

Tree strategy – 2023 – 2030

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1) Foreword

2) Introduction

The benefits of trees, woodlands, and greenspaces are now widely researched and accepted. These include, but are not limited to, combatting the effects of climate change, increasing biodiversity, boosting local economy, and improving the health and well-being of local communities. Considering the exhaustive range of benefits afforded by trees, they are an extremely cost-effective way of contributing to broader climate change targets and to the natural capital our urban environment.

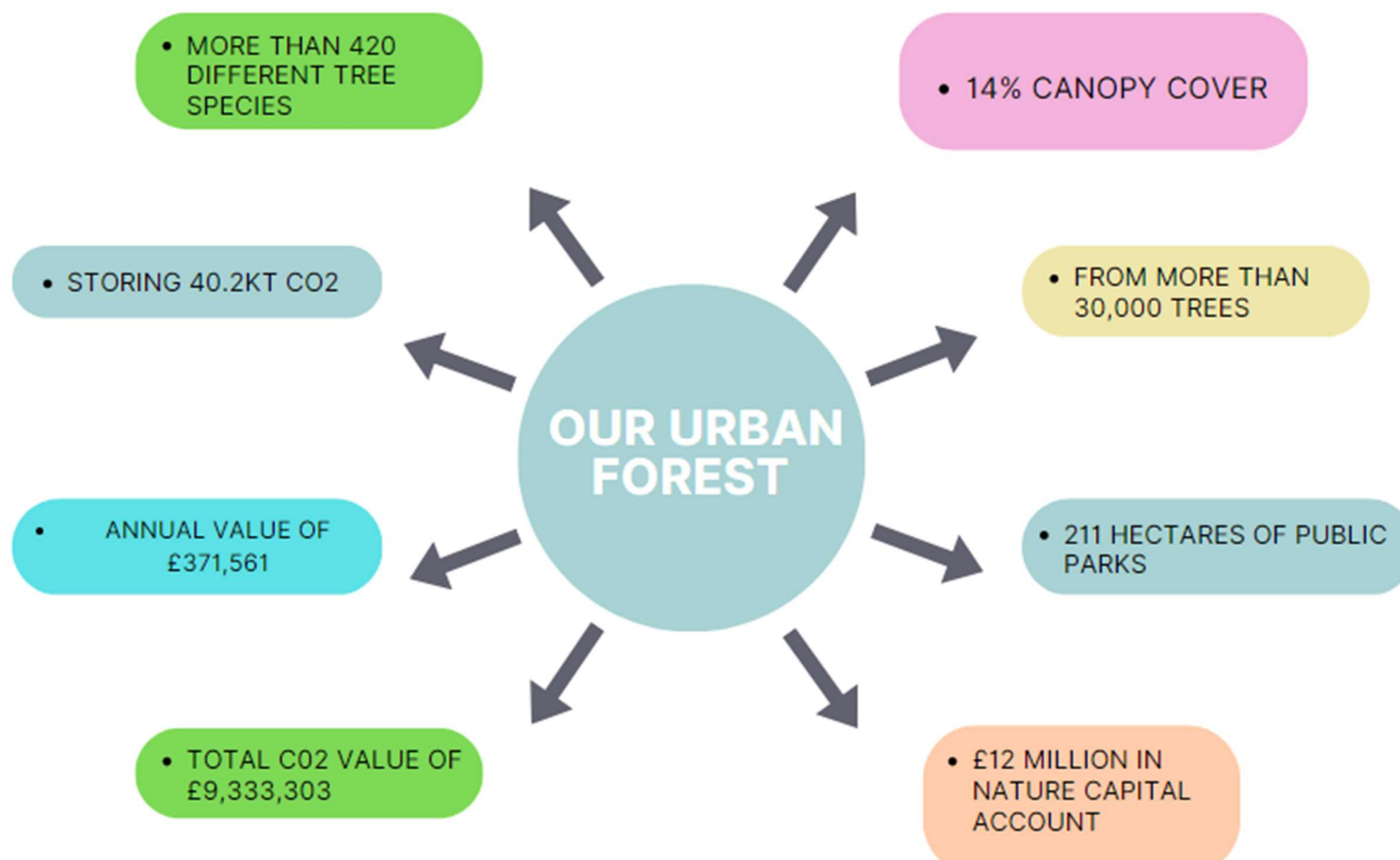
Hammersmith & Fulham council is responsible for over 20,000 trees, located in our parks, housing estates, tenanted properties, cemeteries and on the public highway, sequestering the equivalent of £370,000 of CO2 annually (see appendix 2 - i-tree report. To ensure that we manage and protect these trees to the highest standard we need to formalise a tree strategy; a rhetoric echoed by England's recently published Tree Action Plan and underpinned by the governments 25 Year Environmental Plan, and the publication of the Tree and Woodland Strategy Toolkit by the Tree Council.

This data-driven strategy will outline our vision for our urban forest for 2023-2030 and how we aim to achieve the vision in a concise and accessible document. This 7-year timeframe aligns closely with that of emerging policy and conjunctive strategies such as the EIP 5-year review process and our Climate and Ecology Strategy 2030 timeframe. This allows us to adapt and amend our targets based on shared goals. As our first Tree Strategy, we focus on research, data collection and developing procedures that pave the way for a future of strategic tree management at LBHF.

The strategy provides a roadmap to achieve our vision by detailing main objectives and the actions required to achieve them. Our primary objectives are to protect and improve our current tree stock, increase our canopy cover, and foster relationships with our stakeholders. We operationalise our actions in the Action Plan; an established framework used across the council. A strategic approach is more important than ever as we rise to the challenges posed by the climate emergency and set ambitions to contribute to becoming the greenest Borough in England.

We use primary and secondary research, software, and guidance tools to inform our aims and identify additional knowledge gaps we commit to filling. These include an I-Tree Canopy Cover report, I-Tree Eco, Lodon data store, tools provided by the GLA and outputs from our internal asset management system. This strategy is designed to work in tandem with our Tree Policy; a document that outlines how we manage our urban forest. This can be found at LBHFC.COM.

2.1) Our Urban forest



The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham is the fourth smallest borough in London and one of the most densely populated, with a population of 185,000 in 2011 census and around 80,600 households up 7% from the 2001 census. The

borough covers 1,715 hectares with 211 hectares of publicly accessible parks. Despite a lower-than-average canopy cover of 14% (see appendix – I-Tree Canopy Cover Report), compared to the London average of 21% (GLA), Hammersmith and Fulham is ranked as the 28th greenest out of the 33 London boroughs in terms of proportion of area under publicly accessible greenspace (NCA). This 14% cover includes 20,000 council owned trees that are recorded on our asset management system, thousands of saplings, woodlands, and privately owned trees. All of which contribute to recreational benefits with a total value of £326 million, carbon storage at £0.10 million, temperature regulation value of £12 million as reported by NCA)

At present, we do not have figures on privately owned trees. However, as described in the London Urban Forest Plan (2019), 20% of London’s urban forest is in private properties. Through this we estimate that more than 4000 trees are privately owned. As part of this strategy, we commit to protecting and preserving privately owned trees. This will begin with gathering data via primary research outlined in the action plan.

Our trees are recorded on asset management software used throughout the Council. We have recently integrated CAVAT data fields that in time, will give us a monetary value for individual trees urban that will support our efforts to protect our urban forest. We will continue to develop our records and make data available to the public.

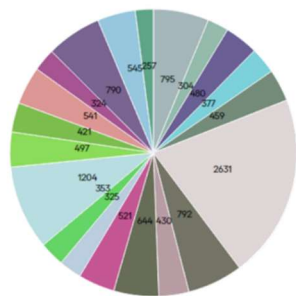


Table 1; Tree species distribution.

CARBON	CARBON (KT)	CO2 EQUIVILANT (KT)	VALUE
SEQUESTERED ANNUALLY	1.62	5.94	£371,561
TOTAL STORED IN TREES	40.66	149.07	£9,333,303

Table 2; I-Tree Canopy Cover Carbon Values

In preparation for this strategy, a borough-wide I-Tree Canopy survey conducted on 3/1/22 found that we have 14% canopy cover, an improvement of from 12%, . 70 of 500 randomly selected points were found to be trees. The canopy cover provided by our urban forest sequesters 1.62/5.94Kt of C/CO2 annually and stores a total 40.66/149.07Kt of C/CO2, with an annual value of £371,561 and a total value of £9,331,303. This is the equivalent of powering more than 7000 homes for a year.

