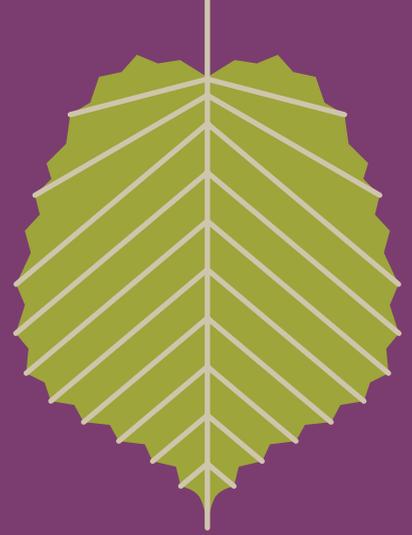
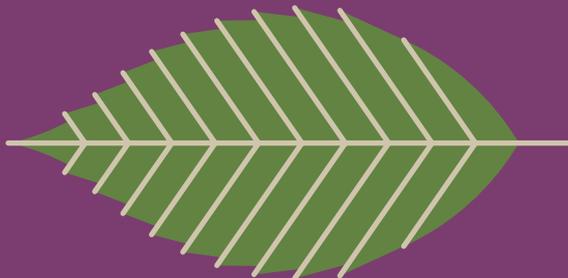
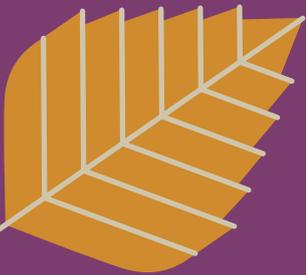
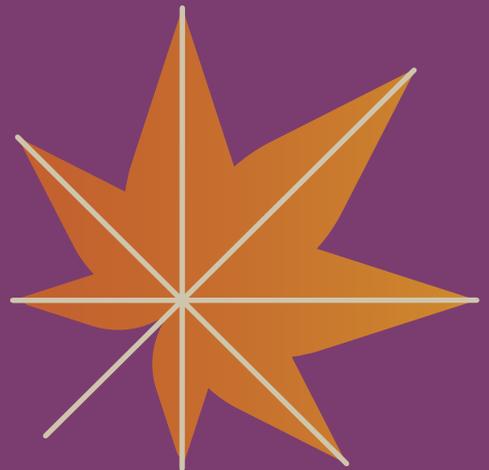
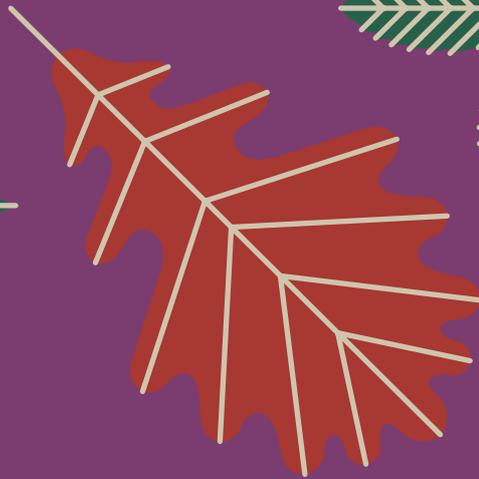
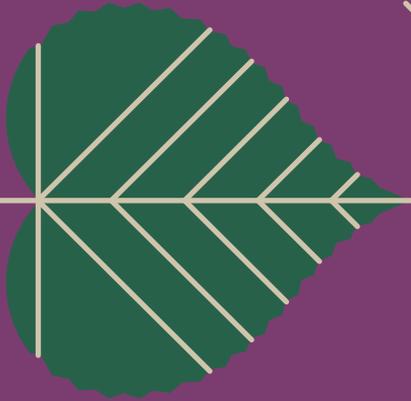
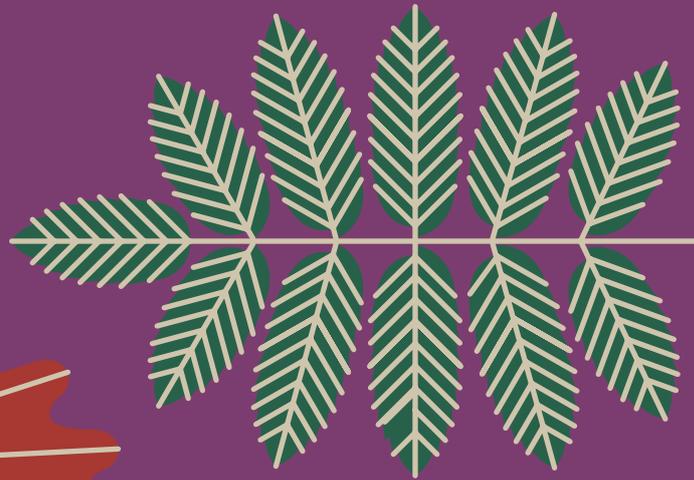




Sheffield Street Tree
Partnership



Annual Report 2022

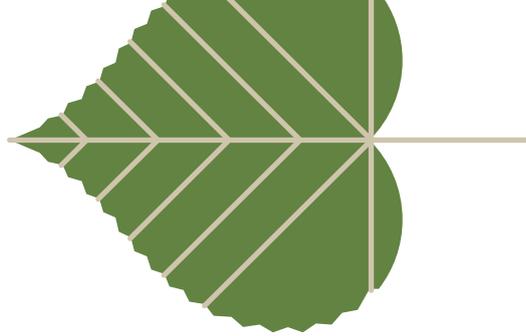


Sheffield &
Rotherham
Wildlife Trust



WOODLAND
TRUST





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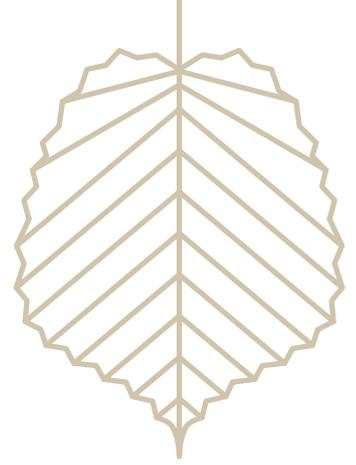


Silver birch
Betula pendula

Background

Following an agreement reached between Sheffield Tree Action Groups (STAG), Sheffield City Council and Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust in 2019, work began to develop a Partnership Street Tree Strategy for Sheffield. More information can be found about how the Strategy was developed on the [**Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust**](#) web pages.

The Strategy was initially launched as a 'Working Strategy' in 2020, to provide the opportunity for people from across the city and beyond to make comments, share their ideas and make commitments to supporting the proposals. The public consultation ran for 12 weeks in 2020, resulting in over 280 responses from individuals and organisations.





