

Appendix C

Shaftesbury Town Tree Plan 2020–2025



Based on research, liaison, survey, discussion by members of the Shaftesbury Tree Group 2019/2020: primarily Angela King (environmentalist).

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Why we and Shaftesbury need trees and hedges

The climate crisis we are facing is already leading to rapid degradation of habitats and increasing loss of biodiversity. For selfish and for altruistic reasons we need to play our part in attempting to reverse the collapse of ecosystems.

We are each part of complex webs that reach in and out of our homes and towns. It becomes the responsibility of us all to change our lives to ensure a benign future – this means we must help nature to help us.

One important role we can perform is in encouraging and supporting care for trees—existing trees, new plantings and the free trees that arise around us.

Trees can help ameliorate the effects of climate change and beyond fixing carbon they make our daily lives more amenable and healthier: creating shade, buffering sound, capturing airborne pollutants, offering shelter from winds, conserving moisture, improving the soil, providing food, homes and pathways for nature. All of which support local and wider supportive ecosystems which help create beauty and offer us a sense of wellbeing. Large and old trees are particularly important for supporting wild life and sequestering carbon.

Shaftesbury has a rich heritage of trees. But the tree cover is uneven. Shaftesbury West Ward has an estimated cover of 22.9% and East Ward has only 7.7%**, and in some cases of a single age. Our aim is to enrich the tree cover and to help build community knowledge and responsibility along the way.

Aims

By playing our part in the return to health of ecosystems and in combatting the climate emergency we intend to:

- Increase the tree cover and biodiversity of the town whilst adding to its local distinctiveness.
- Aid the cutting of pollution along roadsides, by play areas and gardens.
- Providing shade for play areas and by benches.



- Increase habitat diversity and ecological richness.
- Intensify linkages of greenery in and into town.
- Help educate and energise local people into care for trees and in their planting and aftercare.

Objectives are summarised at the head of each area covered.

Anything we can do to help connect ways in and out of town will help wildlife to thrive. It is important to link existing tree cover and hedgerows to provide benign **corridors**: for example to/from Breach Common, The Wilderness, Boyne Wood, Pensbury Plantation, Brickell's Cliff.

Areas where people walk and sit, where children play and formal **play areas** especially need shade and protection from NO2 and particulates from vehicles. Tree cover will become more needed as weather events become more extreme—long spells of heat, prolonged rainfall, high winds,

Biodiversity/ species selection: all the trees and hedgerow plants we have recommended are native and naturalised species. We remain alert to national and international discussion on this. Trees must be sourced from reputable nurseries who take bio-security seriously and who do not use imported stock. Disease is prevalent because our climate is warming and we have been importing disease with stock. Increasingly we should be growing the trees ourselves.

Findings

Out of the 40 open spaces owned/looked after by the Town Council, we have identified 16 for tree and/or hedgerow planting over a period of 5 years.

Year One 2020/21: we have identified 5 areas—Barton Hill Recreation Ground, Cockram's Field, play area and football ground, Castle Hill, Ash



Close Play Area and Mampitts Cemetery for which 2,017 hedgerow and larger trees will be allocated.

There are several areas in the east of town where we should like to have begun work, but they await resolution of issues such as ownership or remedial action.

We are proposing that planting on road verges will not take place until Year 2 (2021–22).

Four Scheduled Monuments must be exempt from tree planting for archaeological protection. There are some spaces and places that do not need additional trees. And there are places for specific discussion. In allotments, trees may not be wanted. Fruit trees, if desired, can be planted in subsequent years. The cricket ground has not yet been visited or discussed.

Timing

Year One

Planting will take place from November 2020 to March 2021 during suitable weather.

Trees will need to be ordered early, since national demand for trees will be immense.

The idea of collection seed locally will need to be developed and we shall need to locate places to act as our own tree nurseries and to prepare them. In the autumn of 2020 we hope to encourage the collection of tree seeds, nuts and berries and to establish a Town Tree Nursery where these local specimens can be grown and when established, planted out in our open spaces.

(We will need to know how much time the Grounds team can give to tree planting etc. (Andrew Flitcroft is a knowledgeable tree planter).

Community Involvement

We cannot plant trees **for** the town but **with** the town by involving existing community

groups and interested individuals.

We favour the finding and appointment of woodwards and hedgewards—volunteers to take care of locally planted trees and hedgerows by keeping an eye on them and helping the Grounds Team and others to water them in dry spells especially during the first two years. The new Town Tree Nursery will need a group too.

During 2020, prior to autumn and winter planting, we should like to organise:

Talks about the importance of trees in the exacerbation of the climate emergency; walks, films etc as well as demonstrations of how to plant seeds, to transplant and to plant young trees and how to organise continued aftercare.



** Source: <http://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=d8c253ab17e1412586d9774d1a09fa07>

This shows data (11.1.19) by District Ward and reports that Shaftesbury West Ward has an estimated Tree Canopy Cover of 22.9% (+/- 2.0%), and East Ward with a TCC of 7.7% (+/-1.5%). Some urban tree folk have suggested 20% as a benchmark, and WT suggest 30% in new developments

We are grateful to the support of the officers of Shaftesbury Town Council in the preparation of this project as well as members of the Shaftesbury Tree Group. We very much hope that the Town Council can support the Plan in principle and that we can liaise with the grounds team and others about its implementation.

A Manifesto for Shaftesbury's Trees is being developed.

Annex A

Tree Planting Scheme by Zones (3 documents): Five-year Tree Planting Plan (15pp), and Year 3 (2022) Planting Plan (2pp). Years 1 & 2 (2020–21) (00pp) to come.

