of action at national, local and community level is needed:

1

STRATEGY AND PRIORITISATION

Make tree equity a key theme of the upcoming England Trees Action Plan being developed by Defra, with a clear programme of action, investment and support for high-need urban areas, delivered by local authorities with national support and guidance.

2

GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

Include trees from the design stage of development, ensuring species and location matches purpose.

Develop a common set of standards and targets for retrofitting key public buildings and public spaces to cope with our changing climate, including how trees and other green infrastructure are used to support adaptation.

Extend these standards to schools, hospitals, transport infrastructure, and social housing. Disadvantaged communities must be prioritised as they are more likely to face the impacts of climate change and other environmental risks.¹³

Use the publication of the next National Adaptation Programme (NAP4, due 2028) to set out the new standards along with details of how they will be enacted.

3

INVESTMENT

To make sure as many people as possible benefit from trees, national Government should set a target for a proportion (20%) of the annual increase in England's canopy cover to be met through planting in urban areas. This would support delivery of the Government's legal obligation to increase tree cover from 14.5% to 16.5% by 2050 under the Environment Act.

To prioritise those most at need, Government should back up its commitment to canopy cover expansion with £200m of the £1bn expenditure committed to trees and woods to 2030, to:

Prioritise tree equity in towns and cities through strategic investment in conurbation-wide programmes of planting, management and associated research and development

Provide a multi-year fund for local authorities and voluntary sector partners to support local tree equity projects

Create a cross-departmental team of support and recognition at central government – bringing Defra and MHCLG together to deliver urban tree benefits

Invest in skills and training to ensure that arboricultural expertise to care for urban trees is safeguarded for the future.
Delivering employment and growth now, while making sure that the trees survive to establish and deliver the benefits required.

4

PROTECTION

Set tougher conditions on tree removal in neighbourhoods with very low tree cover, including reviewing the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) system with the aim of making it more effective and integrating climate, health and ecological values into decision making.

LOCAL AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

A low-risk high-impact approach open for all local authorities.

Target areas of greatest need: use the Tree Equity Score or similar to prioritise.

Protect existing trees: retaining existing trees should be a priority.¹⁴

Treat trees as infrastructure, eligible for ongoing investment and maintenance.

Embed trees across planning, including highways, estates and regeneration programmes.

Funding: skilful utilisation of existing resources such as Section 106 agreements.

Reporting: each local authority should publish a light-touch Tree Equity Action Plan and report annually alongside climate or public health updates. Local governments can use the Tree Equity Score to embed equity-based targets into tree strategies to ensure they deliver maximum public benefit.

Supporting communities: local people should be supported to develop and lead their own initiatives to improve and manage their local environment. Investment is needed to mobilise existing groups and create grassroots capacity nationally to deliver tree equity led by local people enhancing their communities.

**WELL LOOKED-AFTER TREES
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HEAT, INTERCEPT RAINFALL
AND SUPPORT GOOD PHYSICAL
AND MENTAL HEALTH.**



INTRODUCTION

MICHAEL COOPER WTML

This report makes the case for more urban trees and woods. It sets out research findings, analysis, case studies and recommended actions needed to make this a reality. As the different case studies show, the Woodland Trust, our partner organisations, local authorities and communities are already taking action across England. We now need national and local government to step up and enable change to happen at the pace and scale necessary to reduce critical risk to urban communities.

ENGLAND'S TREE DESERTS

Inequality and disadvantage are part of the fabric of many of our towns and cities, reflecting long-term structural inequalities that exist in society. If you live in a low-income area, you are also at higher risk of suffering the effects of air pollution, poor physical and mental health and other disadvantages.^{15/16} You are also more likely to have lower levels of tree cover¹⁷ and reduced access to the multiple benefits of trees. Eleven million people live in places where tree canopy cover is lower than 10% – these are tree deserts.

Tree cover disparities between adjacent neighbourhoods can be stark. For example, the Bordesley area of Birmingham has canopy cover of only 4%, while Edgbaston, just a mile away, has tree cover of 37%. This disparity illustrates how access to the environmental, social, health and economic benefits provided by trees can vary dramatically over short distances.

Unpicking entrenched disadvantage is a long-term challenge requiring coordinated action across national and local government with close engagement with communities. Increasing canopy cover through well-chosen and well looked-after trees and green space can improve a sense of place and community cohesion,¹⁸ and also offer a cost-effective way of helping clean the air of pollution, reduce the effects of extreme summer heat, intercept rainfall¹⁹ and support good physical and mental health.