Introduction

Sheffield Street Tree Partnership Strategy was launched in May 2021 by Sheffield Street Tree Partnership.

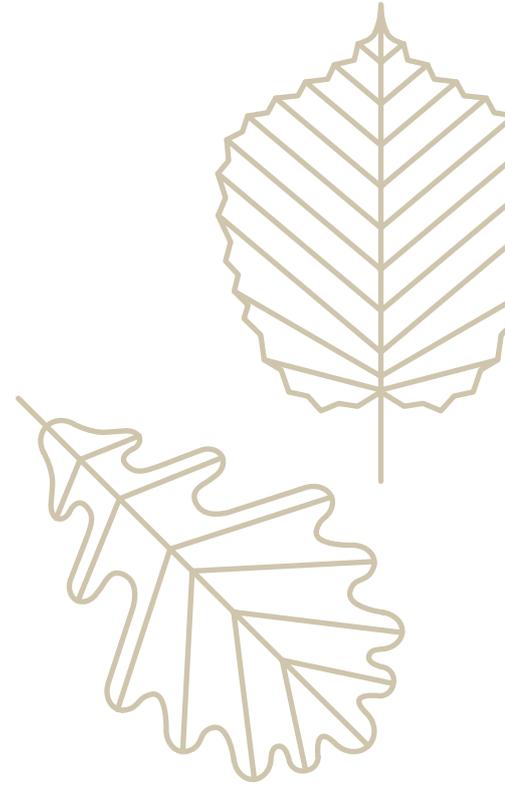
The Partnership’s vision is for a network of street trees that Sheffield can be proud of: well-maintained and cared for; resistant to the threats of disease and climate change; and delivering many benefits for people and our environment.

Sheffield Street Tree Partnership Strategy identifies six outcomes that explain the impact that the activity of the Partnership seeks to deliver. There is a great deal to do to realise the Partnership’s ambitions and it is made clear within the Strategy that some of the actions will take many years to achieve.

Work has initially focussed on areas of activities that resolve outstanding issues as identified by the Partnership and those actions which are needed to underpin the forward ambitions set out in the Strategy.

The action plans in the Strategy remain live and the Partnership is committed to producing an annual report to update on progress.

This is the first of those annual progress reports - it has been produced to publicly share and celebrate what the Partnership has achieved so far and provide transparency about where there is more work to do.





OUTCOME 1

Our street trees are sustainably and carefully managed and maintained in accordance with best practice

This outcome is about ensuring that Sheffield's street trees are looked after as valuable assets for the city and the Partnership has made significant progress with the actions that contribute to this outcome area.

Outcome 1 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
1.1	Work towards an independent certification of street trees	Complete
1.2	Promote and have oversight of the city's approach to street tree management	Complete
1.3	Review, refine and publish the decision-making process for managing Sheffield's street trees	Complete
1.4	Update contract methods statements and management documents	In progress
1.5	Consider ways to influence planning and development e.g. through a Supplementary Planning Document	Not started
1.6	Explore ways to promote existing standards for working in the vicinity of street trees and encourage adherence by all contractors	Not started
1.7	Develop an online, user friendly, interactive and live tree map to aid tree management and community reporting	In progress
1.8	Identify important existing and future 'Treescapes' in the city to inform tree officers' management and planting decisions	Not started
1.9	Submit application for Tree Cities of the World recognition	Complete

Further information

Independent certification of street trees

The Strategy identifies independent certification as a major step forward in ensuring transparency, best practice and quality of street tree management and monitoring; working toward this independent certification was a key action, and it is one that the Partnership has now successfully undertaken.

In autumn 2021 Sheffield became the first city in Europe to take part in a new pilot for urban tree management certification. The audit was undertaken by industry professionals and Sheffield's Streets Ahead Partnership was awarded a certificate of compliance for managing our street trees sustainably, from PEFC UK (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification), the world's largest Forest Certification Scheme.

The Trees Outside Forests standard is expected to be fully endorsed by spring 2023, at which point Sheffield will be awarded the first ever certificate for a city in Europe for sustainably managing its street trees. This means that Sheffield's management of street trees has been found to be at an exemplary standard, and Sheffield residents can benefit from a pioneering tree management process. Knowing that the management of Sheffield's street trees meets this demanding international standard is a significant achievement for the Partnership.

Street tree management guidelines

The action to promote and have oversight of the city's approach to street tree management has been addressed via the publication of street tree management guidelines which help answer some of the most common questions about street trees that people ask the Council. The guidelines cover the following content:

- street tree inspections
- routine street tree maintenance
- pruning works
- birds' nests and bat roosts
- street tree work that we do not do
- street tree removal and replacement





Decision making process for managing Sheffield's street trees

The action to review, refine and publish the decision-making process for managing Sheffield's street trees has been successfully achieved. The decision process for the management and maintenance of Sheffield's street trees was reviewed as part of the consultation on the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership Working Strategy and is published as Appendix 5 of the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership Strategy.

Between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022 Sheffield City Council held 131 public consultations on the removal and replacement of highway trees and received 325 responses, including from citizens, interest groups, tree wardens and academics.

This was, and continues to be, an important priority to enable the Partnership to provide transparency of the decision-making process adopted by the Council and Amey for the management of street trees and the Partnership is proud of the significant improvements that have been made in this area in recent years.



English Oak
Quercus robur

Tree Cities of the World

Another ambition within this outcome area was for Sheffield to apply to become part of the 'Tree Cities of the World' community. Having submitted an application in early 2022, the Partnership is delighted that Sheffield is amongst the 138 cities worldwide, and one of the 19 UK cities to be recognised in 2021 as Tree Cities of the World.

Cities are recognised for demonstrating leadership in management of their urban trees and have to meet five core standards of urban forest management in order to earn recognition.

By joining a network of internationally recognised frontrunners in urban tree management, the Partnership can connect with other cities, share ideas and examples of best practice, celebrate progress made in terms of improving tree stock management practices, and help to create a positive narrative to reinforce Sheffield's 'green city status'.

The Partnership will continue its work to maintain Sheffield's Tree Cities of the World status in 2022 and beyond.



OUTCOME 2

Our street trees are more resilient through the type and age of trees we plant and how we manage the current street tree stock

This outcome focusses on the Partnership's ambition to ensure that Sheffield's street trees are more resilient to climate change and threats from pests and diseases.

