



# Tree Planting Update

22/06/2022

Transport, Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee

*Councillor Gareth Williams*

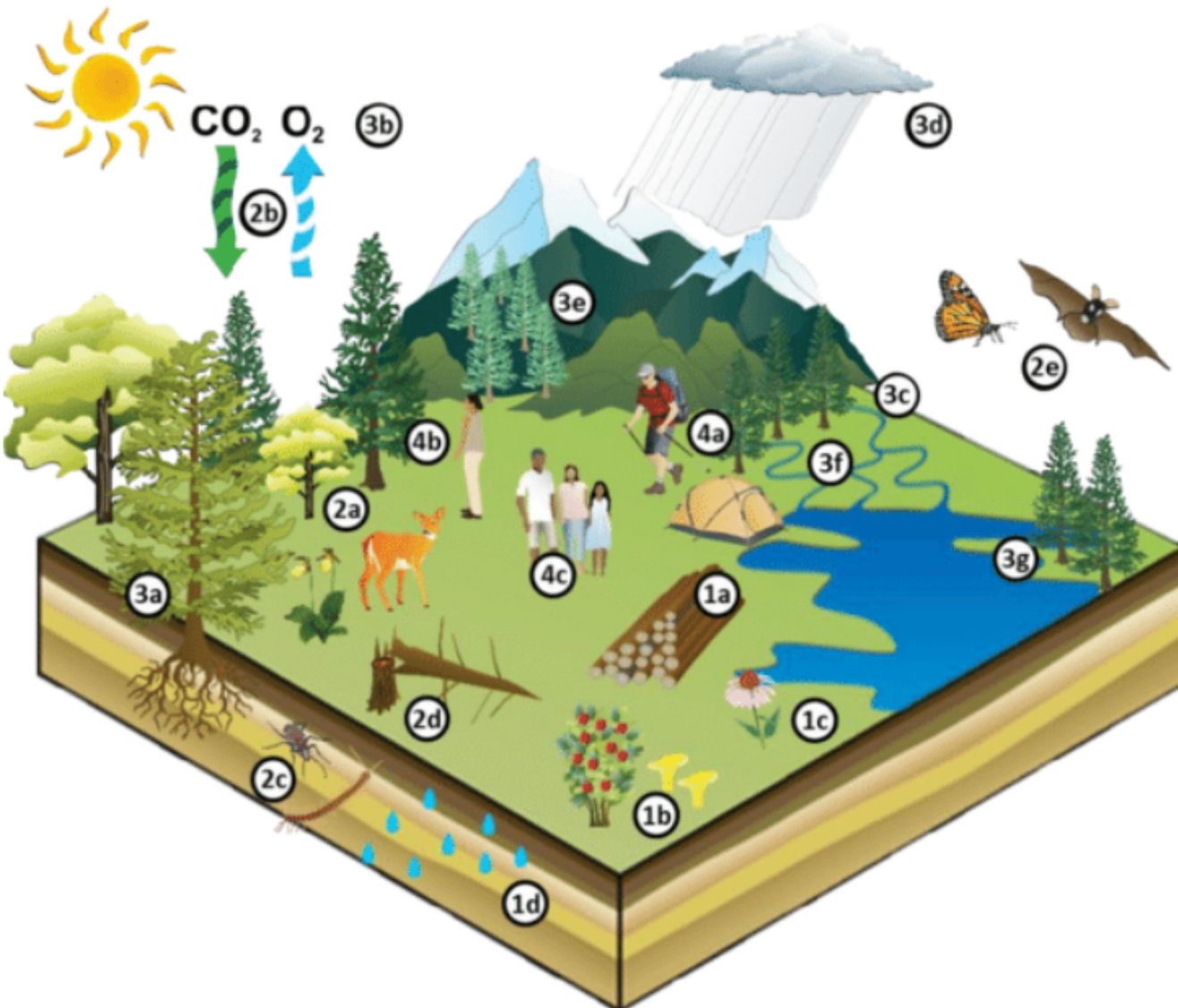


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# 1. The Right Place for the Right Tree

Trees provide a diverse range of ecosystem services



## 1. Provisioning Services

- a. Timber/Fibre (construction, energy)
- b. Food (deer, fruits, herbs, seeds, honey)
- c. Chemical and medicinal products
- d. Water

## 2. Supporting Services

- a. Habitats for fauna and flora (biodiversity)
- b. Photosynthesis/Primary production
- c. Soil formation
- d. Nutrient cycling
- e. Pollination, seed dispersal

## 3. Regulating Services

- a. Carbon storage (above/below ground)
- b. Purification of air
- c. Purification of water
- d. Climate regulation
- e. Protection against erosion/avalanches
- f. Flood mitigation
- g. Protection against coastal erosion and storms

## 4. Cultural Services

- a. Recreation/Aesthetics
- b. Spirituality
- c. Education

# 1. The Right Place for the Right Tree

England Tree Action Plan 2021-2024 sets out a target of 30,000ha woodland being planted per annum.

In 2021, the Council

- committed to planting 543,000 trees on Council land by 2032
- launched the Bucks' Tree Mission in 2021 - a shared mission encouraging everyone to plant trees for a greener future.