3) Our Policy

The way in which Hammersmith and Fulham council manages its tree assets and those in conservation area or protected trees is governed by national and local policy. This section outlines the policy that informs this strategy.

National Policy

- The **National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government, June 2019)** sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Framework is a guideline for the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Under the title 'Achieving sustainable development' and 'Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change' the document outlines the role for trees in meeting these challenges. [LINK TO NPPF](#)

Regional Policy

- The **London Plan (GLA, 2021)** produced by the Greater London Authority promotes economic development and wealth creation, social development, and to improve the environment in greater London.
- Throughout The London Plan greening and trees are part of several policies such as policy G1 Green Infrastructure, policy G5 Urban Greening, policy G8 Public Realm and policy G7, Trees & Woodlands which highlights the important of protecting London's urban forests and woodlands. Within The London Plan the London Mayor, Sadiq Khan outlines a target to increase tree cover by 10% by 2050. [LINK TO LONDON PLAN](#)

Local Policy

- The **Hammersmith and Fulham Local Plan** is used to help shape the future of the borough and to determine individual planning applications and deliver development.
- Local Plan Policy OS5 is specific to greening the borough in relation to trees it seeks to prevent removal or mutilation of protected trees; seeking retention of existing trees and provision of new trees on development sites; adding to the greening of streets and the public realm; and making Tree Preservation Orders where justified in the interests of amenity. [LINK TO LOCAL PLAN](#)

In addition to key policy drivers, the council has several strategies that whilst they are not focused directly on trees, they have shared targets and themes, such as the Climate and Ecology Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, and the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

Climate and Ecology Strategy

- This sets out our plans to tackle the twin threats of the climate and ecological emergency. Trees are essential to delivering on 2 of the strategy's 5 challenges, Ecology and Adapting to climate change. Trees are embedded in actions throughout the strategy. [LINK TO STRATEGY](#)

The Air Quality Action Plan

- Key recommendations for action relevant to the Council's tree strategy included: ensuring arboricultural and greening policies are promoted in the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs); for the Council to stagger tree pruning to one in every three trees every three years; for the Council to increase tree, hedge and grass planting on Council-owned land and highways; for the Council to exercise its enforcement powers to ensure that developers fulfil commitments in delivering tree planting plans; and finally for the Council to seek ways of maintaining mature tree cover when planning for new developments. [LINK TO AQAP](#)

The Parks and Open Spaces strategy

- This strategy reiterates how important it is to greatly improve and enhance green spaces for resident wellbeing. Six of these visions that relate to trees are to protected existing open space; providing open spaces, play spaces and access to local biodiversity; creating safe, attractive and accessible spaces for all; improving the standard of management and maintenance; actively involving the community in their local open spaces; and Increasing participation in open spaces. [LINK TO DOC](#)

3.5) Tree policies

Whereby our Tree Strategy sets out aims for the strategic management of our urban forest in the future, our Tree Policy (found here; [Trees | LBHF](#)) outlines the policies we adhere to during routine management.

These include policies for tree management on highways, parks and housing sites, as well as information on the management of trees on private land. All of our tree management and operations are underpinned by guiding legislation and standards i.e. the Highways act, Town and Countryside Act, Wildlife Act and BS39982010. (REVIEW)

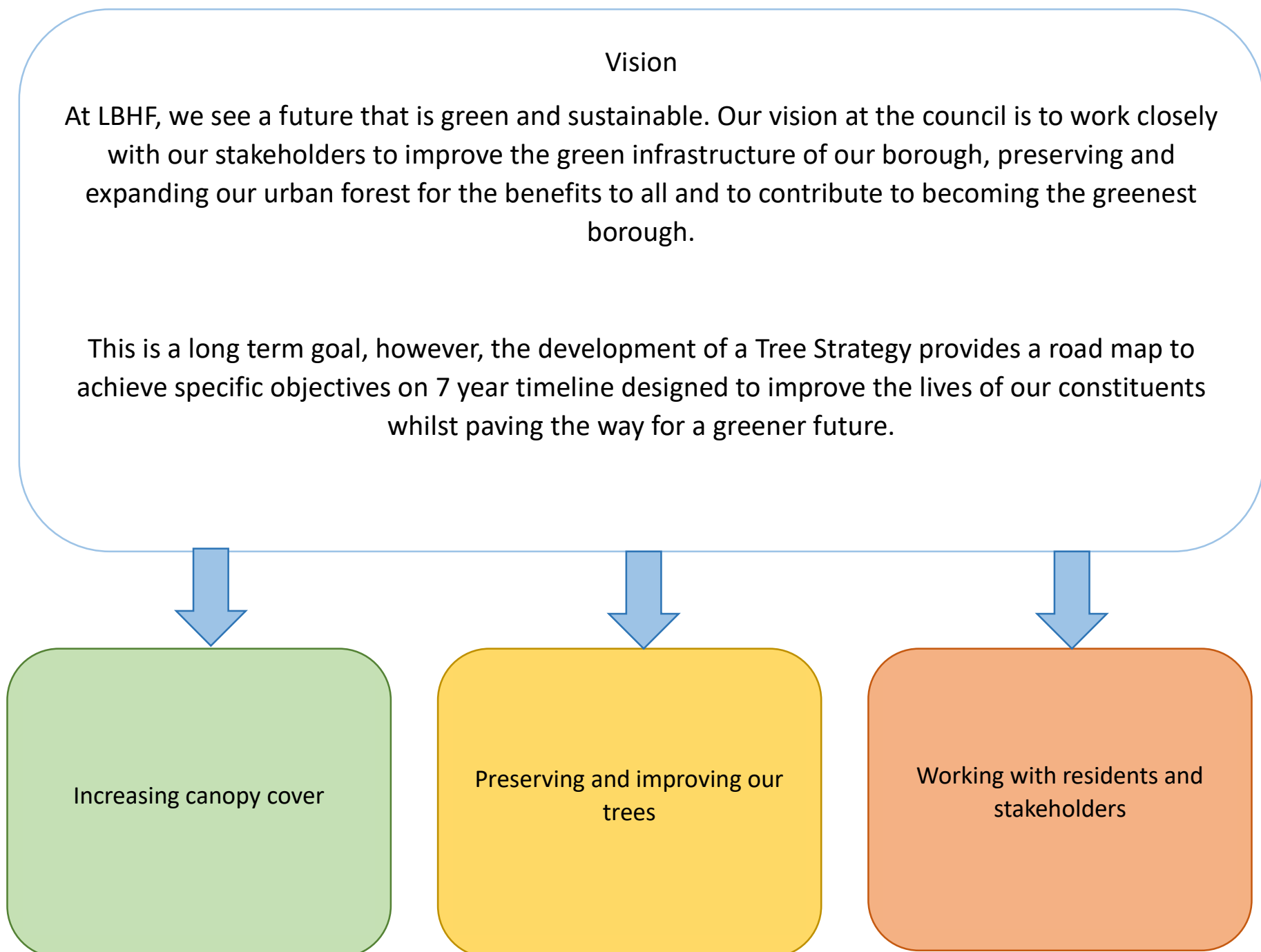
4) Vision

At LBHF we see a future that is green and sustainable. Our vision at the council is to work closely with our stakeholders to improve the green infrastructure of our borough, preserving and expanding our urban forest for the benefits to all. The Natural Capital Account reported that in 2017, LBHF was the 28th greenest of 33 London boroughs. However, In the wake of the climate emergency, we have set out the ambitious target to become the greenest borough of England. This is a long-term goal, however, the development of a Tree Strategy provides a road map to achieve specific objectives over a 7 year period designed to improve the lives of our constituents whilst contributing to greater environmental targets. This document helps us deliver our obligations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (s40: duty to conserve biodiversity), to manage our borough in-line with the National Planning Policy Framework and to target aims outlined in the Governments 25-year Environment Plan 2018, and it's revision, The Environmental Improvement Plan; 'to leave our environment in a better condition than when inherited it'.