Outcome 2 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
2.1	Annual review of these measures	Ongoing
2.2	Cyclical tree inspection of at least once every 3-5 years	Ongoing
2.3	Review the current age profile and consider approaches to increase resilience	In progress
2.4	Develop a thorough species selection process for replacements and replanting, with reference to best practice	Complete
2.5	Monitor and report the planting of cultivars on the network with the aim of optimising their use	Ongoing
2.6	Support the establishment of a network of local provenance tree nurseries	Not started



Further information

It has long been established that a greater diversity of street trees can improve the resilience of tree networks and can help to combat the devastating effects of disease and pests. The target proportions for street tree planting that our colleagues in Sheffield are aiming to achieve are:

- **no more than 30% of any one family**
- **no more than 20% of any single genus**
- **no more than 10% of a single species**

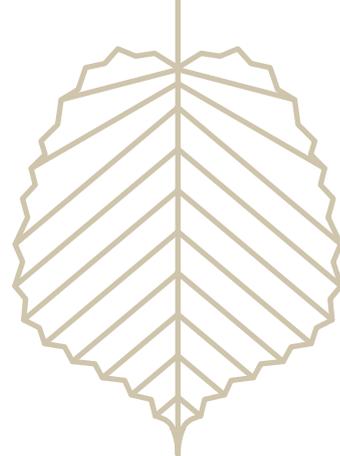
We have made significant strides in 2021 in improving the diversity of our street trees, through creating a greater diversity of Family, Genus, and Species.

Family

Comparing 2020 with 2021, the number of Street Tree Families has increased to 29. Our most common tree family is Rosaceae, which contains Rowan, Hawthorn and Cherry, amongst others. The percentage of Rosaceae is slightly high at 37.4% in comparison with ideal proportions, although it is reducing over time. Bringing this back in line using natural wastage means that there can't be a target date and progress will be slow, but steady. The percentage of the families comprising 'All others' has increased from 6.2% to 6.5%, which is good in terms of introducing completely new tree families to the network.

Genus

Between 2020 and 2021 the number of genera increased to 66. Acer (Maple, Sycamore) still has the highest percentage by genus at 16.9%, ahead of Prunus (Cherry, Plum) at 16.4%. Although the proportions of both Prunus and Sorbus (Rowan, Whitebeam) have fallen slightly, Malus (Apple) and Crataegus (Hawthorn) have increased, which is why the percentage of Rosaceae hasn't changed greatly. We perhaps need to consider taking more concerted action in future years in relation to all four of these genus in the Rosaceae family. The proportion of Fraxinus (Ash) remains at 7.3%, but is expected to reduce as removals due to Ash Dieback expand across the city. The top eight genera make up 83.6% of the total, down from 84.2%, which again shows a steady improvement in the diversity and subsequent resilience of our trees.



Species

Whilst our species count has increased, there are difficulties in allocating all trees to a specific species due to the fact that not all trees are fully identified to species level, but also the use of cultivars and hybrids which have been created by crossing several different types, and whose derivation is in some cases unknown. In 2020 there were 202 botanical names (species, hybrids, cultivars) in 167 species/hybrids; by 2021 there were 220 botanical names in 174 species/hybrids.

8.6% of trees are still only identified to genus level, but this represents an improvement in the richness of data we have on our trees which makes it easier for us to measure diversity and look for ways to improve. The number of species has increased, though the proportions of the ten most numerous haven't changed much in the past few years.

Age profile

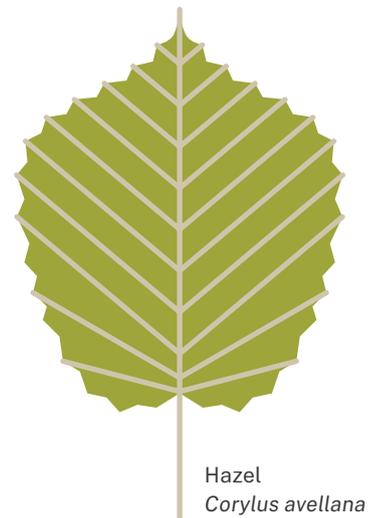
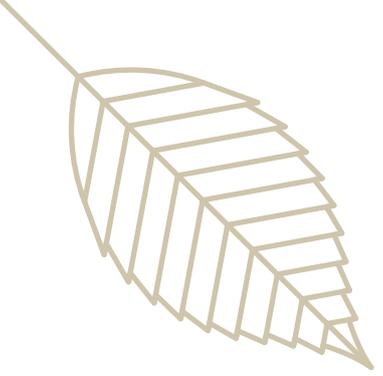
In 2021, 63% of our tree stock was maturing, which is unchanged from 2020. The only change in proportions of age class comes from an increase in the percentage of young trees (12% from 11%) and a reduction in the percentage of new plantings (15% from 16%).

A tree provides maximum benefits when it's at maturity, so a good age profile should incorporate mature trees providing maximum benefits, older trees retained for cultural or biodiversity value, and younger trees planted to maintain tree stocks in future. More analysis is required into the health and vitality of our street trees before we can determine whether current proportions need to be adjusted and how we would manage that transition.

Condition

The way we measure the current condition of our street trees is through subjective assessments by experienced professionals. Our colleagues look at the overall physiological and structural condition of our trees and make a judgement based on their extensive experience and knowledge. In 2021, 86% of our trees were reported as being 'Fair' to 'Good', with the percentage of 'Good' trees seeing an increase in comparison with 2020.

It is difficult to improve the condition of an established tree once it has matured, therefore the work of our tree wardens, professionals, and residents in supporting young street trees to have a healthy start is vital to ensure our trees grow faster and are more resilient in adult life.







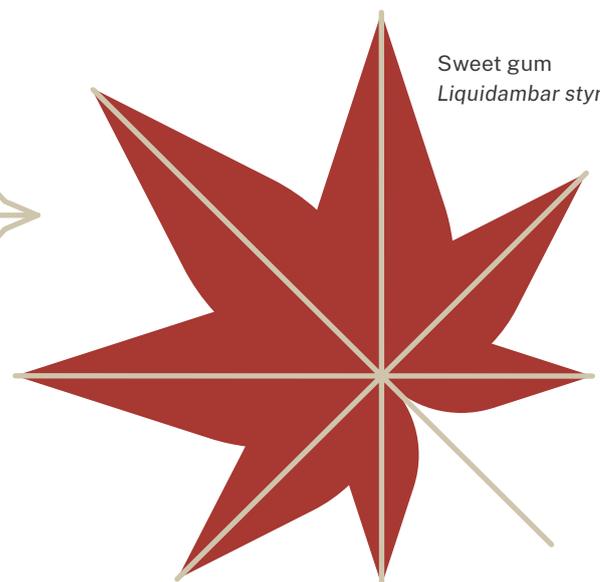
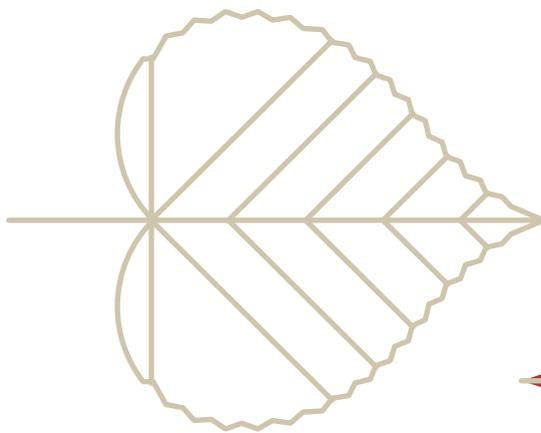
OUTCOME 3