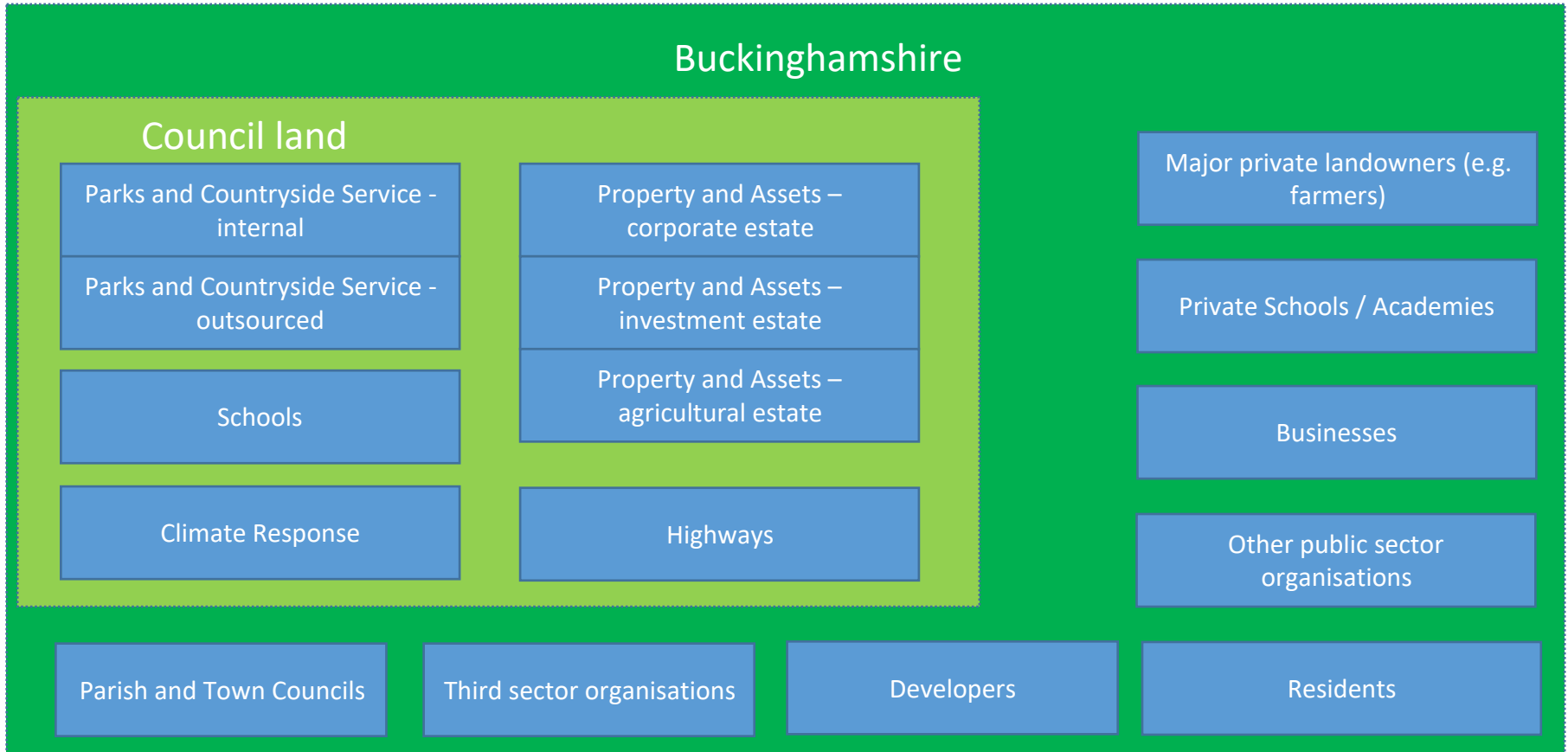
Considerations when planting trees

1. Soil type and suitability
2. Proximity of natural water features
3. Biodiversity and ecology of the area proposed for planting (e.g. chalk grassland?; local tree species)
4. Landscape
5. Historic environment (e.g. statutory designations)
6. Presence of utility services
7. Climate (e.g. rainfall, wind)
8. Protection against weeds and pests (e.g. mulch mats, and rabbit netting)
9. Stakeholder access
10. Maintenance, security, and safety
11. Property ownership, rights and covenants
12. Biosecurity
13. Purpose (e.g. for fruit; roadside tree)
14. Conformance (e.g. UK Forestry Standard)
15. Cost

## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

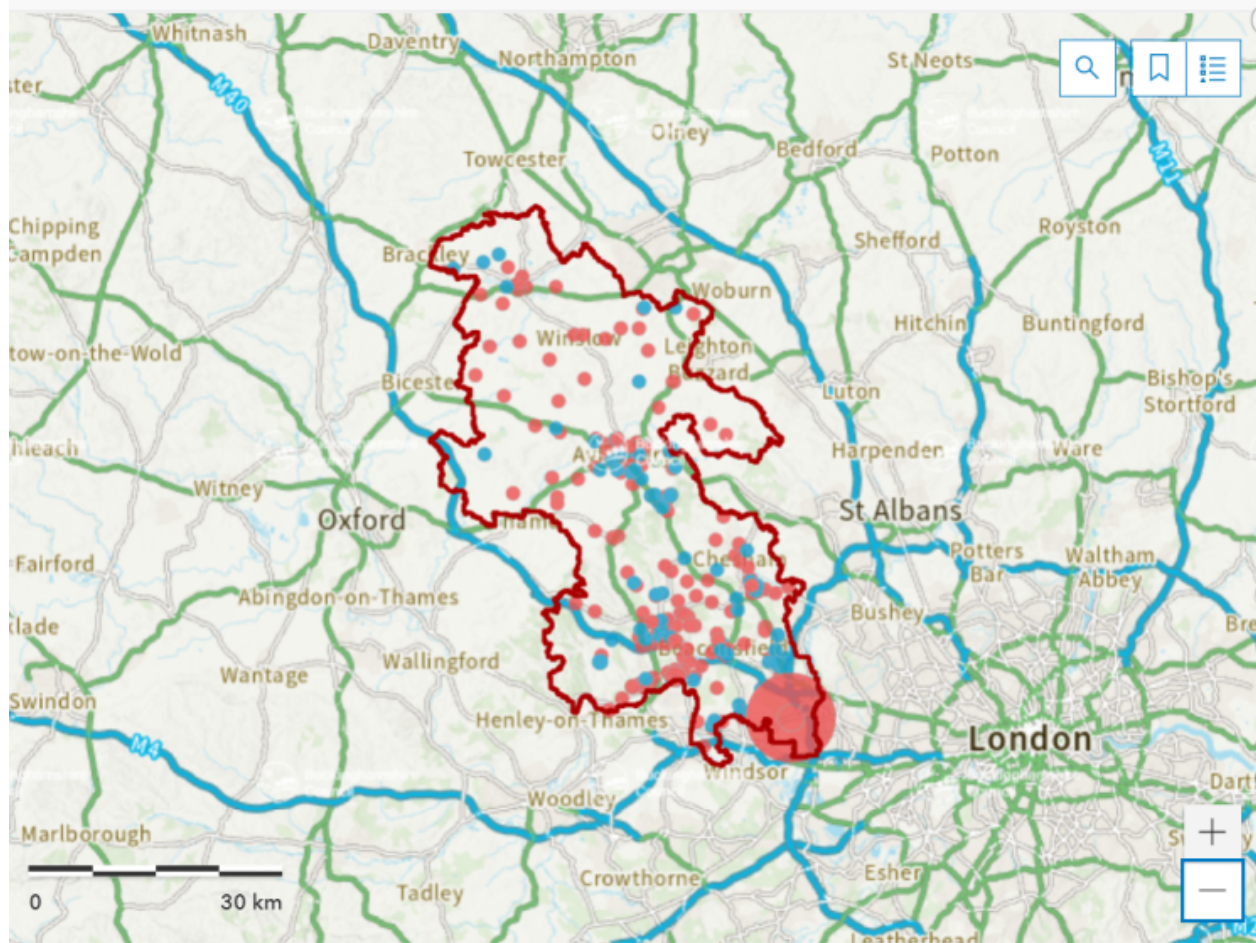
Multiple stakeholders undertaking planting, maintenance, and felling works

Project underway to map trees planted as a result of Council activity





## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

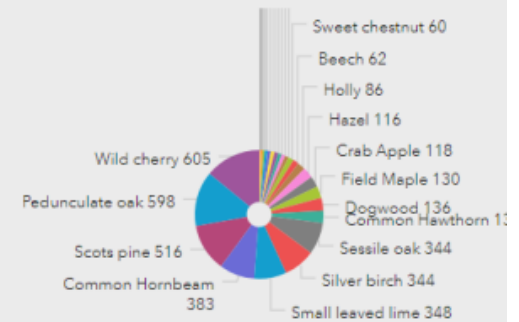


NONE | © Crown Copyright and database rights 2021. Ordnance Survey 0100062456.

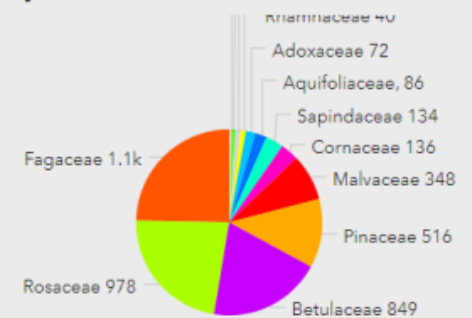
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL

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### Species



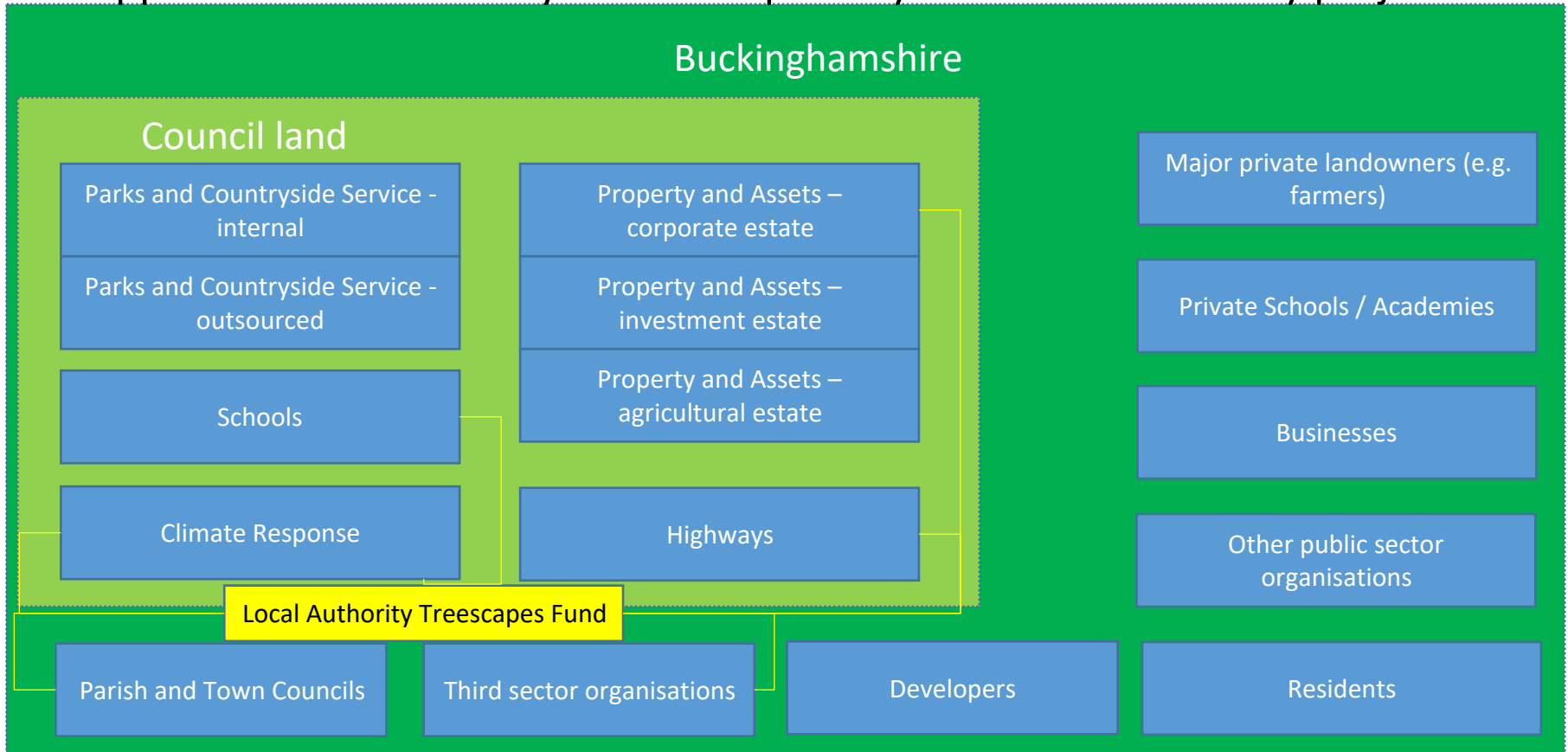
### Family



## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

### Local Authority Treescapes Fund

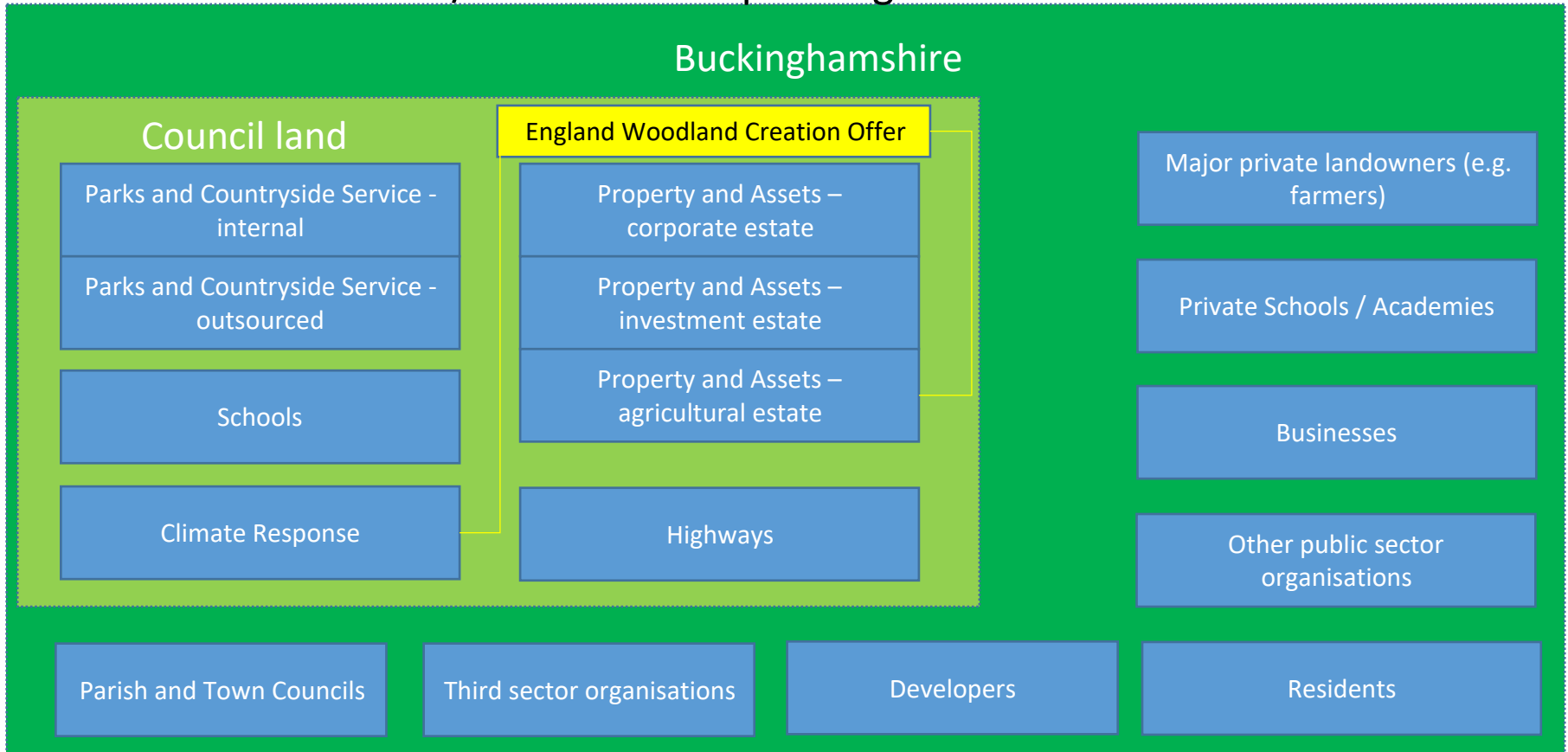
- Secured £203k in '21/'22 to support tree planting (in stands of  $\leq 0.5$ ha) and maintenance (3 yrs) in non-woodland locations
- Upper tier local authority led with a primary focus on community projects



## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

### England Woodland Creation Offer

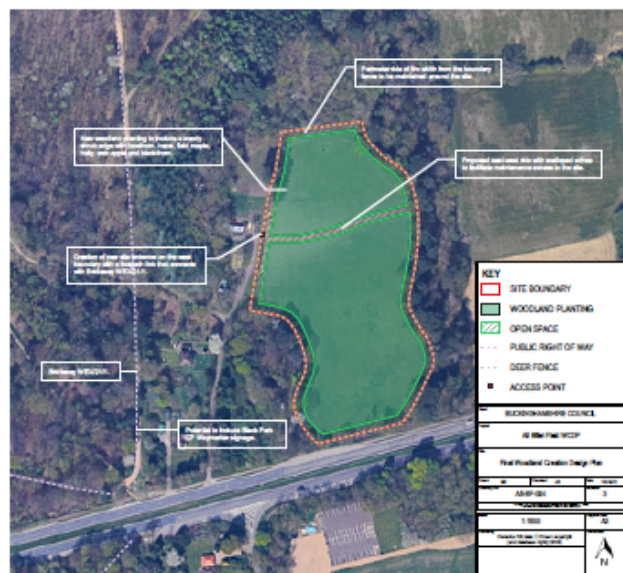
- Open to all landowners and has 1 ha minimum size requirement
- Launched in 2021 providing 25% more grant funding than previous schemes
- Secured £28k in '21/'22 to for tree planting and maintenance at Billet Field





## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

Inclusion in a Forestry Commission case study published in January – ‘[Helping local authorities respond to the climate emergency](#)’



***“We’re on a mission to make Buckinghamshire cleaner and greener, to play our part at a local level to tackle climate change. Planting trees is a key part of that strategy – not only to help offset our carbon emissions but also bring a host of other benefits to our local landscape. Our Bucks Tree Mission brings together a wide range of tree planting initiatives, including planting a minimum of one tree for each resident in Buckinghamshire – over 543,000 trees.”***  
Jilly Jordan, Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment, Buckinghamshire Council

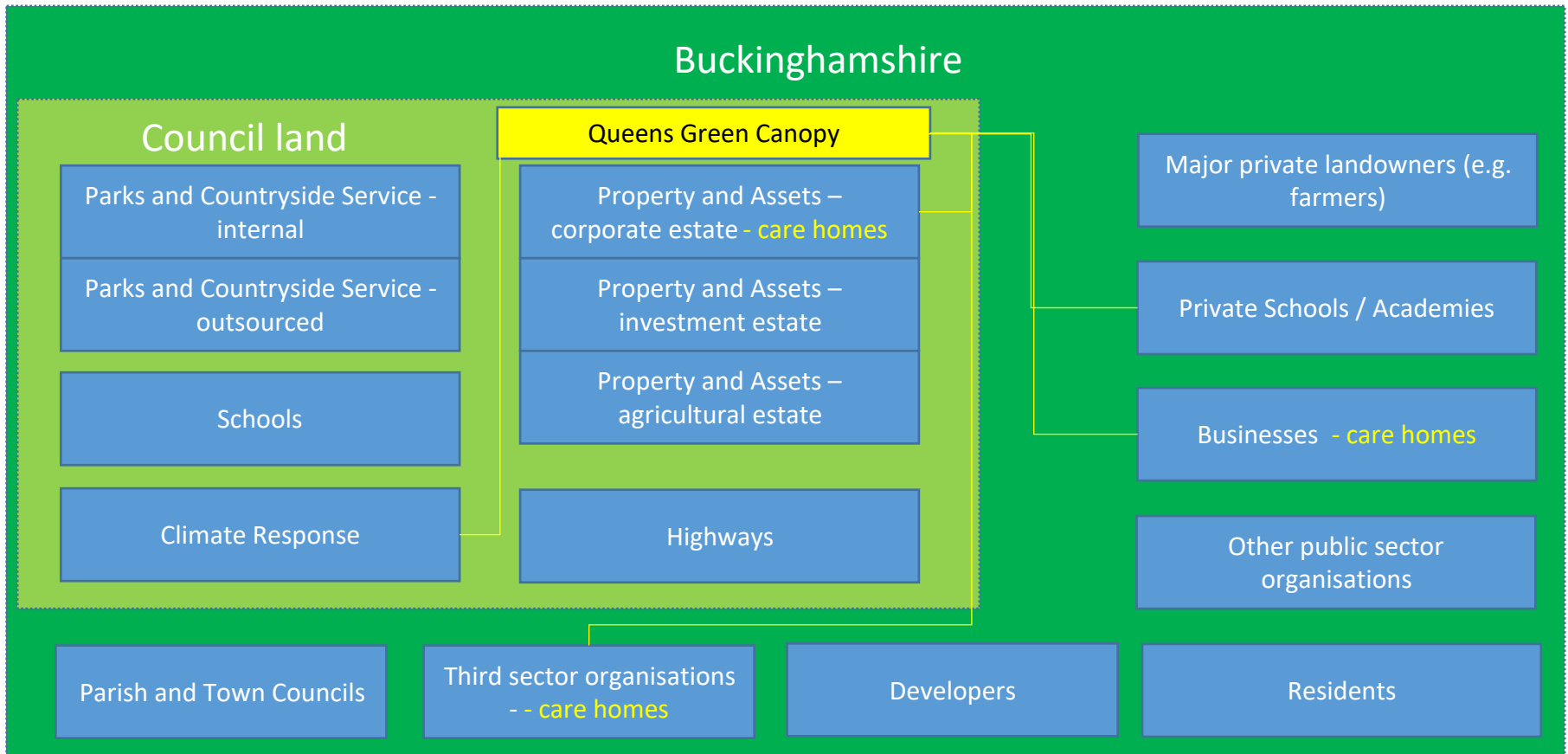
### **Buckinghamshire Council:** Planting on council land – supported by Forestry Commission grant aid