NEIGHBOURHOOD-LEVEL URBAN TREE COVER BY REGION ^{20/21}

Region	Number of urban neighbourhoods	Urban tree canopy cover (%)	Average GDP per head as % of England average
South East	4452	25.5	102%
London	4986	20.8	171%
South West	2376	19.3	88%
Eastern	2691	18.8	88%
West Midlands	3044	18.5	79%
North West	4121	18.2	88%
Yorkshire and the Humber	2801	16.8	81%
East Midlands	2127	16.8	78%
North East	1375	15.2	71%
England	27973	19.5	100%

TREE DESERTS AND AN UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Disadvantage is complex. Social categories including income, age, gender, race, and disability often overlap. To face one set of disadvantages can mean a higher likelihood of facing others.

England is a wealthy country, but also an unequal one. The wealth held by the top 10% of British households is five times greater than that of the bottom 50% combined.²² One-in-five people live in poverty — a proportion that has remained virtually unchanged for 20 years.²³ This inequality is reflected not only in income and wealth, but also in the ability of a neighbourhood to withstand and adapt to risks. Everyone should have access to an environment that supports their health and wellbeing. Increasing tree cover and improving tree equity is a central part of providing this to the 50+ million people who live in urban areas in England.

Overall, tree canopy cover and levels of accessible green space increase as household income increases.²⁴ Urban neighbourhoods with higher percentages of white people tend to have the highest urban canopy cover and green space access. While not true in every situation, canopy cover generally decreases as the proportion of the population from minority ethnic groups non-white groups increases.

High density housing is associated with less green space and fewer trees.²⁵ It is associated with lower incomes and more adults under 30 years of age.^{26/27} Green urban areas that help support the health of people and nature diminish in number and size as population and deprivation increase.²⁸



GREEN URBAN AREAS THAT HELP SUPPORT THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE AND NATURE DIMINISH IN NUMBER AND SIZE AS POPULATION AND DEPRIVATION INCREASE.

Understanding the relationship between tree cover, green space with class and race is complex but very important. These relationships have consequences for a community's disadvantage and to designing, prioritising and implementing measures to improve tree equity and social justice more broadly.

HOW TREES HELP TO FIGHT FIVE KEY RISKS FACING COMMUNITIES

JAMES READER/WTML



1

HEAT

In 2022, temperatures in England breached 40°C for the first time on record. Longer heatwaves and higher temperatures are expected to be features of our future climate. By 2070, summer temperatures are predicted to be 6°C warmer and significantly drier than 1990.²⁹

Urban areas are particularly at risk from higher temperatures associated with climate change. Concrete and tarmac absorb and retain more heat than the natural environment. This can mean city areas are up to 12°C warmer than the surrounding countryside,³⁰ contributing to premature deaths.³¹

Summer shade is urgently needed in many neighbourhoods. More than half of England's 25 million dwellings³² were built before 1965, and over 20% before 1919³³ — a period when average summer temperatures were 5°C lower than that predicted for the middle of this century. Our historic street layouts and buildings are not equipped for the temperature extremes of today.

Between 2020 and 2024, more than 10,000 heat-related deaths were recorded in England, with older people most at risk.³⁴ The NHS estimates that heat-related mortality in England already costs £6.8bn annually. Neighbourhoods with lower levels of tree canopy cover are consistently more exposed to heat risk, reflecting the role of trees in providing shade and in moderating urban temperatures.³⁵ Surface temperature can decrease by 1.4°C for every 10% increase in canopy coverage.³⁶

2

RAINFALL AND FLOODING

Winters are becoming wetter, with more prolonged and intense rainfall. The growing risk of flooding is likely to disproportionately affect disadvantaged areas and cost the public purse heavily.³⁷ Six of the 10 wettest winters on record have occurred since 2000 and rainfall over the winter of 2023/24 was 50% above the long-term winter average, resulting in widespread flooding.³⁸ Up to a quarter of all properties in England – some eight million households – are expected to be in areas at risk of flooding by 2050.³⁹ In 2025, Tenbury Wells became the first town in England to find some of its public buildings uninsurable due to flooding risk.⁴⁰ The cost to the public is already here.

More deprived areas are more exposed to flood risk, something particularly true for urban areas where surface water flooding is a problem.⁴¹ From 2026-36, the Government expects to spend £10.5bn on flood defences in England with nearly 900,000 properties at risk.⁴²

Areas with lower tree canopy cover and fewer green spaces are more exposed to surface-water flooding, reflecting the role of trees and soils in intercepting rainfall and supporting drainage.⁴³

3

AIR POLLUTION

Every year in the UK, between 29,000 and 43,000 early deaths are attributable to air pollution.⁴⁴ Air pollution can affect almost every organ in the human body⁴⁵ and the economic costs in terms of healthcare, productivity losses and increased likelihood of developing conditions such as dementia amounts to £50bn a year.⁴⁶

In towns and cities, living in a poorer area increases the risk of exposure to dirty air. The difference is stark; people living in the 20% most deprived areas are exposed to significantly higher pollution levels than those in the 20% least deprived areas.⁴⁷

A range of actions are required to tackle air pollution including addressing vehicle emissions, smoke controls and green infrastructure. Trees can help to protect communities and collectively, UK urban woods are estimated to remove 7.5 kilotons of pollutants such as particulate matter and ozone per year, a benefit worth over £75 million in avoided health impacts.⁴⁸



COLLECTIVELY, UK URBAN WOODS ARE ESTIMATED TO REMOVE 7.5 KILOTONS OF POLLUTANTS SUCH AS PARTICULATE MATTER AND OZONE PER YEAR, A BENEFIT WORTH OVER £75 MILLION IN AVOIDED HEALTH IMPACTS.