These emerging frameworks have developed our understanding of the benefits of trees, leading to a bolstered presence in national and global policy. Evident in Chapter 8 of the London Plan 2021 and The Preparing Borough Tree and Woodland Strategies SPG, the requirement for policy driven, strategic management is vital to improve, increase and protect our urban forests. This strategic approach is also outlined in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals 11, 13 and 15, demonstrating the motivation of the global community and how strategic management at a local level can be the most effective way contribute to greater environmental targets and rise to the urgency of climate emergency.

5) Delivering the vision

From a service review and research into how to meet our vision for trees in H&F, three aims have been identified, these can be seen in Fig X. In this chapter the three aims are discussed in detail, XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX





Objective 1: Increasing canopy cover from 14% - 16.5% by 2030

The Environment Improvement Plan 2030, upheld by the Environment Act 2021, sets targets to achieve England-wide canopy cover average of 16.5% by 2050. However, to achieve our vision, we have set the aim to increase our canopy cover from 14% to 16.5% by 2030, to align closer with the London average tree canopy cover of 21% ((18% inner London – 21% outer London - GLA) and the aim to achieve 23% by 2050.

To do this we not only need to consider council owned spaces but privately owned spaces. We must consider how to fund this and importantly how what we plant now can increase the canopy to cover in future years. To achieve this there are four key areas that need to be considered below.

1.Opportunity mapping

2.Funding

3.Legacy Planting

4.Private land

1 - Opportunity mapping

Understanding the constraints and opportunity areas for trees planting will inform how best to increase tree planting to meet our vision. We draw on research from the GLA and learnings from our own asset management systems to prioritise tree planting.

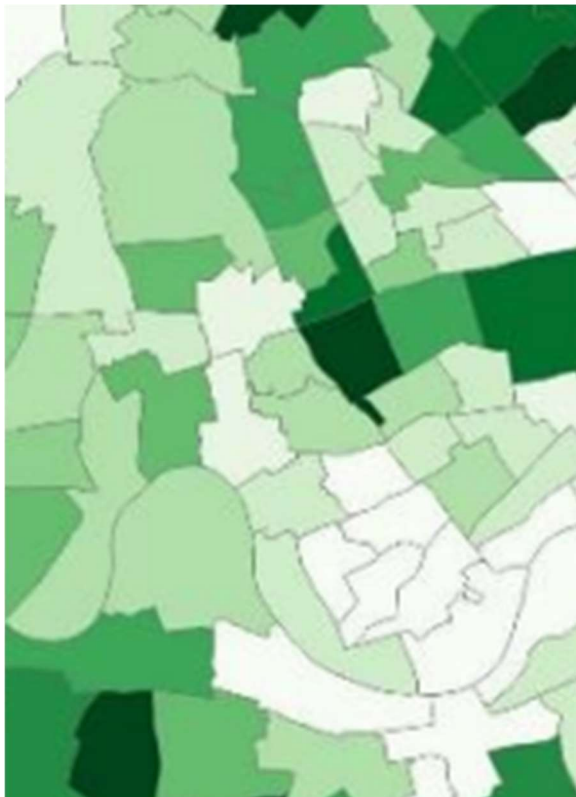
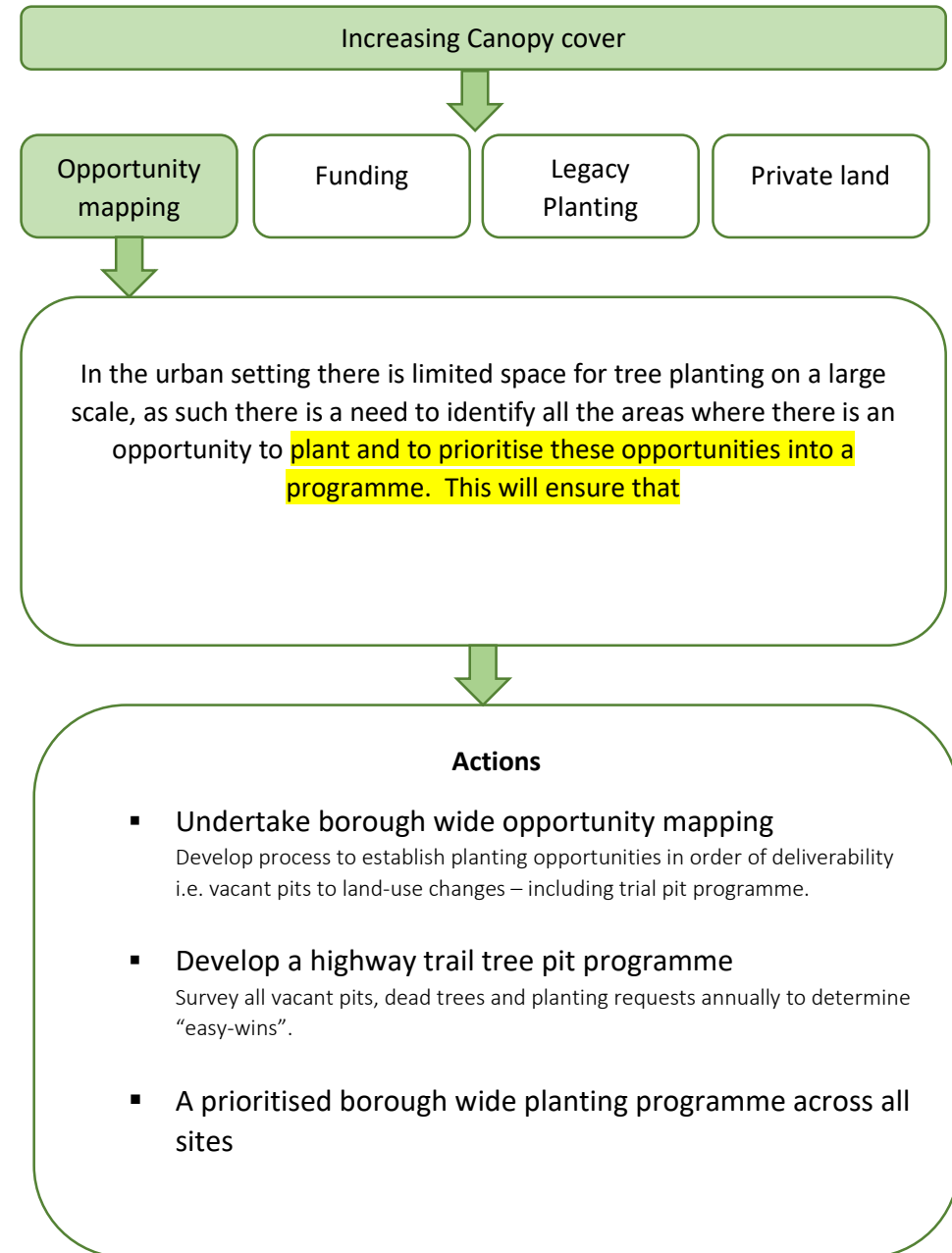
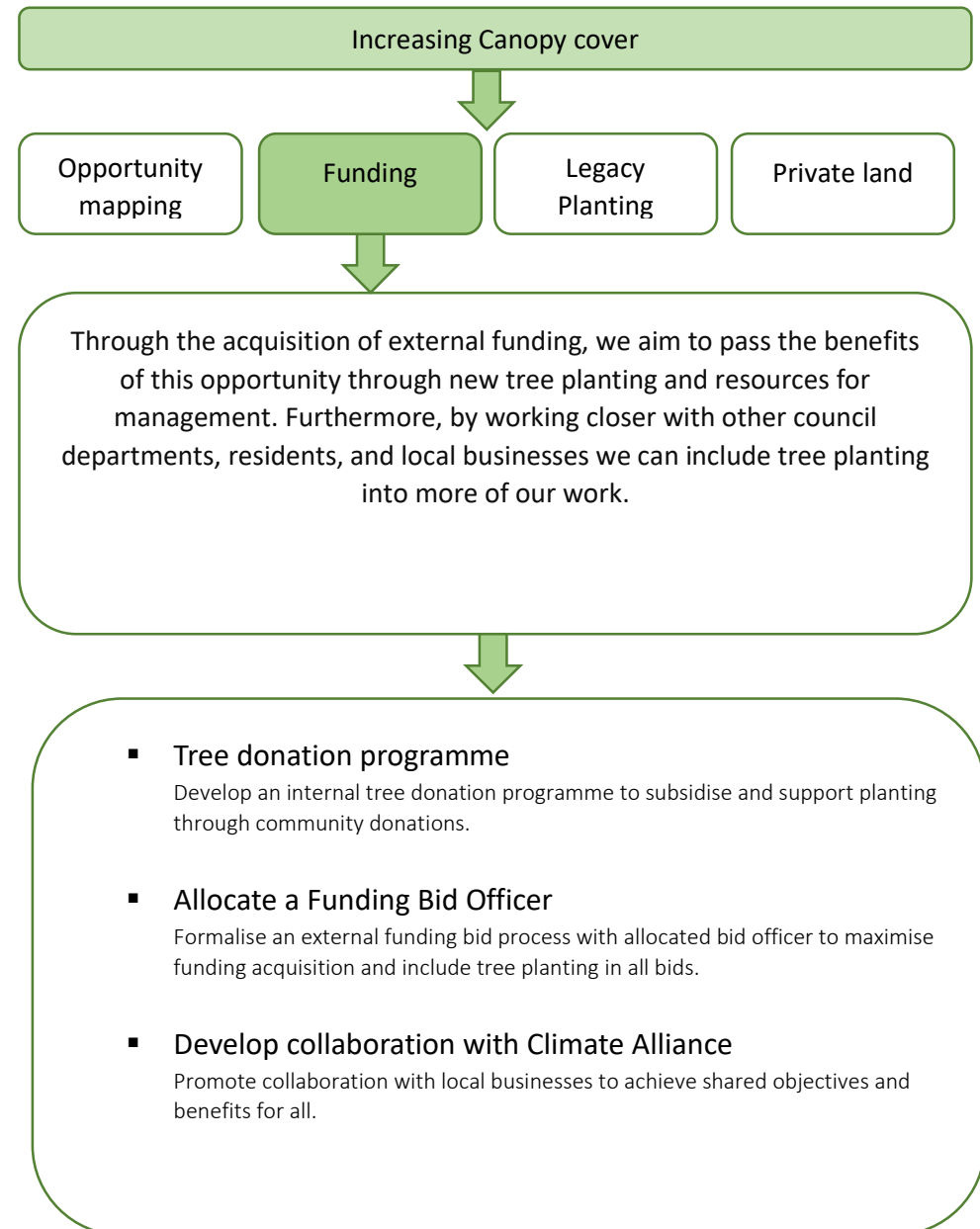