Increase the value and benefits that flow from our street trees

Sheffield's urban trees provide many important benefits, including:

- Enhancing Sheffield's 'green city' reputation and contributing to a sense of place
- Improving our physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Cleaning the air that we breathe
- Contributing to offsetting our carbon emissions
- Helping combat the effects of climate change such as flash floods and rising temperatures
- Providing a connection for people to the natural environment on their doorsteps
- Bringing communities together, fostering a sense of belonging, and being part of the heritage and history of an area
- Making the city more attractive to encourage students, visitors and businesses to come to Sheffield and help boost the local economy
- Supporting and protecting the city's biodiversity and wildlife
- Providing local environmental benefits like shade, natural traffic calming and reducing verge and pavement parking

This outcome is about increasing these benefits.



Sweet gum
Liquidambar styraciflua

Outcome 3 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
3.1	I-Tree Eco recalculated in spring every year and reported as a five-year moving average	Ongoing
3.2	Undertake equivalent planting in advance of felling mature trees as part of planned schemes where possible	Not started
3.3	Identify suitable locations on the network and under plant with hedges	Not started
3.4	Training Street Tree Wardens to monitor biodiversity supported by street trees	Not started

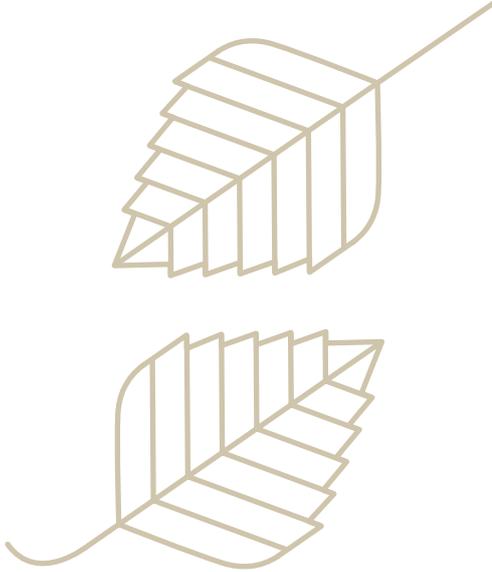
Further information

The Strategy has identified that we will know that we are increasing the value and benefits that flow from our street trees because there will be an increasing trend averaged over five years across the following indicators:

- A Capital Asset Valuation of Amenity Trees (CAVAT)**
- B Tonnes per year of air pollution removal (ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and particulates by street trees and financial value of this service)**
- C Tonnes per year of carbon stored and sequestered by street trees and financial value of this service**
- D Cubic metres per year of storm water alleviation by street trees and financial value of this service**

This is a long-term approach and the Partnership is not far enough into the delivery of the Strategy to be able to report against the indicators outlined above at present. Changes recorded on an annual basis are small-scale, which is why the Partnership’s commitment is to report measures as a five year moving average.

It is the Partnership’s intention to reproduce i-Tree Eco calculations to support future analysis; further updates to assess progress against the indicators above will be available in future progress reports.







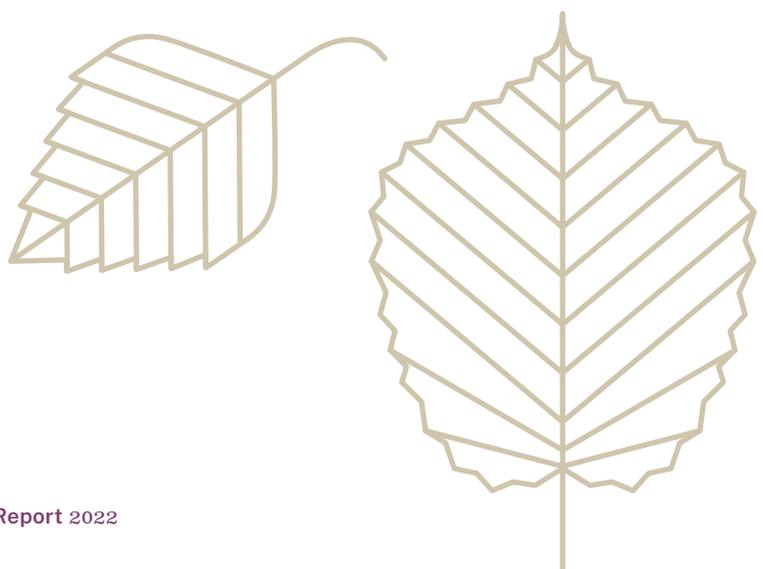
OUTCOME 4

Contribute to a more equal distribution of urban forest across the city

There is growing evidence to support the health and wellbeing benefits of being in close proximity to trees including reducing stress and improving the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of individuals and communities. This outcome is about supporting increased tree planting in areas of lower canopy cover across the city that also have poorer air quality and lower indices of living environment and/or health deprivation (Indices of Multiple Deprivation) rankings.

Outcome 4 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
4.1	Analyse the distribution of all trees across the city in relation to air quality, living environment and health deprivation indices	In progress
4.2	Use mapping analysis to target additional planting, including through community funded planting	In progress
4.3	Develop measures that will lead to a more even distribution of trees across the city e.g. through redistribution, community funded planting	In progress
4.4	Influence others to consider additional planting in local centres, district centres, and the city centre	In progress



Further information

Distribution of trees across the city in relation to air quality, Living Environment and Health Deprivation Indices

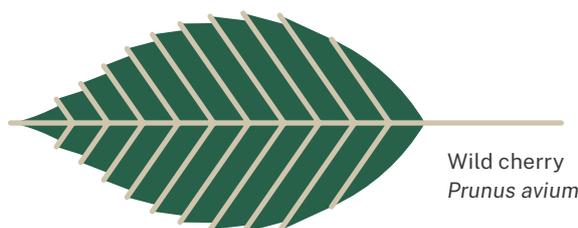
Looking at deprivation, there's a clear east/west divide, with much lower levels of deprivation in the west side of the city and correspondingly higher life expectancies. Apart from the densely treed suburbs of Southey, Firth Park and Shiregreen, street tree cover follows a similar though less marked pattern, with a tendency for more trees in the west and trees in the east concentrated on the main roads.