4

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The so-called ‘inverse care law’ shows that deprived areas with the highest health needs are generally those places with the least and lowest quality care available.⁴⁹ This applies to the urban natural environment too, where the communities who would benefit most from interaction with nature and trees are those who are least likely to have access to them.

Trees are one of the main opportunities people have for contact with nature in urban areas, and health outcomes are generally better in areas with high tree canopy. This shows how environmental quality, deprivation and health outcomes cluster together.

A major study in Wales linked individual primary health records to an assessment of the greenness of home surroundings, and access to that green space⁵⁰ This found that the greener the area you live in and the more nature you can see and hear from your front door, the less likely you are to suffer anxiety and depression. A major health and wellbeing study of people living in urban areas in China found that two hours per week of contact time with nature resulted in a lowered likelihood of conditions including cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes and mental health conditions, when compared with no access.⁵¹

Poor physical and mental health can have many other negative impacts. This includes limits on employment prospects, reduced earnings and additional living costs associated with illness and disability.⁵² It also creates sharply diverging lives, shown most starkly in terms of health outcomes.

For example, a male living in Fleet, Hampshire, where tree canopy cover is 25%, has a life expectancy of 83 years, a full decade longer than a male living in Blackpool, where the canopy cover is 6% and life expectancy of 73 years.^{53/54} This reflects wider patterns in how environmental conditions, deprivation and health outcomes intersect.⁵⁵

BLACKPOOL
TREE COVER: 6%
LIFE EXPECTANCY: 73

FLEET
TREE COVER: 25%
LIFE EXPECTANCY: 83

Particular health benefits are associated with woodlands with high biodiversity (see BIO-WELL research case study, page 23). However, disadvantaged communities are less likely to live near woods like this making it harder to access them and the benefits they offer.

5 COMMUNITY COHESION AND SAFETY

Canopy cover and the accessibility of green space often reflect deeper structural inequalities in place-based investment and opportunity. For example, the quality of parks and green spaces is generally worse in areas of lower income.⁵⁶ This has knock-on impacts with neglected green space being linked to higher levels of crime and vandalism.⁵⁷ On the other hand, crime rates are lowest in high canopy areas suggesting that, when done well, neighbourhood greening and access to nature are associated with reduced antisocial behaviour.⁵⁸

Public safety should always be a central part of urban green space design and management, making sure as wide a section of the local population as possible is able to enjoy the benefits.

Minority ethnic groups are often most affected, being more than twice as likely as white people to live in areas most deprived of green space.⁵⁹

TAKING ACTION



ACTIONS FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

1. CREATE A NATIONAL PLAN FOR URBAN TREES

As part of the new England Trees Action Plan, Government should commit to developing, funding and implementing a national plan for urban trees, setting policy direction and allocating strategic investment. This plan should adopt the public health principle of proportionate universalism to balance universal services for everyone with prioritising the places by need.

Research commissioned by the Woodland Trust⁶⁰ demonstrates the scale of contribution increasing urban tree cover could make to the legally-binding national target to increase tree cover from 14.5% to 16.5% by 2050 (an additional 260,000ha. of tree cover):

- Increase tree cover in areas of most need – for all urban communities to have tree cover in line with the England target of 16.5% would require the equivalent of 53,000 hectares of new trees, 20% of the overall Government target.

2. INVEST IN URBAN TREES

While the England Woodland Creation Offer can support some types of urban woodland creation, more specialised funds such as the Urban Tree Challenge Fund and the Local Authority Treescapes Fund have closed to new applicants.⁶¹ At local level, budgets supporting trees and green space have seen year-on-year cuts⁶² with the prospect of more to come.⁶³ To capitalize on investment to date and kickstart further and widespread delivery, at least 20% of the £1 billion the Westminster Government has allocated for England's trees and woods for 2025-2030 should be targeted at urban areas, with a focus on priority areas where tree cover is low. This should support a programme of:

Strategic multi-year grant funding to further and kick-start change in priority towns and cities.

- This should involve planning and delivery at conurbation-wide scale and be focused on communities with low canopy cover and high levels of disadvantage.
- Delivery should support community empowerment as well as planting and establishment, recognising the higher costs and complexity of urban environments.
- Projects should be tasked with developing ongoing and replicable income sources to ensure success over the long-term.
- Following the closure of the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund in March 2025, further funding is required to ensure there is capacity within local authorities to deliver planting, engagement and operational needs.