Photo X; GLA Ward Prioritisation Tool – Green/Blue Cover

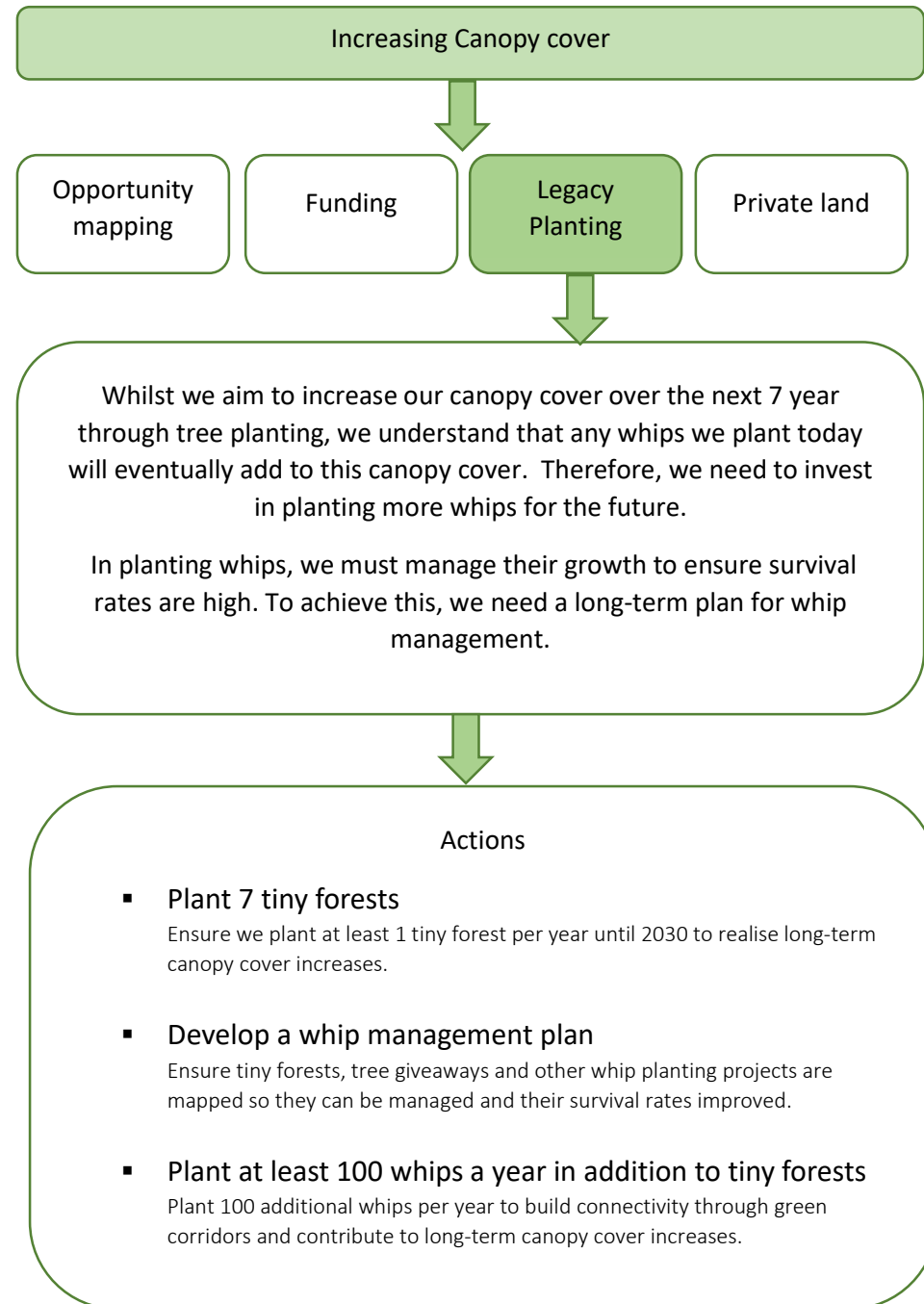


2 - Funding

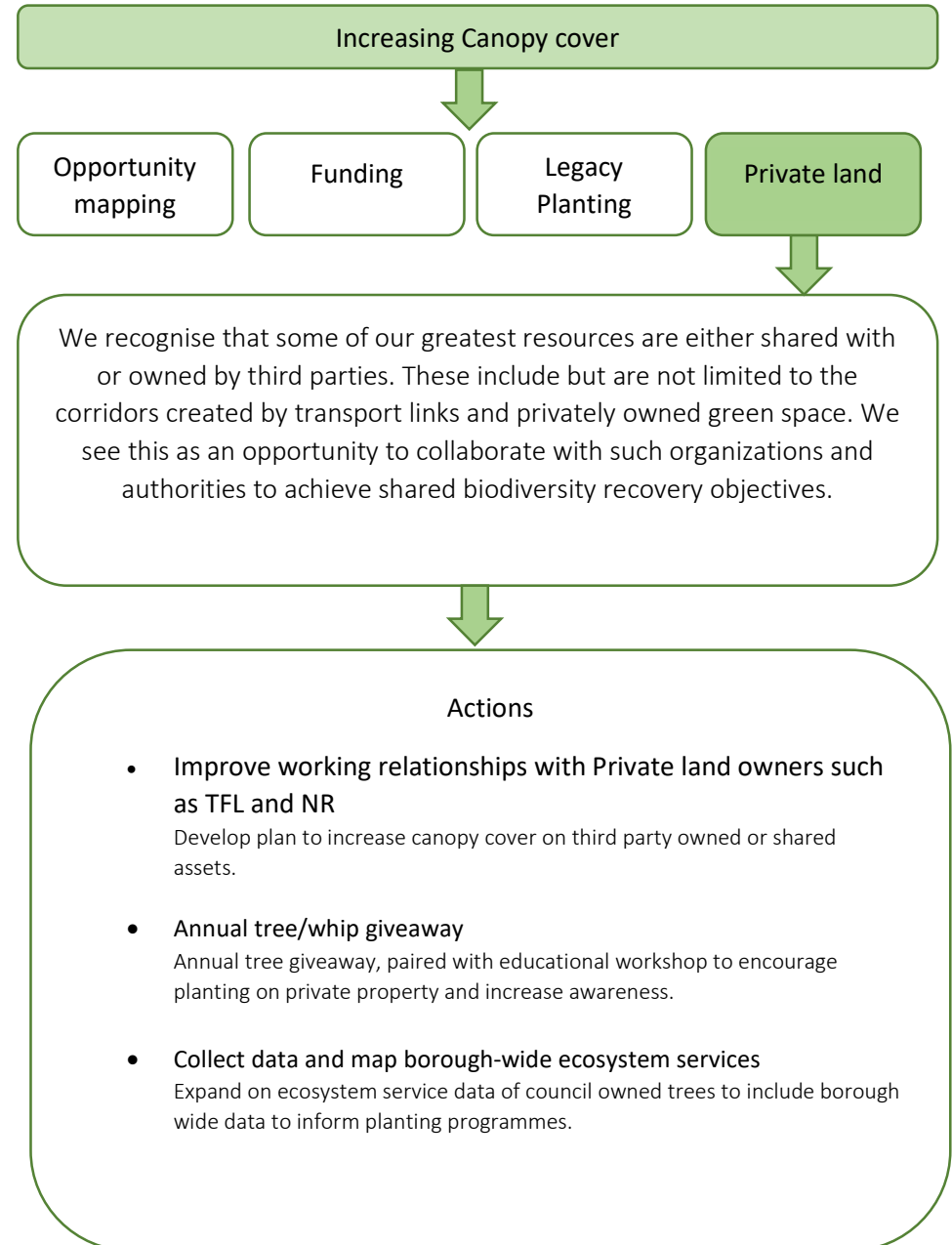
Multiple funding opportunities have been made available to local authorities from central government. External funding opportunities include the UTCF, the LATF, and the Tiny Forests initiative. To achieve a vision, we must utilise all funding support provided in order to contribute to shared goals.



3 – Legacy Planting



4 – Private Land





Preserving and improving our urban forest

Whilst we aim to add to our urban forest, we must make certain that we preserve it, ensuring that it can adapt to the changing climatic condition and regeneration of our borough. To do this, we must ensure that we plant the correct species that not only improve local biodiversity, but also species that can survive in the extreme conditions that we experience, such as extreme heat, drought, and flooding.

In addition, we need to ensure that we adhere to best practice in the management of our trees, and that we update our policies and practices to reflect this. We must also ensure that those regenerating parts of borough also do this.