Unsurprisingly, air quality is worst in the city centre and near the M1, both areas with relatively few trees in the urban and industrial areas. Although additional trees will intercept particulate pollution, the wider challenge is to reduce air pollution, and Sheffield City Council continues to consider and implement ways to achieve this.

Use analysis to target additional planting in areas of low canopy cover so as to provide the most benefits

The ambition to locate additional street trees in the areas that would most benefit from them - according to analysis of air quality, living environment and health deprivation indices - isn't as simple as it might be, as previous planning policies both create and frustrate planting opportunities. Urban tree cover across areas is often defined by housing policies and 'grand designs'. Examples are the lime tree avenues of Nether Edge, and the matched pairs of large deciduous trees in Southey and Shiregreen. Other areas like Walkley and Hillsborough, have terraced houses on narrow streets where it's difficult to place trees of any size, and this is exacerbated by the growth of car ownership since some of these estates were built, which can create parking pressures whether there are any street trees or not.

Darnall was targeted as an area for investigation for additional planting, due to its proximity to the M1. A joint project with the University of Sheffield has identified potential planting sites, which will be investigated further in order to assess feasibility and look for funding sources. Further sites are being considered in partnership with the University.



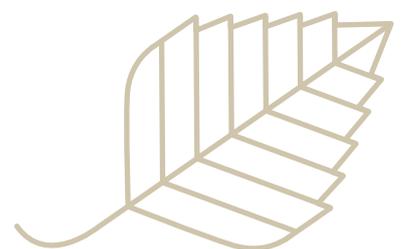
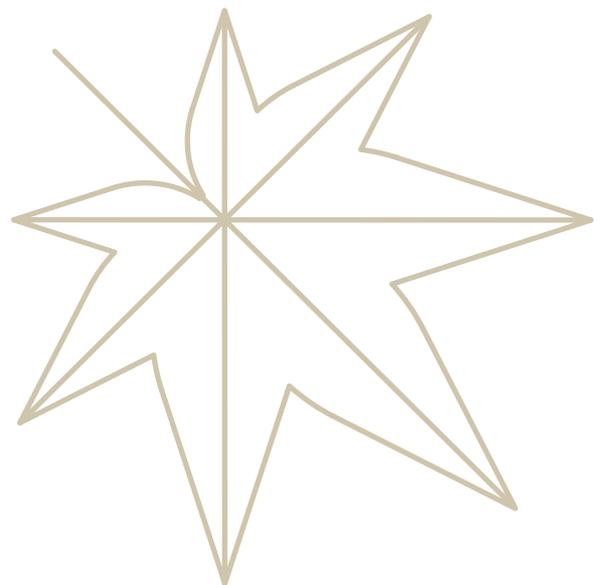
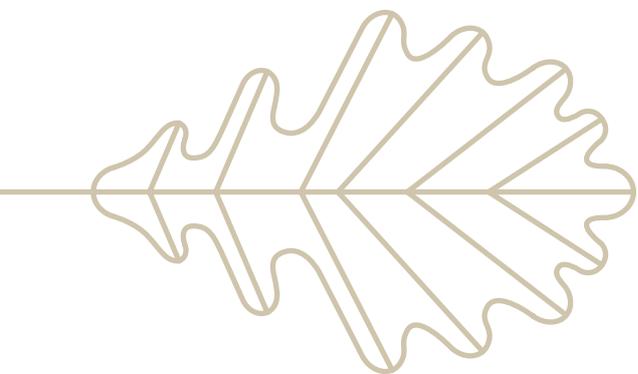
Develop measures that will lead to a more even distribution of trees across the city

Initiatives will include:

- Relocating replacement trees where appropriate
- Creating larger scale schemes which the partnership can seek funding for
- Community funded planting, either by residents directly, or by altruistic funding from other areas

Influence others to consider additional planting

Initiatives like 'Grey to Green' and 'Connecting Sheffield' are examples of a new confidence in planting strategies; these need to be linked to the Strategy so we can take advantage of multi-organisational partnership working and create a unified approach. During 2021, members of the Partnership successfully engaged with one of the Connecting Sheffield scheme designs to suggest improvements to the design. This helped prevent around 20 large mature street trees from being felled and has influenced the species choice and location of the replacement trees.





OUTCOME 5

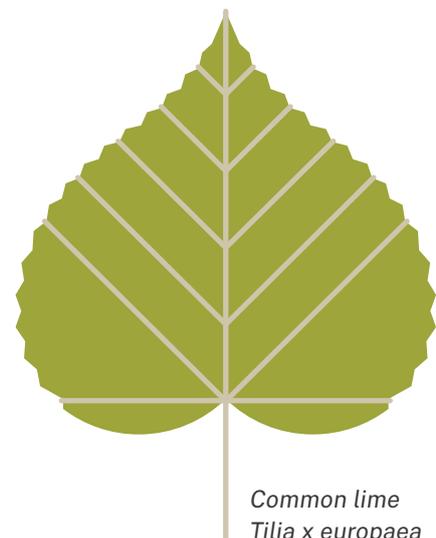
Increase street tree canopy cover

Street trees form a small but important part of the whole tree canopy that covers the city. Canopy cover is an indication of whether the whole biomass of our street trees is increasing over time. More tree biomass generally equates to more benefits and value flowing from our street trees. In particular this should benefit biodiversity, providing more habitats for bats, birds, insects and other wildlife.

If the Partnership is successful in achieving this outcome there will be an increasing trend in average canopy cover over a five-yearly rolling period using the i-Tree canopy calculations.

Outcome 5 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
5.1	Calculate canopy cover annually in spring/early summer	Ongoing
5.2	Explore ways to monitor biodiversity across our street trees	Not started
5.3	Explore ways to enhance biodiversity and bio abundance across our street trees	Not started



Further information

Context

According to the Sheffield Trees and Woodlands Strategy 2018-2033, the total tree cover of Sheffield is 18.4% and 21.6% in the urban area of the city.

Street trees are only part of the total tree cover in the city; trees in public parks and private gardens, housing land and natural woodlands are by far the greater part of the city's trees. Nevertheless, street trees by definition deliver benefits where people are, and also form valuable wildlife corridors, so their contribution is important.

There might be variations in canopy cover from one year to the next depending on particular management issues that might arise. Therefore the Partnership intends to measure canopy cover averaged over a five-year period.

This is a long-term approach and at the time of publication of this progress report the Partnership is not far enough into the delivery of the Strategy to be able to assess whether there has been any meaningful change in street tree canopy cover.