Working in partnership with the local Forestry Commission team, Buckinghamshire Council’s aim is to plant at least 543,000 trees across its estate. This also involves planting new woods on their agricultural estate. Detailed woodland creation plans have been produced by external consultants for pilot sites, with over 3,400 trees and shrubs to be planted during the 2021/22 planting season. The council will take advantage of the generous planting grants available from the [England Woodland Creation Offer](#) (EWCO) and [Forestry England Woodland Partnership](#), and will register all eligible projects with the [Woodland Carbon Code](#). Recent non-market economic analysis on 18.5 ha of woodland on council land identified that the total public benefit in present value terms over 30 years is £354,602 including £196,223 in recreation access benefits, £118,058 in biodiversity benefits, £12,980 in landscape benefits and £27,339 in flood risk management benefits.

## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

### Queens Green Canopy

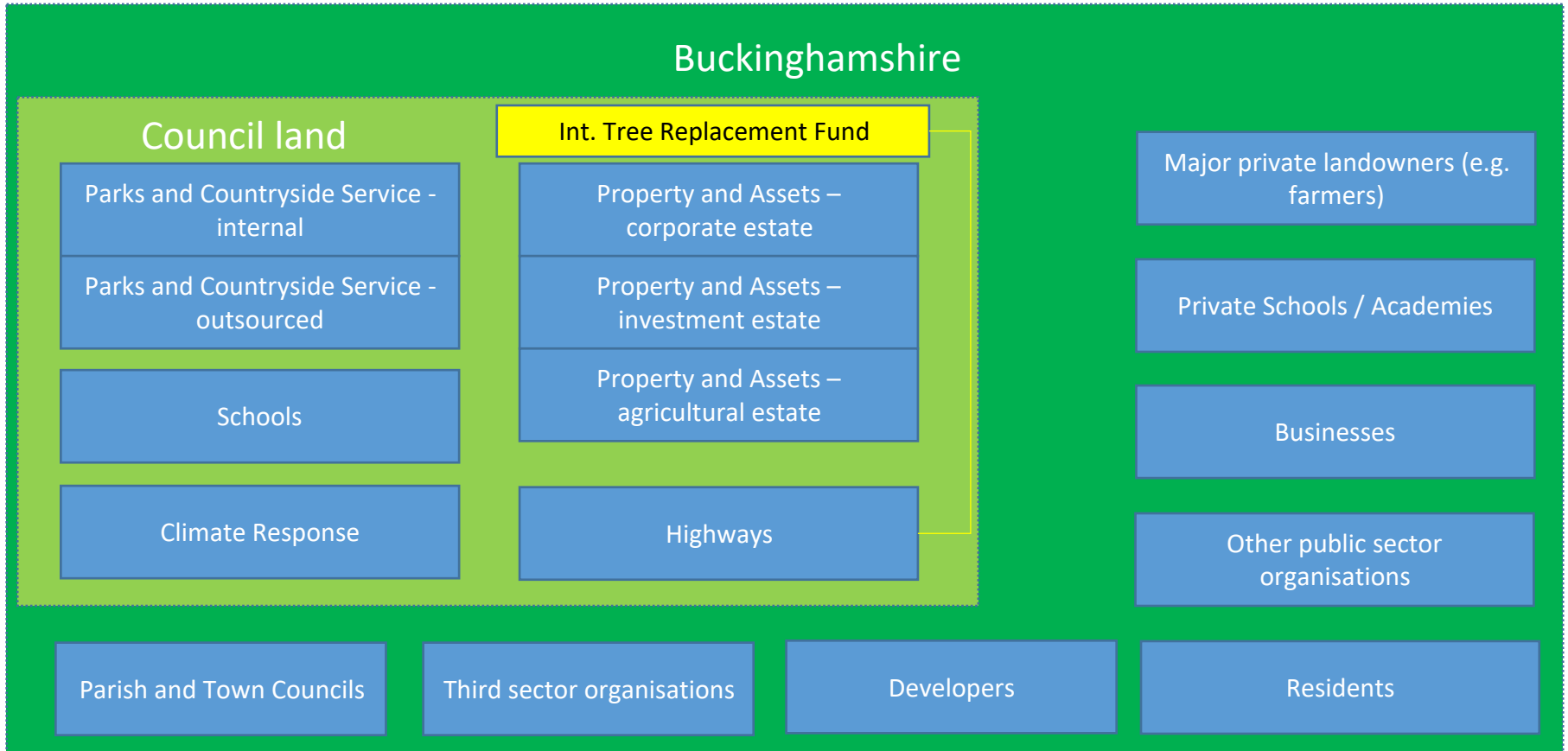
- Offered a free tree to care homes and schools in Buckinghamshire
- Interested parties received trees from the Woodland Trust and plaques