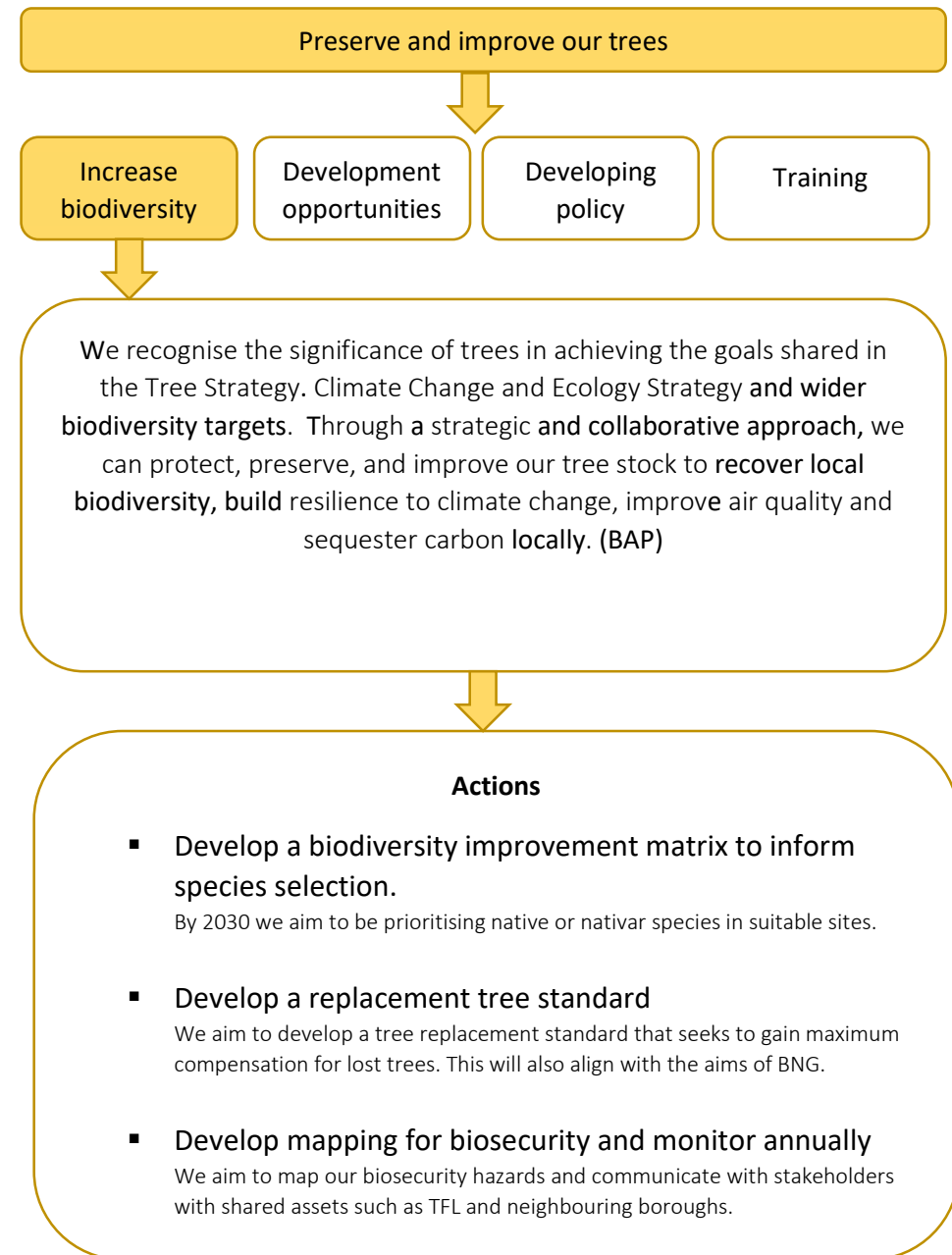
Increasing biodiversity

Development opportunities

Developing policy

Training

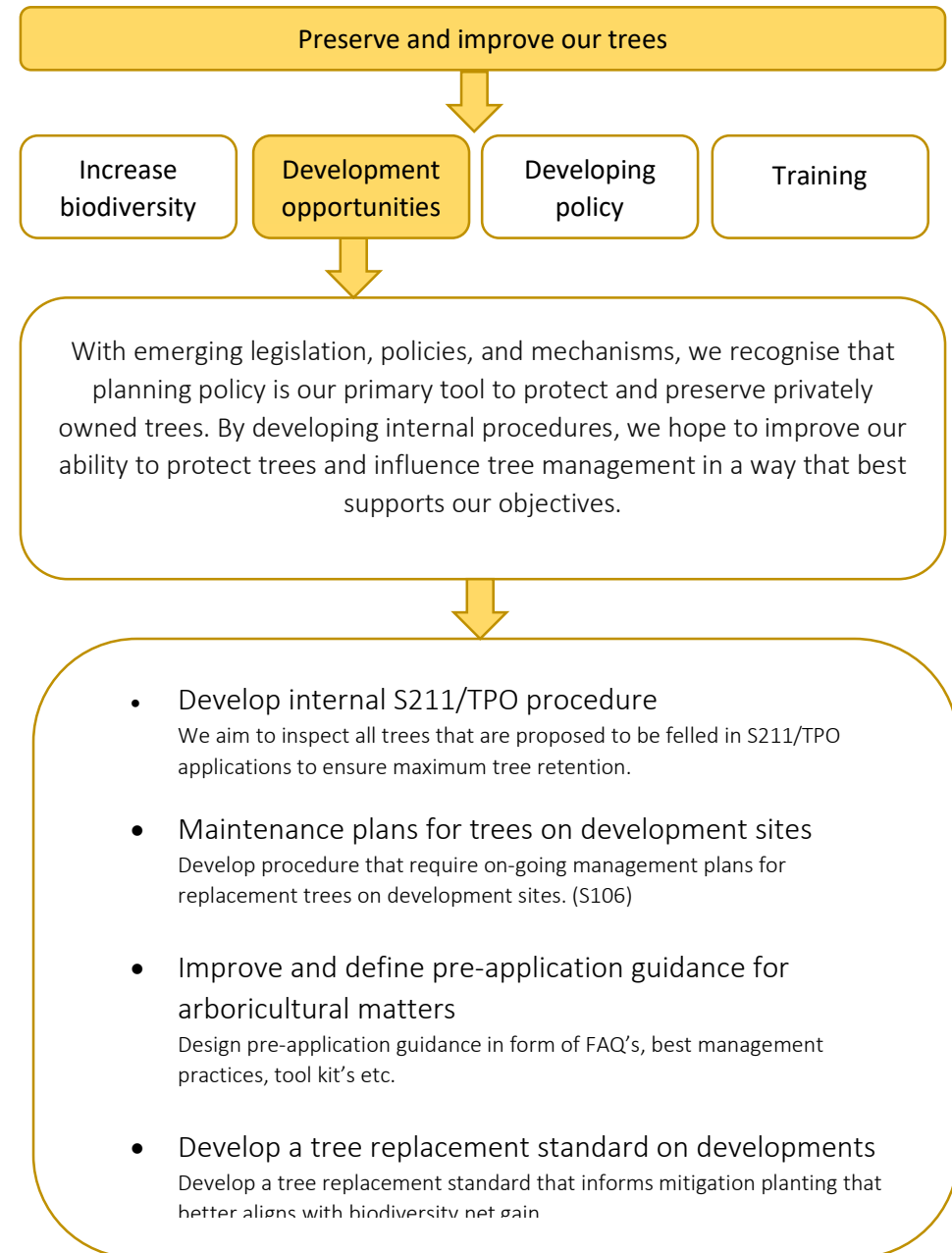
4 - Increase biodiversity



5 – Development Opportunities



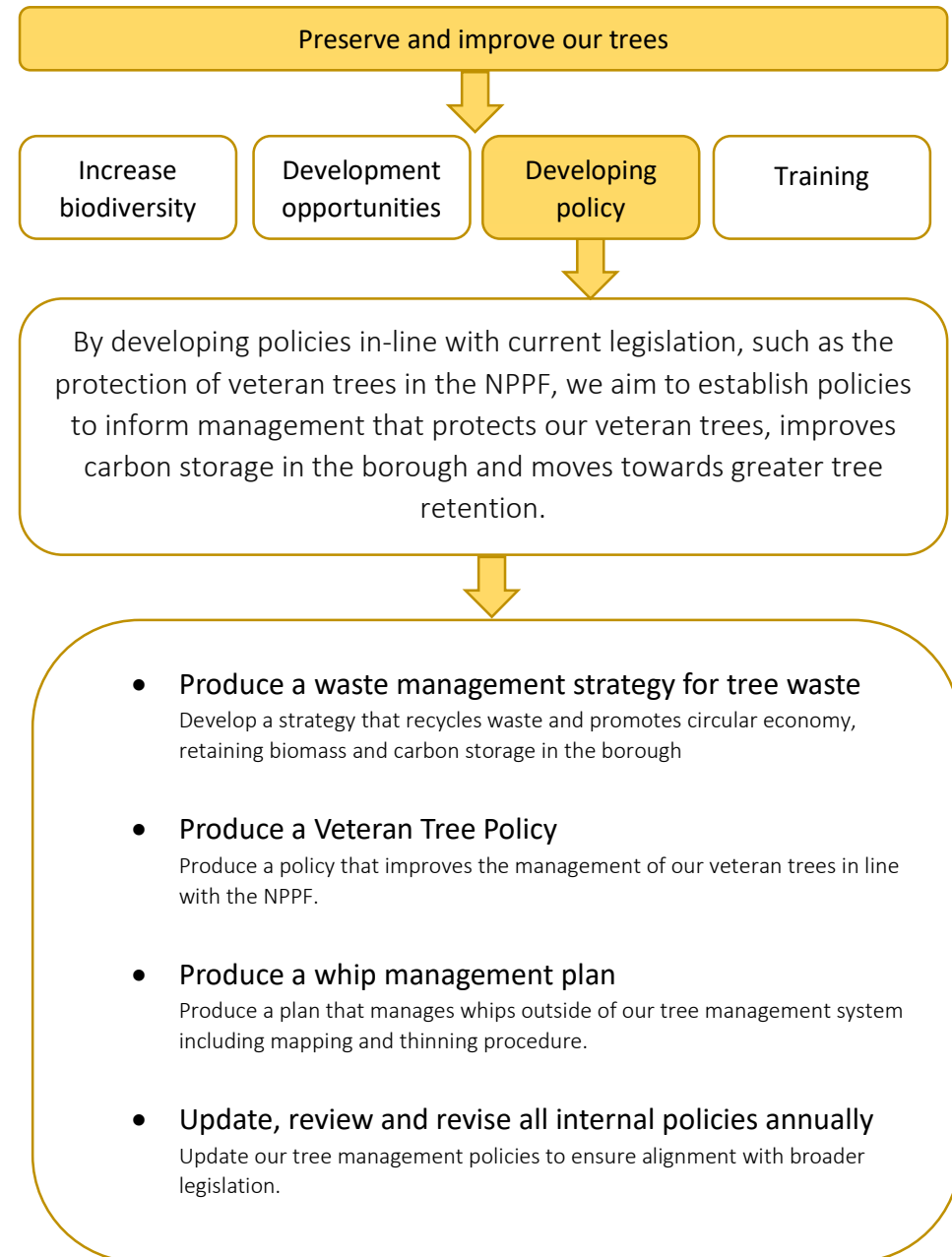
IMAGE OF CONFIRM AND HEAT MAPPING?