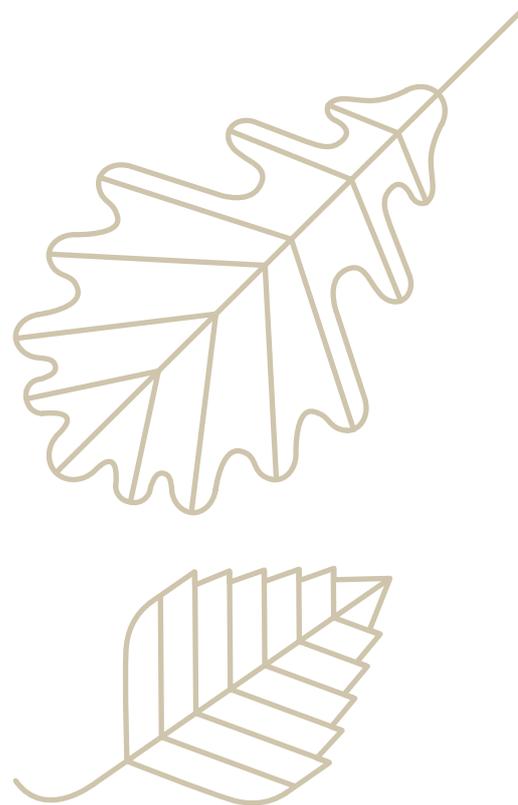
Additional planting

Whilst it is not possible to report canopy cover calculations at present, one of the ways that an increase in canopy cover will be achieved is via additional planting and progress has been made relating to this agenda.

One of the important projects that the Partnership has progressed over the past year is the Community Tree Planting Pilot. This successful pilot resulted in the planting of 61 additional trees in the Nether Edge, Sharrow, Sharrow Vale and Carter Knowle areas in early 2022, thanks to a Partnership approach led by Nether Edge and Sharrow Sustainable Transformation (NESST) and Abbeydale Street Trees.

Using a crowdfunding approach NESST and Abbeydale Street Trees worked with local residents to raise thousands of pounds to fund the additional trees and many of these new trees are on roads without any current street trees.

This may seem like only a small increase of 0.2% on the existing number of 36,000 street trees in Sheffield, however this marks a significant change of direction.



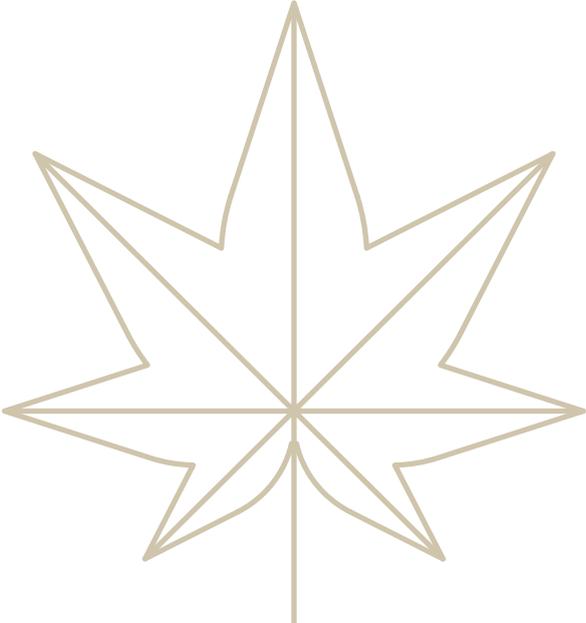
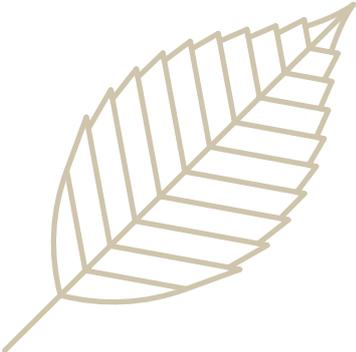
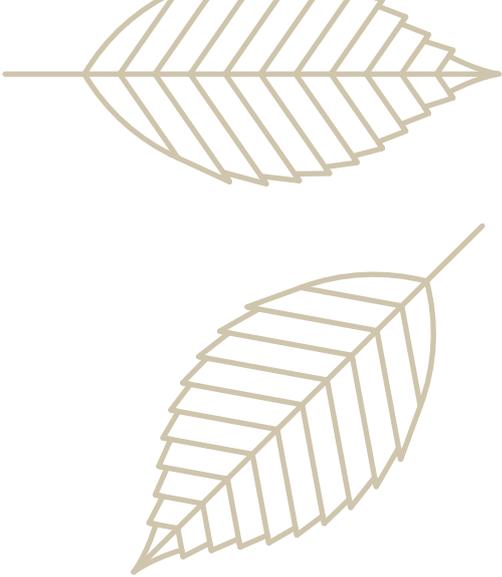
Work is ongoing to assess, evaluate and learn lessons from the pilot. The Partnership will continue to work to achieve a clear process for residents and community groups to fund additional street tree planting across the city.

The Partnership is also supportive of the ambition to plant additional trees through the Connecting Sheffield programme, which aims to transform the transport infrastructure that people use to get around the city as part of their everyday lives.

While trees due to be felled as part of the Connecting Sheffield projects will be kept to a minimum, it is the intention of the Connecting Sheffield programme to replace each felled tree with three new trees, which over time will help to support an increased tree canopy cover in the city.

The Partnership also welcomes the environmental benefits associated with Sheffield’s Grey to Green strategy. The additional planting resulting from this project makes a positive contribution to urban biodiversity in Sheffield. It helps nature to thrive in the city centre and creates a sustainable environment where a diversity of insects can feed, roam and shelter.

The Partnership will continue to support additional planting to increase canopy cover and improve urban biodiversity, both through its own activity and by working collaboratively with other partners in the city.







OUTCOME 6

The wider community of all ages is involved in caring for and valuing street trees

This outcome is about increasing the resources (funds and time) available to care for Sheffield's street trees by involving more people. There is also an opportunity to improve our shared understanding and raise public awareness of the benefits and challenges that come from managing street trees. Better communication should help to ensure that we work together across the city to improve Sheffield's street trees and not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Outcome 6 summary table

Action ref	Action description	Action status
6.1	Continue to develop the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership to take forward this Strategy	Ongoing
6.2	Promote the new process that allows residents and community groups to fund additional street tree planting	In progress
6.3	Support the Street Tree Warden scheme for Sheffield	Ongoing
6.4	Develop an engagement and outreach programme to encourage children, young people, families, and adults to learn about and value their local trees	Not started
6.5	Arrange an annual celebration to raise awareness and acknowledge volunteers	In progress

Further information

Developing the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership

Sheffield Street Tree Partnership continues to develop and evolve, working together to deliver the vision of a network of street trees that Sheffield can be proud of. The Partnership is incredibly grateful to Liz Ballard, Chief Executive at Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust, for her excellent stewardship in her role as Chair of Sheffield Street Tree Partnership, without whom all that the Partnership has achieved together would not have been possible.