# 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

## Internal Tree Replacement Fund

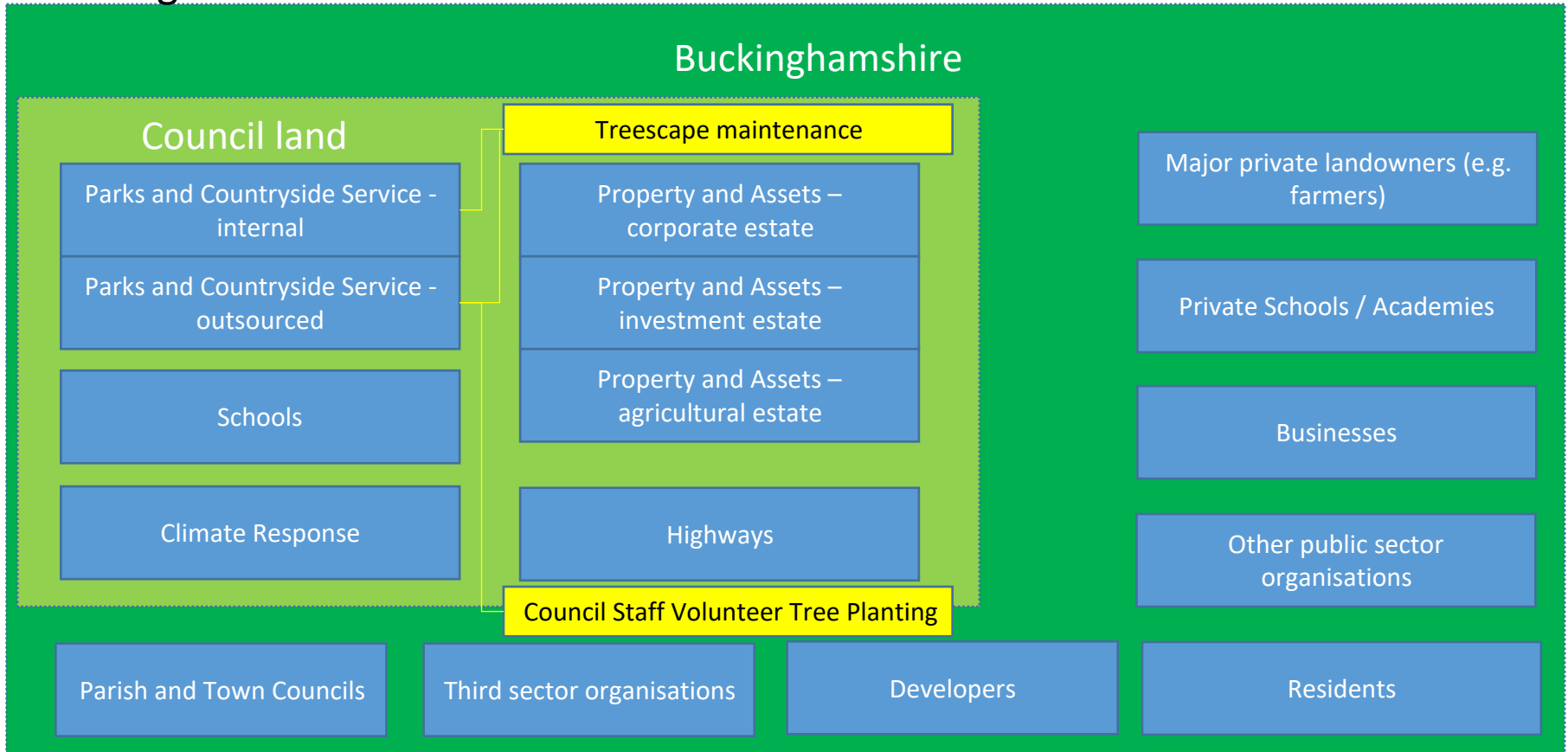
- £138k to replace 158 trees removed from the public highway



## 2. Stakeholder Activity and Responsibilities

### Parks and Countryside

- Ongoing activity to maintain treescapes in Council parks and PROWs
- Volunteer tree planting undertaken by Council staff '21/'22 with Chiltern Rangers



### 3. New Trees Planted to Date – Billet Field

#### Planting and maintenance

- Planting design includes:
  - the use of plastic-free biodegradable mulch mats and spiral guards, and deer and rabbit netting to suppress weeds and help prevent tree damage from pests.
  - Pedestrian and vehicle access gates
- Pryor and Rickett Silviculture was the contractor chosen in 2021 to plant and maintain (5+5 years) the trees at Billet Field.
  - Maintenance obligations include:
    - clearing weeds (without using chemical weedkillers)
    - inspecting and affecting minor repairs to fencing and gates
    - replacing any dead trees
    - mowing grass along the rides (walking routes)
    - removing litter from the site.

