

County Council Meeting – 9 February 2023**Question to Councillor Tagg
Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure
and Climate Change****By Councillor Afsar**

Question

Urban Tree planting is critical for maintaining good air quality. What else can be done to plant more Trees in urban areas and do you have any district by district year to year comparative statistics on Urban tree planting in Staffordshire?

Reply

A corporate Tree Management Strategy is currently under development. This will include future tree planting and maintenance programmes, which amongst other things is a key part of the council's Climate Change Action Plan.

There are already several programmes of tree planting activity taking place. Examples include:

- a. A free tree giveaway that will be taking place in the coming weeks via the Country Parks. 5000 trees will be made available to residents to plant in their gardens to encourage urban tree planting.
- b. Economic regeneration schemes also include tree planting, and over the last two years the County Council has planted over 20,000 trees through this approach.
- c. Tree planting schemes involving schools taking place in many urban areas.

District and Borough councils are engaged in their own tree planting programmes and have a key role by influencing planting in new developments through their planning functions. Recent updates to the National Planning Policy Framework mean that all new streets must now be tree-lined unless there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate. Opportunities are also taken to incorporate

trees elsewhere in new developments, such as parks and community orchards.

Last summer Cabinet approved a new highway tree strategy, within which it is now stipulated that where any existing highway tree has to be removed it will be replaced with at least 2 large or 3 smaller new trees. Borough District and Parish Councils are also supported to plant and maintain highway trees in suitable places.