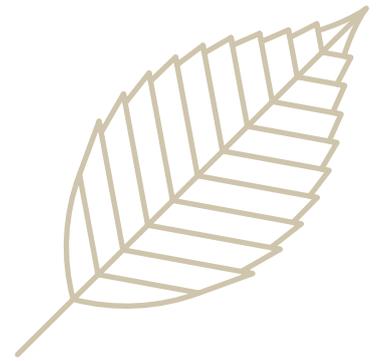
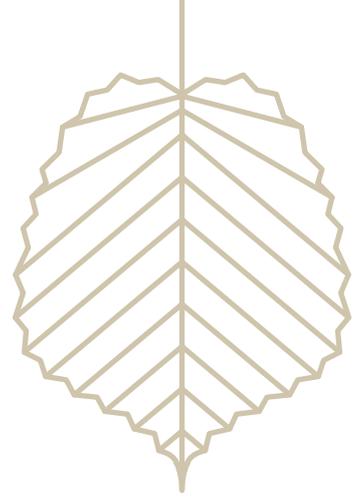
Liz stood down in March 2022 and the Partnership has welcomed a new Chair, Nathan Edwards, who will lead the Partnership in the next phase of its journey. Nathan is a chartered landscape architect, a member of the Landscape Institute's Advisory Council, part of the steering group for Nature Recovery Sheffield and the Chair of the Woodseats Community Garden. He has a particular interest in how canopy cover can be increased, particularly across the more disadvantaged areas to the east of the city.

The Partnership welcomes the continuation of Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust representation on the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership via a new member of the Partnership, Nicky Rivers.

The Partnership will continue working together to contribute and secure skills, resources and funds to deliver the actions in the Sheffield Street Tree Strategy.

Additional street tree planting process

One of the actions for this outcome area is to promote the new process that allows residents and community groups to fund additional street tree planting. The Partnership is delighted with the progress that has been made regarding the Community Tree Planting Pilot (see further detail in Outcome 5, pages 23-24). Once a clear process for additional street tree planting across the city has been agreed by the Partnership this will be promoted to residents and community groups.



Tree Warden scheme

The Strategy states that the Partnership will support the Street Tree Warden scheme to provide a structured approach to engage local people in looking after street trees. Although there have been some challenges with this scheme, due to the restrictions in terms of face-to-face activity during the pandemic, work is continuing to support our existing volunteer Street Tree Wardens and recruit new ones. There are currently over 30 Street Tree Wardens helping to care for their local street trees and acting as the eyes, ears and voice for the trees down their street. The Partnership will continue to support and train these volunteers, engage them in the activities of the Partnership and grow the scheme over time.

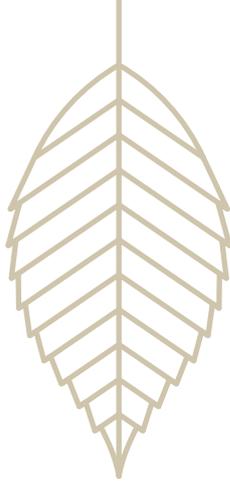
Annual celebration event

As part of the Partnership's ambition that the wider community of all ages is involved in caring for and valuing street trees, one of the Strategy actions is to arrange an annual celebration event. This will raise awareness among residents of the value and benefits of street trees and acknowledge the volunteers who support the management and maintenance of street trees. The Partnership is planning to host its first annual celebration event in September 2022.



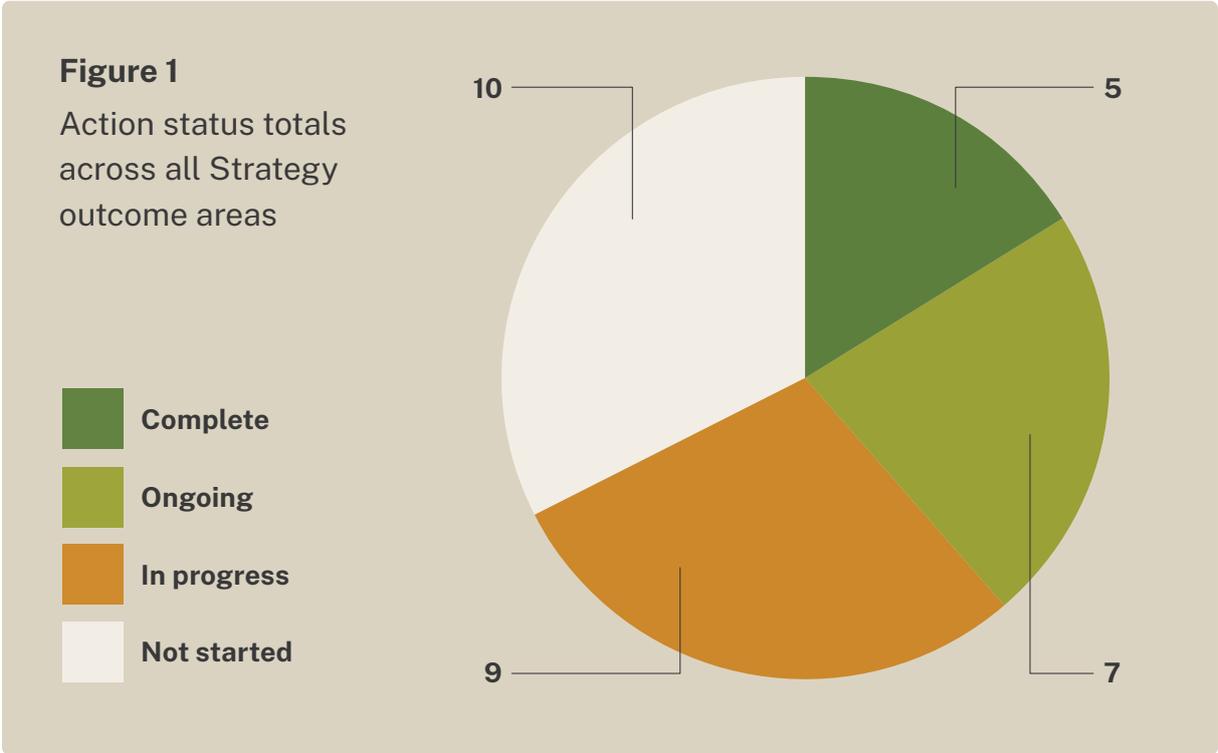


Final comments



The Partnership would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all partners, volunteers and to everyone who has been involved so far in delivering the vision outlined in the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership Strategy.