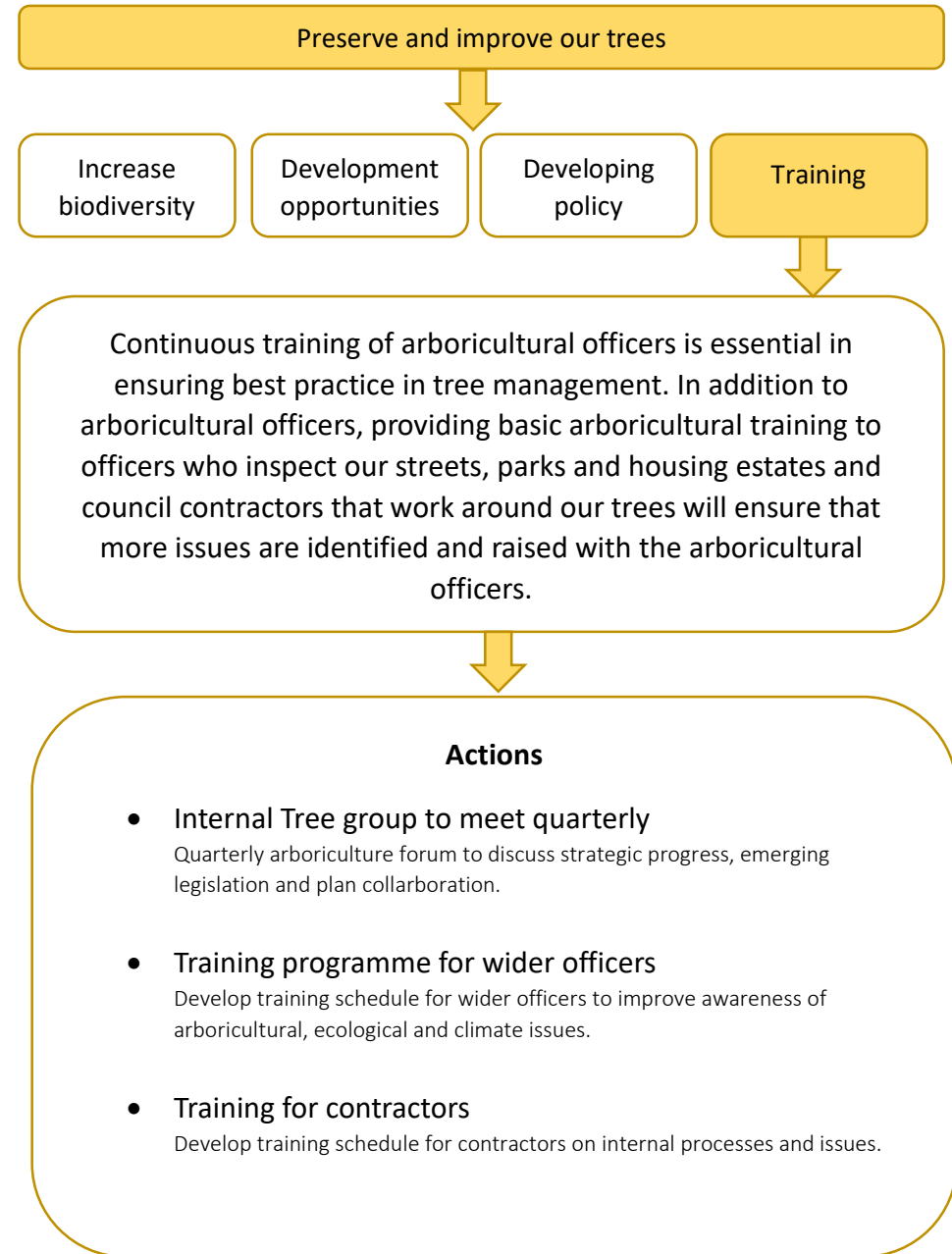


7 – Developing Policy



IMAGE OF THE SCRUBS AND WASTE CENTRE?







Working with residents and partners

Residents, communities, and businesses are key stakeholders in delivering our objectives. It is reported that as well as environmental benefits, tree cover brings several economic and social benefits, therefore we believe it's vital that we **continue to foster partnerships with all our stakeholders**, and that we build new relationships can benefit our urban forest as well as all stakeholders.