Boosting sustainable tree supply.

- Invest in tree nursery capacity, and especially urban and community tree nursery capacity, to ensure appropriate supply of UK sourced and grown trees aligned to the needs of urban areas, including appropriate species selection.
- Support the production of climate resilient species (through new seed sources etc) which will be able to survive, and deliver benefits in, projected climates.

A skills plan for urban forestry.

- Investment in skills, including urban tree growing, management and arboriculture, and promoting career potential among new and diverse city dwellers. This is essential to ensure new canopy is resilient and well maintained.
- Recognise arboriculture skills as essential to the success of any such plan, taking steps such as a recognised Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code for the sector.

3. POLICY AND GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT URBAN TREES EVERYWHERE

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) National Planning Policy Framework and design guidance should set the context for local policymakers to embed tree equity and develop city and town-level solutions to increasing urban tree cover where it is most needed. Specifically:

- Support tree retention and canopy expansion as a national planning priority.
- Embed expectations for tree-lined streets, sufficient rooting space and long-term management in new development.
- Plan and develop new residential buildings to be naturally cooled by high levels of canopy cover to reduce solar gains.
- Ensure guidance on drainage reflects the role of trees and soils in managing increased rainfall.
- Support appropriate species selection and management to maximise benefits while minimising risks such as subsidence.

Defra and Natural England should support local authorities with complete and up-to-date guidance on nature-based solutions for urban areas to:

- help identify neighbourhoods most at risk from overheating and support passive cooling through increased tree canopy
- set out how trees and vegetation can reduce exposure to air pollutants
- support the integration of trees into existing streets and public spaces to provide cooling, reduce solar gain and manage surface water
- provide clear advice on species selection, planting design and long-term management, including addressing subsidence risk.

To improve protection of urban trees Defra and MHCLG should work together to:

- establish the governance infrastructure and communication channels needed to work jointly on urban forestry
- provide a planning framework that recognises the long-term value of retaining trees alongside appropriate management
- review Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to integrate climate, health and ecological criteria into considerations on the value of trees alongside existing assessment of amenity value, and other changes such as how TPO designations can be made and recorded in a more consistent way between local authorities.



ACTIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AND TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

1. USE THE TREE EQUITY SCORE TOOL TO IDENTIFY PRIORITY AREAS FOR PLANTING

Tree canopy maps closely onto wider patterns of inequality. All authorities, from major urban conurbations to market towns, should apply the Tree Equity Score tool or similar to prioritise lowest-canopy neighbourhoods within Local Plans and Green Infrastructure Strategies. Priority areas should require net canopy gain or minimum planting standards through development management.

2. FUNDING

In the first instance, implementing many improvements will rely on skilful utilisation of existing resources. Commuted sums and the Community Infrastructure Levy should both be deployed for long-term support for trees. Beyond this, councils should consider establishing a ringfenced trees and woods reserve to support ongoing maintenance. Green finance tools should be considered, such as Hammersmith & Fulham's £5 million Green Investment scheme, which is investing in environmental and public realm improvements aligned with its climate strategy.⁶⁴



3. REPORTING

Local government should adopt and publish a simple Tree Equity Action Plan. A light-touch approach, this should set a small number of measurable targets (for example, percentage canopy increases in priority wards over 5–10 years) and report annually alongside climate or public health updates, tracking whether spend is reaching lowest-canopy neighbourhoods.

4. COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

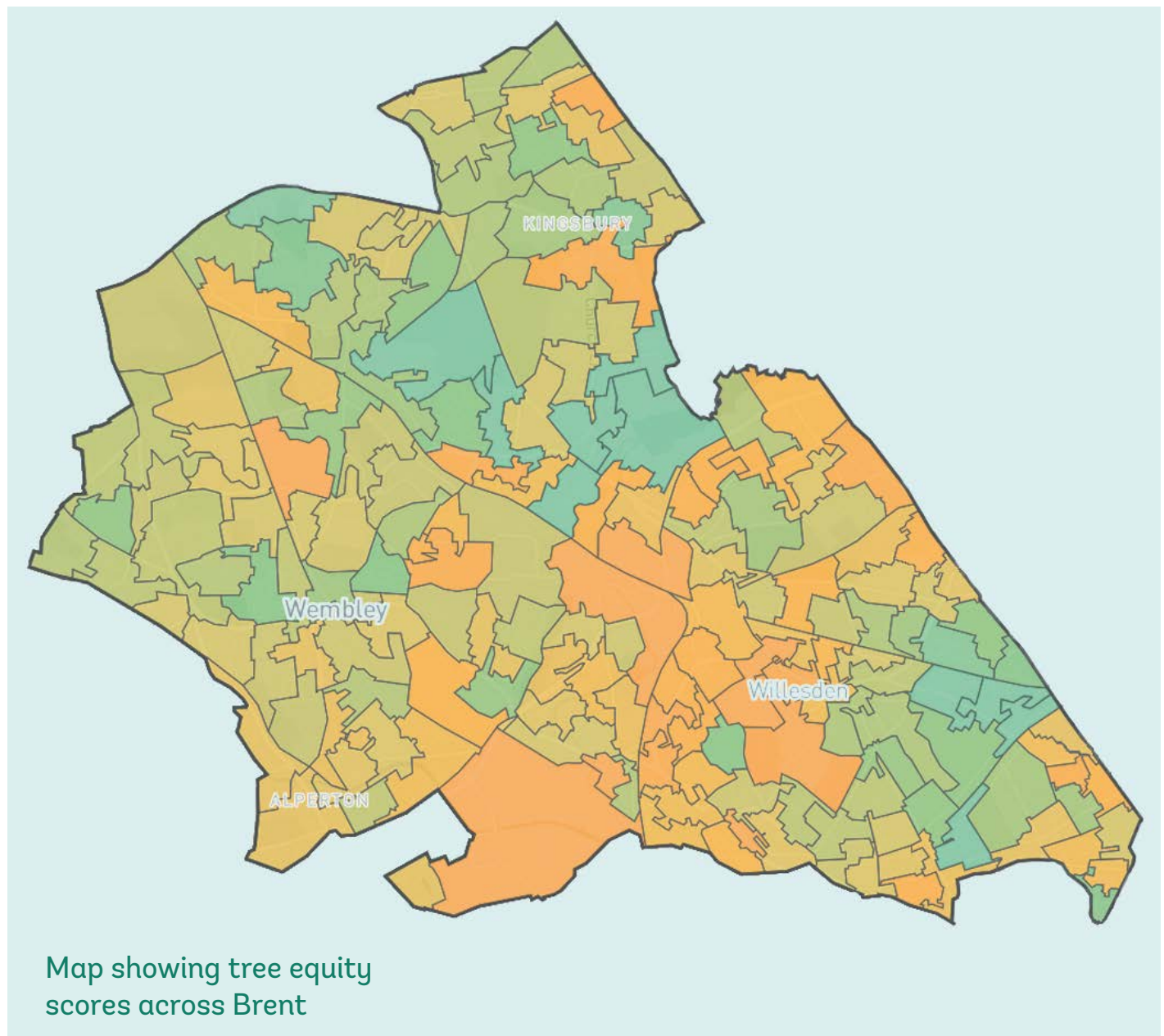
Work with schools, residents' groups, landowners and local charities to co-fund, grow and maintain trees, reducing pressure on limited budgets while building local ownership.



CASE STUDIES

BRENT COUNCIL

Brent Council is developing a new tree strategy for the borough. Alongside policies dealing with the management of existing trees, the draft strategy has acknowledged the need for increased tree cover and is using the Tree Equity Score tool to identify those areas that are currently most lacking in trees and should be the highest priority for new planting. This is supported by policies around partnership working, funding and species resilience.



TRANSFORMING LOW TREE EQUITY IN HARTLEPOOL

Tree Equity for Hartlepool⁶⁵ is a ground-breaking two-year project (initially) funded partially by the National Lottery Heritage Fund that will transform the town's urban landscape, increasing tree canopy cover to help address the area's environmental and social inequities. Hartlepool has the second lowest local authority Tree Equity Score in England with canopy cover as low as 2% in some areas. This is accompanied by serious levels of disadvantage on numerous fronts across the town. It is unpacking what it really takes to turn the dial with and through the lens of trees and a tree equity approach.

The project aims to improve tree equity across 10 hectares in high priority sites to increase tree canopy cover, establish stronger green corridors, restore natural heritage and enhance biodiversity for those most in need. An urban forest masterplan will be developed to provide long term strategic steer and see Hartlepool achieve Tree City of the World status. 1,500 residents will be involved in shaping and caring for their urban forest, strengthening civic pride and community wellbeing.

The project is led by Trees for Cities with partners including Hartlepool Borough Council, Tees Community Forest, the Woodland Trust, Thirteen Housing and Treeconomics.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT IN BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham Tree People is a charity that advocates for trees across the city.⁶⁶ They work with communities on tree care and tree planting, map and monitor existing trees, and offer training and volunteering opportunities to local people. New planting focuses on areas with low tree cover and involves communities not just in planting, but in scheme design and species selection too. Among the charity's resources is a newly established tree nursery, helping ensure future tree supply. The charity also maintains an online map of over 75,000 trees across Birmingham, recording the age, health and environmental benefits of each one and producing and promoting 'tree trails' with local groups. Alongside the city council, they lead implementation of Birmingham's Urban Forest Master Plan, which aims to maximise trees' contribution to improved environmental resilience, biodiversity, and public health.