### 3. New Trees Planted to Date – Council Land

Billet Field	3450
Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF)	586
Queens Green Canopy (QGC)	168
Parks and Countryside	1656



**Target: 543,000. '21/'22 Total: 5860**



# 3. New Trees Planted to Date – ‘21/’22 Summary

<b>Council Land</b>	<b>5860</b>
<b>Non Council Land</b>	<b>469</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6329</b>



Marlow  
community  
trees

Fruit Trees at the  
Lady Ryder Memorial Garden,  
Parmoor



Trees for Buckland  
Parish Council's public  
Green space



Wye Dene housing development  
Trees, High Wycombe



Haddenham  
community trees



# 4. Replacement Highways Trees Planted to Date

Aylesbury Vale Area	65
High Wycombe Area	47
Amersham Area	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>146</b>



**Target: 158. Planted: 146**

# 5. Trees on Council Land – '22/'23 Planting Plans

In 2021

- funding for contractor planting increased by 25% for tree establishment and started offering contributions towards ongoing maintenance
- a mechanism where the Council wouldn't have to bear contractor costs became available for the Council – the Forestry England Woodland Partnership scheme

*Long term policy appears to support more generous support packages for trees*

- 3 pronged approach for '22/'23
  - Use the **Forestry England Woodland Partnership (FEWP) scheme** as far as practicable for sites on the agricultural estate
  - Where FEWP isn't possible, **secure funding from the most generous grant schemes for contractor planting** on the agricultural estate (e.g. England Woodland Creation Offer)
  - **Local Authority Treescapes Fund** – maximise funding from this source for tree planting at all other sites

# 5. Trees on Council Land – ‘22/’23 Planting Plans

Forestry England Woodland Partnership (FEWP) scheme

- Tree establishment and maintenance is the responsibility of Forestry England
- Public can access the newly forested sites
- Council benefits from the Woodland Carbon Units generated
- Rental income received from Forestry England (FE)
- Site must be 50ha (but can be a smaller area if located close to FE operational sites)
- 50ha site in east Buckinghamshire
  - Natural break in tenancy contracts mean that the site could become available for planting in the ‘22/’23 planting season
  - Potential for 83,000 – 102,000 trees

# 5. Trees on Council Land – '22/'23 Planting Plans

## Contractor Planting

- 3 potential sites near High Wycombe (5ha and 7.1ha), and Amersham (7.44ha) could accommodate 41,700 trees.
- Woodland Creation Design Plans currently being updated which consider
  - Soil and water aspects
  - Biodiversity and ecology
  - Landscape and the historic environment
  - Access and stakeholder interest
  - Timber production
  - Carbon sequestration
- Sites would become available for planting in September following crop harvests
- Compensation would be paid to tenants if:
  - They forego agricultural subsidies for the land
  - Contracts are amended ahead of established renewal dates

# 5. Trees on Council Land – ‘22/’23 Planting Plans

## Contractor Planting

- England Woodland Creation Offer grant applications will request:
  - ~£10,700 per ha ‘one-off’ contribution, made up of:
    - £8,500 per ha cap for standard items (trees, fencing etc)
    - £2,200 per ha for recreational access
  - £300 per ha per annum contribution for maintenance (10 years max.)
  - Additional ‘one-off’ grant contributions will be sought where sites:
    - Are close to settlements (£500 per ha)
    - Provide nature recovery benefits – e.g. woodland expansion (£1,100 / £2,800 per ha)
    - Provide water quality benefits – e.g. reduce pollution to watercourses (£400 per ha)
    - Mitigate flood risk (£500 per ha)
    - Provide shading / wildlife corridors for watercourses (£1,600 per ha)



## 6. Finance - For 543,000 Trees

Changes to the funding landscape have brought down net projects costs

Expenditure for the entire programme is expected to remain within the budget earmarked from the Climate Change Fund due to:

- Funding support increasing from external sources
- Optimising our approach to procurement so that it's sensitive to market demand and capitalises on economies of scale

## 6. Finance - LATF

- LATF fully funds the planting of trees by community groups, NGOs, Parish Councils etc. in non-woodland areas of 0.5ha or less
- 21-22 bid - 817 planted of which 586 are on Council Land (CL)
- 22-23 application -
  - Miyawaki 'Tiny Forests' 1800 whips – planting within a school and two other locations
    - Very dense planting of trees
  - Community group projects planting 1316 trees
    - Likely that 849 will be planted on CL
- If LATF supported the planting of an average of 718 trees a year on CL then a total of 7,175 trees would be planted over the next 10 years
  - **Saving of £88k**



## 7. Added Value

### Carbon Offsetting

The price of units used to offset carbon continues to increase dramatically. 'Growing' our own Woodland Carbon Units offers the Council a financial saving in the long term.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

It may be possible to use the increase in biodiversity units from new woodland planted on Council land to help some developers fulfil some of the forthcoming 10% biodiversity net gain requirements. This could provide additional revenue to support the woodland.

### Wellbeing

The recent pandemic saw unprecedented increased use of public green spaces. Providing additional areas will contribute to combatting health issues.