Improving communication

Education

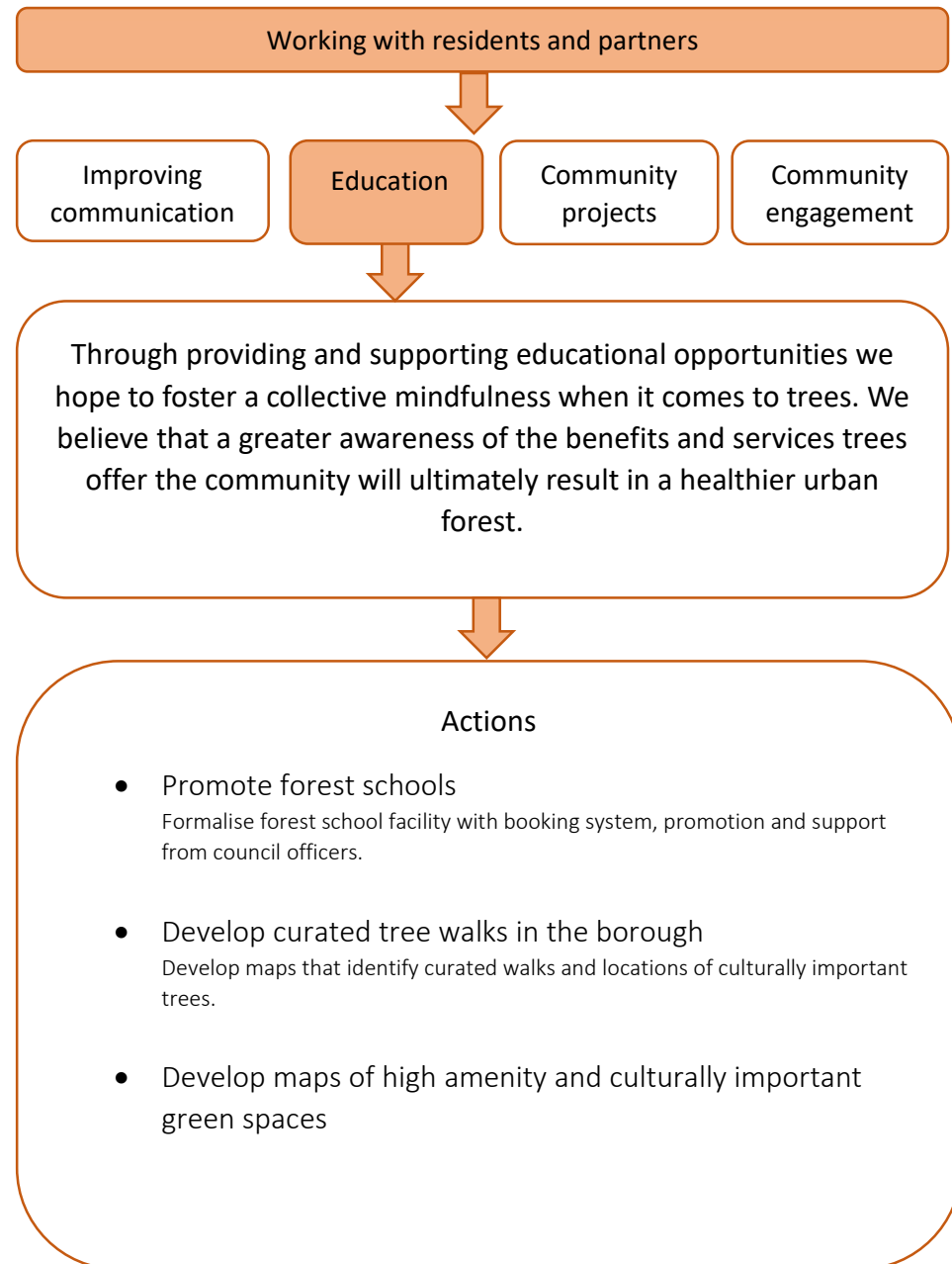
Community projects

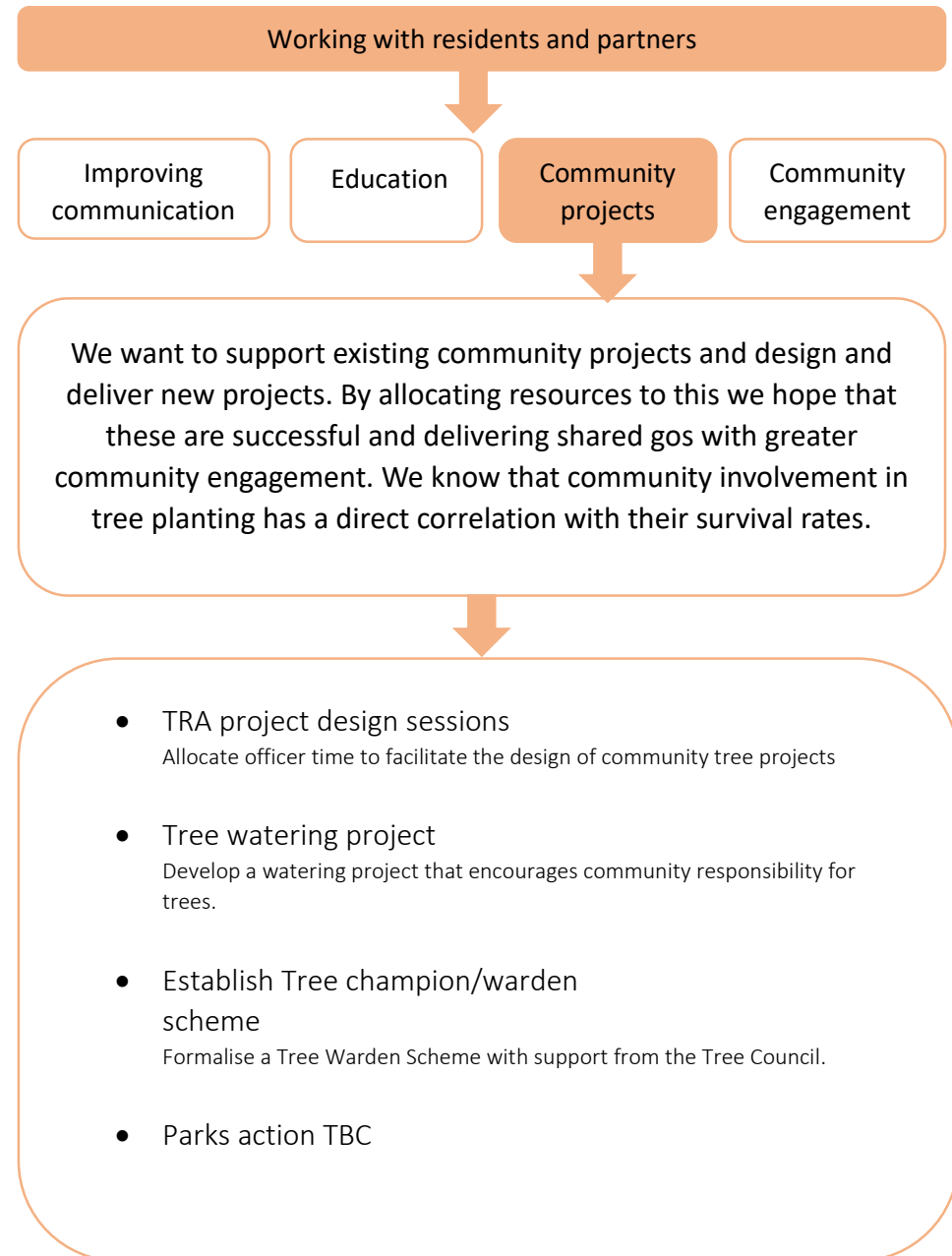
Community engagement

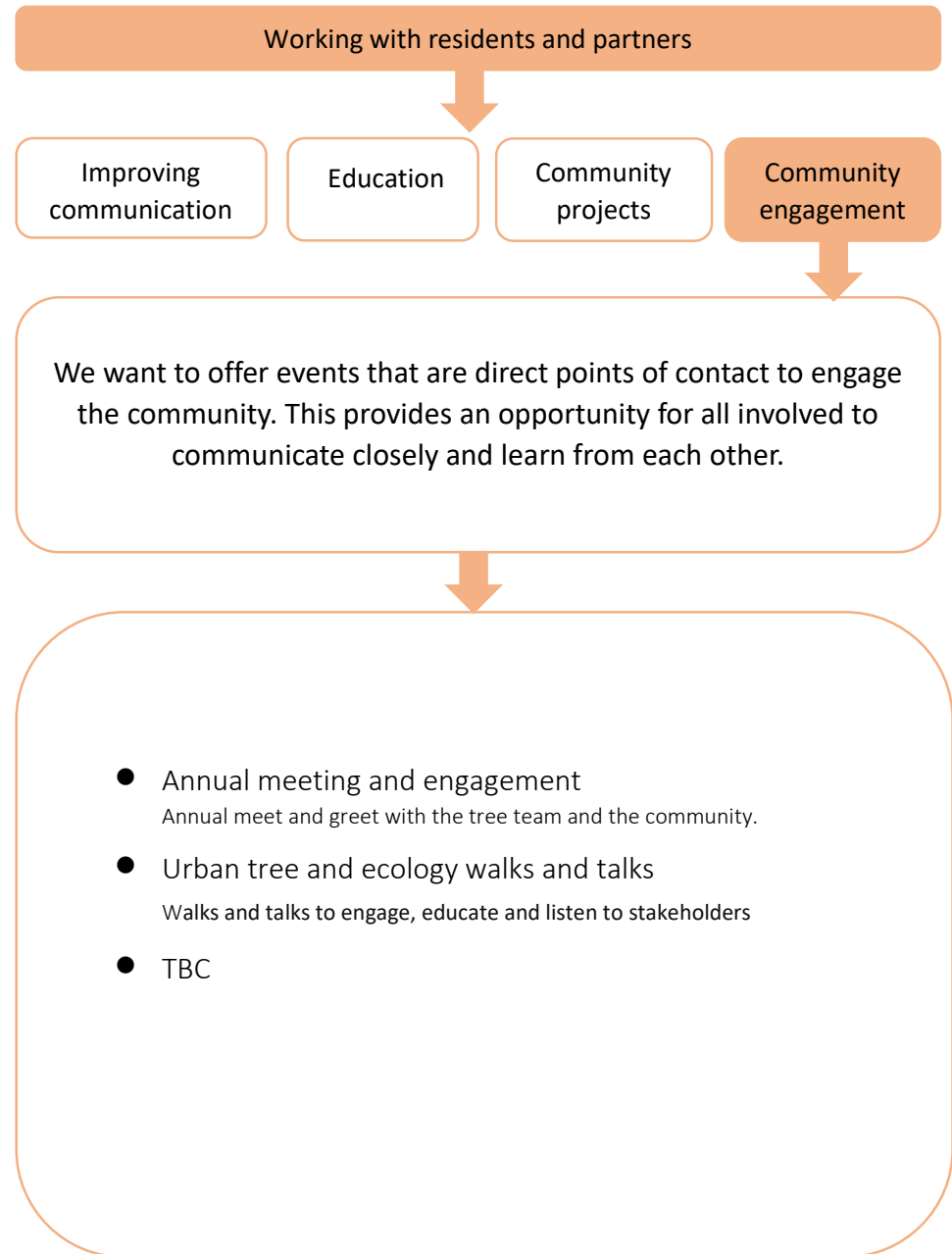




IMAGE OF FOREST SCHOOL - REPLACE







7. Action Plan

Our Action Plan outlines how we intend to operationalise the actions proposed that move us towards our vision. Our Action Plan follows a framework of action, cost, benefit, timescale, responsibility and review. By doing this we systemize our means of achieving specific and measurable outcomes whilst remaining realistic and accountable. This framework is already employed in our Highways Department. By using a framework already in effective use, we make our goals more transparent and accessible for all our stakeholders.

8. Review, Development and monitoring

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – I-TREE CANOPY REPORT

i-Tree Canopy

Cover Assessment and Tree Benefits Report

Estimated using random sampling statistics on 1/3/2023

Abbr.	Cover Class	Description	Points	% Cover ± SE	Area (mi ²) ± SE
NT	Non-Tree	All other surfaces	430	86.00 ± 1.55	11.38 ± 0.21
T	Tree	Tree, non-shrub	70	14.00 ± 1.55	1.85 ± 0.21
Total			500	100.00	13.24

Tree Benefit Estimates: Carbon (English units)

Description	Carbon (kT)	±SE	CO ₂ Equiv. (kT)	±SE	Value (GBP)	±SE