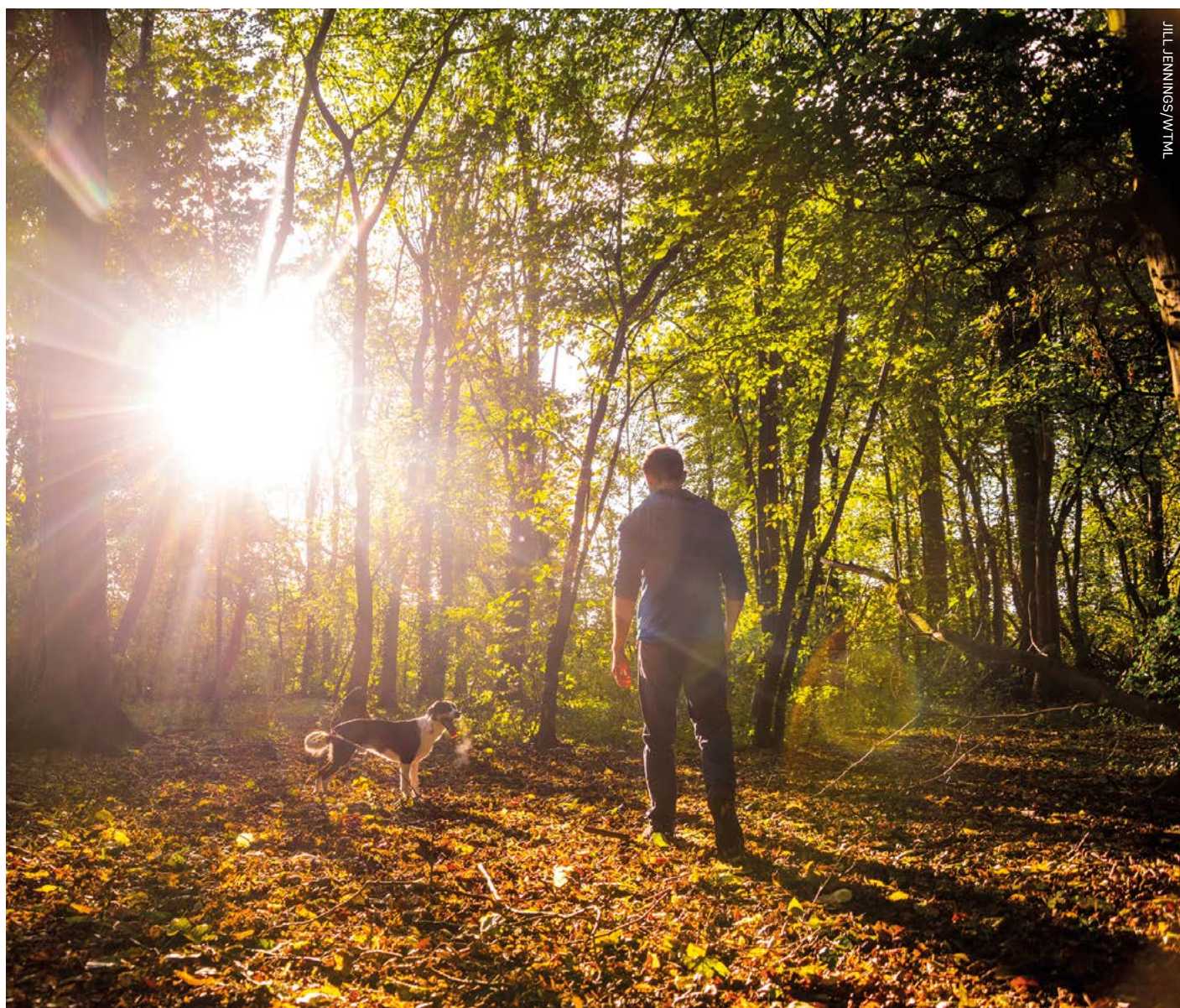
Birmingham Tree People carries out research to inform species selection, helping to build a resilient urban forest and advocates for retaining of larger trees which have the best impacts for people now and into the future.



HOW BIODIVERSE WOODLAND CAN SUPPORT GOOD MENTAL HEALTH

The Woodland Trust-funded BIO-WELL project examined the relationship between human health and wellbeing and access to high biodiversity woodland. The research found most people feel better after experiencing biodiversity in a thriving woodland.

From a survey of 10,000 people, 90% indicated that woodland biodiversity positively impacts their wellbeing. But the research also found woodlands rich in positive traits such as birdsong, sights, smells and texture are very unevenly distributed across the country. Access to local woodlands with high wellbeing benefits may be a privilege and people in more income-deprived areas may not have woodlands near them that offer the full health benefits that thriving woodlands can bring.