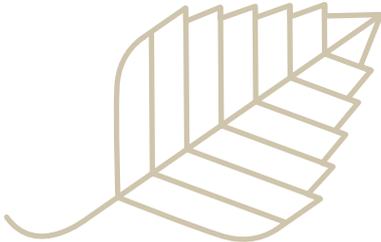
Figure 1, below, shows status totals for the actions across all six outcome areas of the Strategy, demonstrating the excellent progress that is already being achieved just one year into delivery of the Strategy.



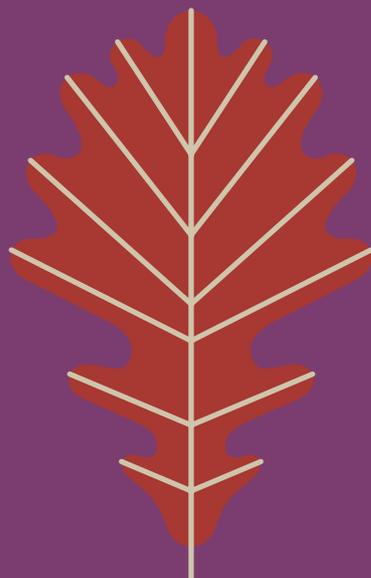
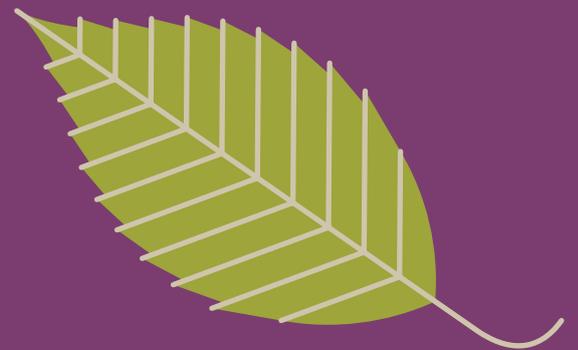
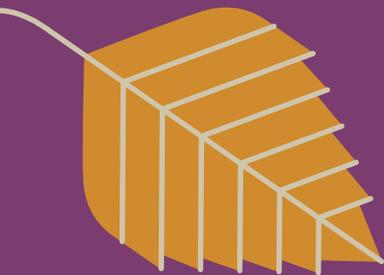
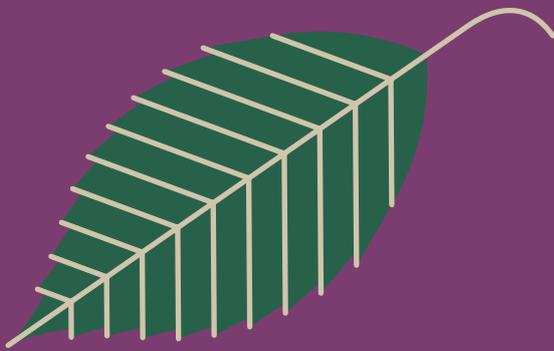
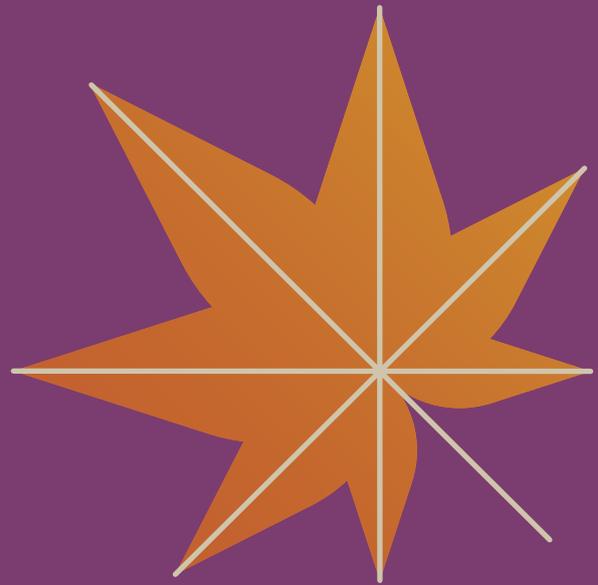
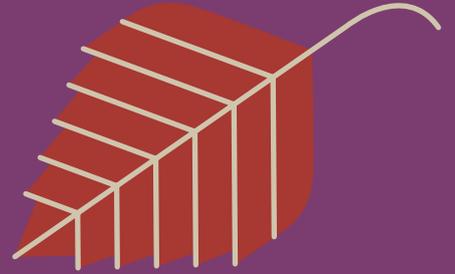
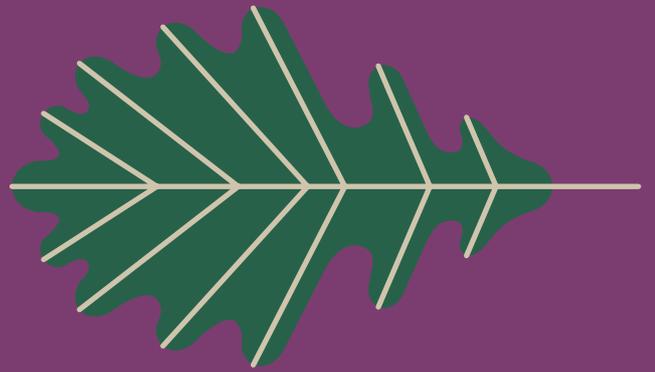
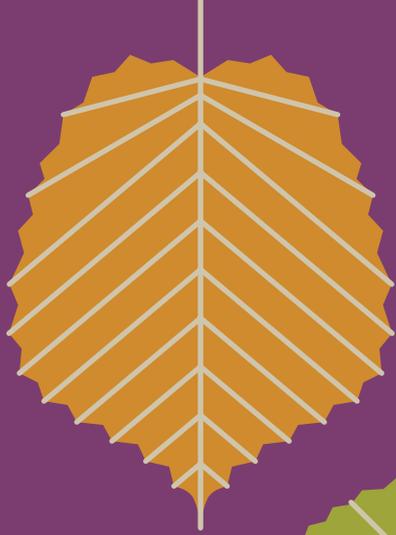
The Partnership is proud of what has been achieved so far but there is so much more to do to deliver the benefits that street trees can bring, both for the environment and for the people of Sheffield.

Work will continue in collaboration with partners, volunteers and the wider community to secure these benefits.

Further updates on the work of the Sheffield Street Tree Partnership will be available in future annual progress reports.







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