Sequestered annually in trees	1.62	±0.18	5.94	±0.66	£371,561	±41,184
Stored in trees (Note: this benefit is not an annual rate)	40.66	±4.51	149.07	±16.52	£9,331,303	±1,034,290

Currency is in GBP and rounded. Standard errors of removal and benefit amounts are based on standard errors of sampled and classified points. Amount sequestered is based on 0.874 kT of Carbon, or 3.203 kT of CO₂, per mi²/yr and rounded. Amount stored is based on 21.940 kT of Carbon, or 80.446 kT of CO₂, per mi² and rounded. Value (GBP) is based on £229,517.74/kT of Carbon, or £62,595.75/kT of CO₂ and rounded. (English units: kT = kilotons (1,000 tons), mi² = square miles)

Tree Benefit Estimates: Air Pollution (English units)

Abbr.	Description	Amount (oz)	±SE	Value (GBP)	±SE
CO	Carbon Monoxide removed annually	0.01	±0.00	£0	±0
NO2	Nitrogen Dioxide removed annually	230,487.79	±25,547.48	£1,064	±118
O3	Ozone removed annually	771,755.24	±85,542.08	£20,391	±2,260
SO2	Sulfur Dioxide removed annually	31,099.25	±3,447.07	£53	±6
PM2.5	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 microns removed annually	107,644.01	±11,931.36	£93,032	±10,312
PM10*	Particulate Matter greater than 2.5 microns and less than 10 microns removed annually	141,684.02	±15,704.39	£134,936	±14,956
Total		1,282,670.32	±142,172.39	£249,477	±27,652