JILL JENNINGS/WTML

FURTHER READING AND LINKS

URBAN FOREST ALLIANCE

The Urban Forests Alliance aims to catalyse and support a movement that advances urban forestry and tree equity nationally, providing a clear identity to urban tree work and gravitas through joint championing by all the partners involved. It aims to deliver more benefits to people in the urban areas that need them most. The Alliance includes Community Forest Trust, National Trust, Trees for Cities and Woodland Trust. We are sharing resources, knowledge and influence, combining our efforts to support local authorities and community organisations to bring trees and their benefits where they are most needed.

TREE EQUITY SCORE UK

The Tree Equity Score (uk.treeequityscore.org) provides a national framework for identifying communities most exposed to environmental risk due to low canopy cover and therefore with the greatest need for investment.

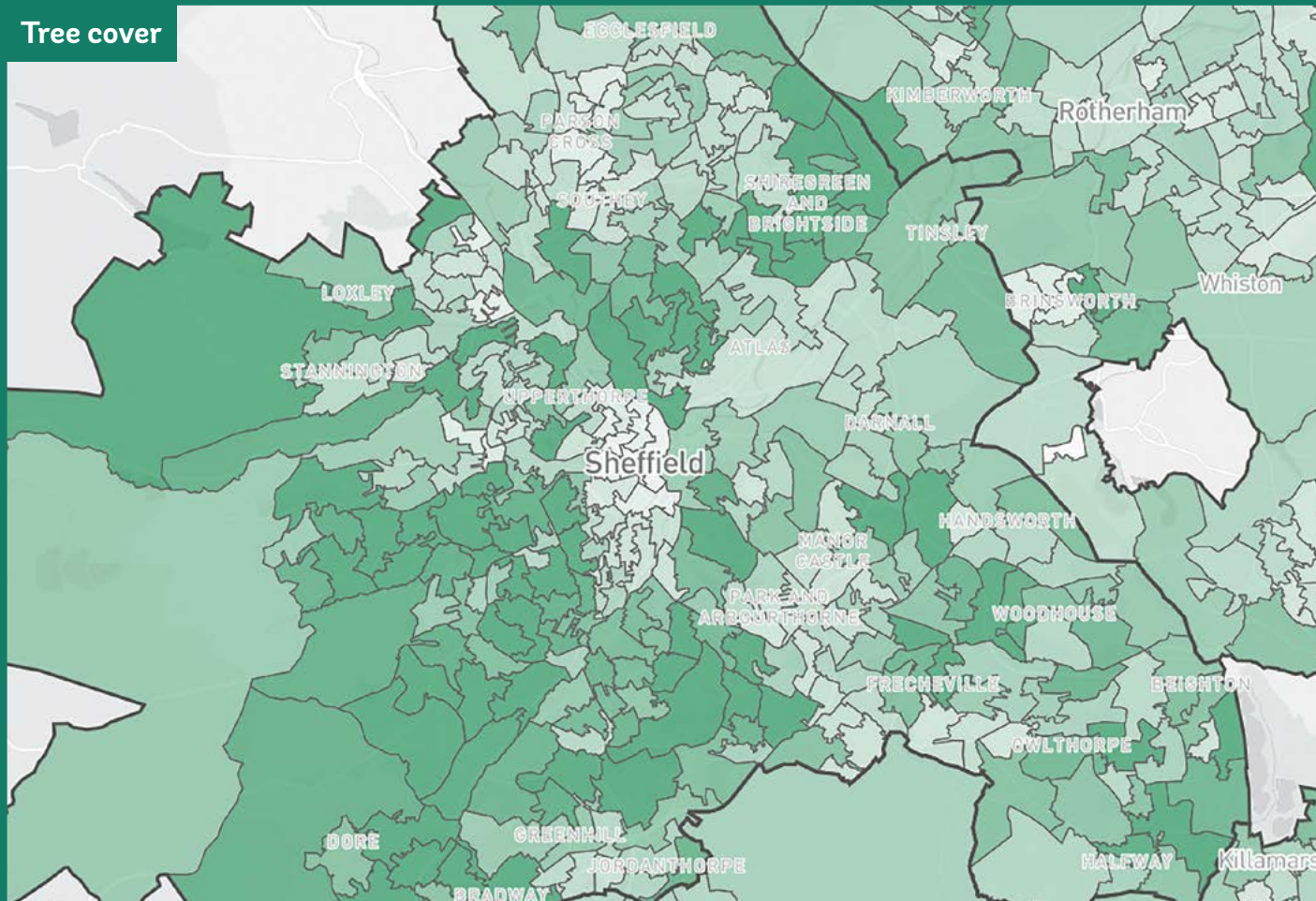
Tree Equity Score is an online tool that assesses urban neighbourhoods across the UK using data on tree canopy cover, climate, health and socioeconomic factors. For England, it offers an individual assessment of over 27,000 urban neighbourhoods giving each a score out of 100. A score of 100 means the neighbourhood has met a minimum standard for tree cover appropriate for that area. The lower the score an area receives, the greater the priority for tree planting. The Scorecard uses specialist live mapping data allied with the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

URBAN FOREST ACCELERATOR TOOLKIT

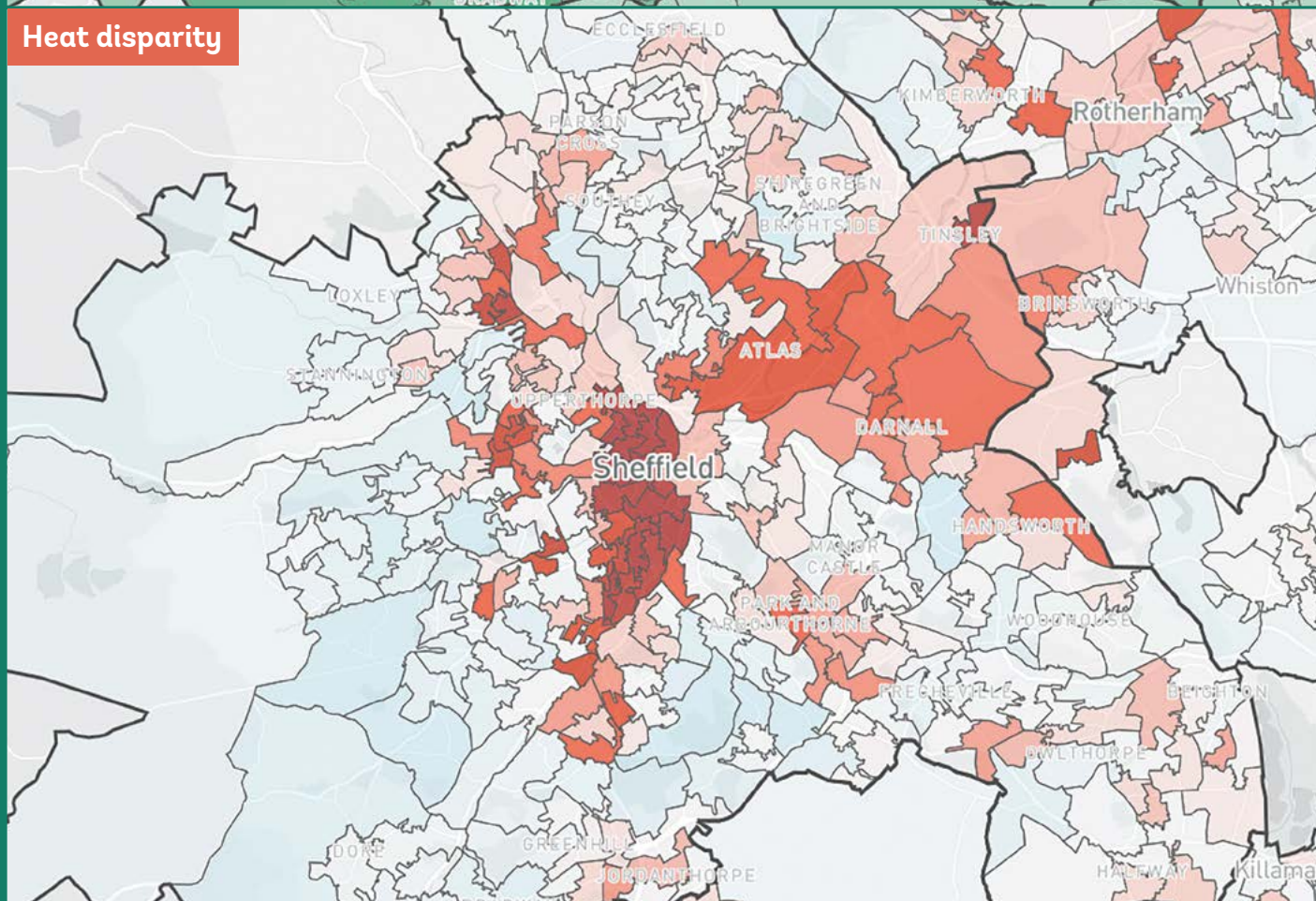
The Urban Forest Accelerator (naturetownsandcities.org.uk/topic/the-urban-forest-accelerator-toolkit) helped councils and communities improve urban green-space through tree planting and associated community engagement. The programme's work has been amalgamated into a toolkit of case studies and guidance designed to help others implement similar work. This includes master planning to unlock the social, economic and environmental benefits of urban forests for all, guidance on the value of the urban forest and advice on attracting funding that supports long-term maintenance and growth. It was run in partnership with organisations including the Woodland Trust and the Community Forest Trust. It was supported by Defra, the Forestry Commission and the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

MAPS SHOWING TREE CANOPY COVER IN SHEFFIELD AND SUBSEQUENT HEAT DISPARITY

Tree cover



Heat disparity



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