

The Invisible Asset

Rob Scholefield – Estate Services Manager

LiveWest

- Registered Provider of Housing (Housing Association) – not for profit, mainly affordable rented homes
- Formed in March 2018 by merger of DCH & Knightstone
- Largest Housing provider in the south west 35,000 properties in 21 Local Authority areas, from the Isles of Scilly to Gloucester
- Includes stock transfers from 3 Local Authorities
- Developing 1500+ homes per year across the area with a mix of tenure

LiveWest

“The Only Constant is Change” – Heraclitus of Ephesus



- Changes of government/leader/policy
- Changes of regulation/rent setting
- Changes to internal management
- Mergers
- Contractors

The Housing environment

- 4.1 million homes provided by social landlords in England – 2.4 million by Housing Associations and 1.7 million by Local Authorities. (Shelter 2014)
- In the South West – 252,000 social rented properties (National Housing Federation 2016)
- 1990's policy for stock transfers - shifted responsibility from Local Authorities to Housing specialists - 1.3 million properties transferred between 1988-2012. These transfers included large amounts of previously LA managed open space
- HA's now control large areas of open space – including areas transferred from LA's as well as self-developed sites. HA holdings now equivalent or larger than many LA's



The Housing environment

- 1600 RP's in the UK. Policy has been to reduce the number of providers through mergers. These organisations end up as major landowners
- Many smaller organisations had little or no specialist hort or arb knowledge in-house. Skills lost when transferred from LA
- Barton (2013) found that 57% of providers did not have any formally qualified staff managing trees; of those who did only 34% had arb qualifications, and only 6% above NQF 3



The Housing environment

- All the space – but not all the properties – so who pays?
- No service charges from old RTB properties
- No funding from local taxation – only income is from rent, service charges & sinking funds
- Service charges – complex legislative & bureaucratic framework
- Benefits of trees and green space available to all (not least higher property values) – but paid for by the least well off?



From small beginnings...

- Started in one LA area with 3,500 properties
- Tree surveying and works in-house
- Robust tree management policy in place
- Trees mapped on GIS database
- Involved with modest development programme



One County...

- Then County wide – 13,000 properties
- No tree information
- No maps
- “there aren’t many trees....”



Two Counties...

- Devon & Cornwall – 25,000 properties



The region...

- LiveWest – 35,000 properties and rising



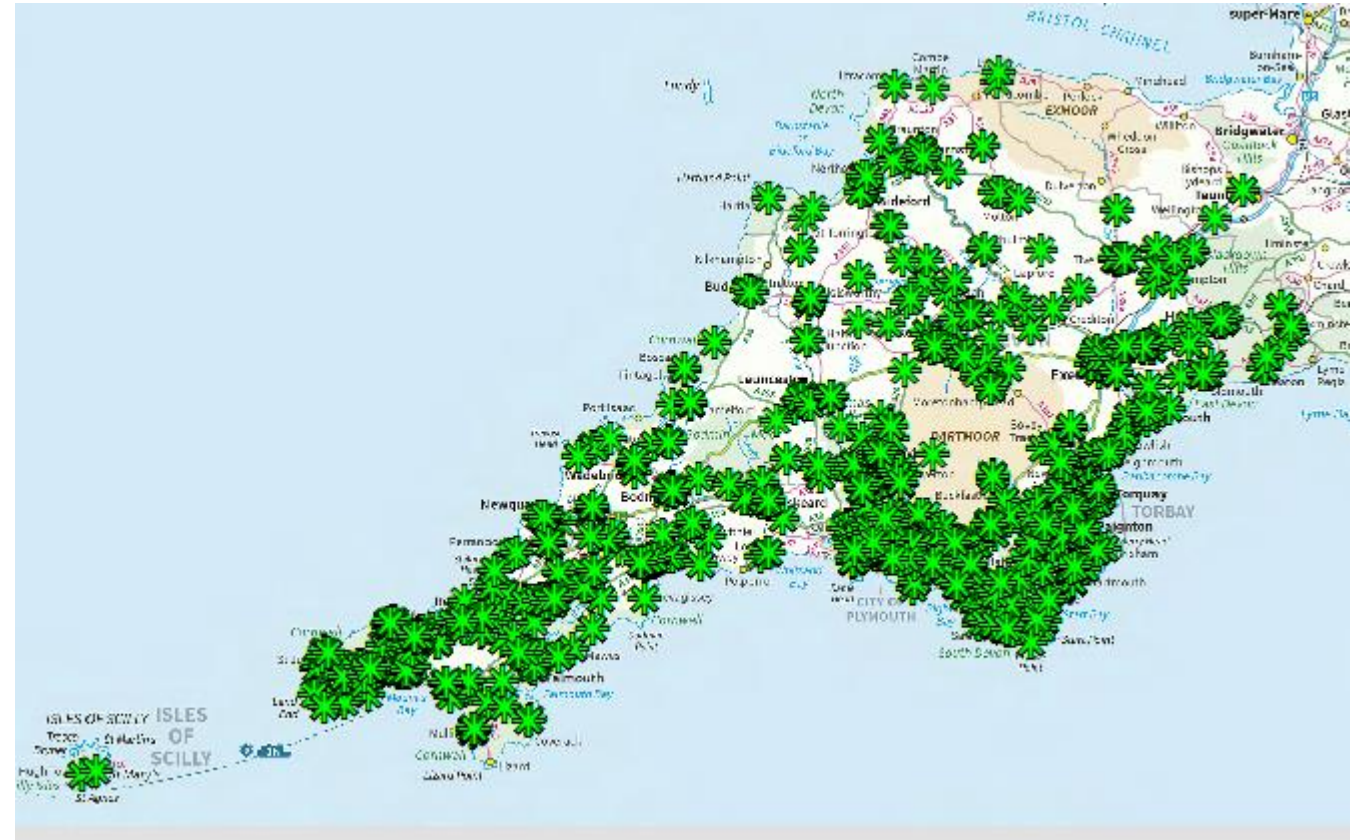
Not just houses...

- 1,400 sites with grounds maintenance assets
- 525,000m² of grass
- 90,000m² of shrub beds
- 60,000m² of hedges
- And over 28,000 trees



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Bricks & sticks

- Focus on property fabric. Massive investment programmes for 'Decent Homes', planned maintenance, repairs, servicing etc
- Teams of Property Services staff
- Huge new build programme is the driver 1500+ new homes per year



Bricks & sticks

- Trees and open space have often been viewed as a drain on resources, an after-thought, and a liability rather than an asset
- Can be difficult to get the green infrastructure voice heard
- One step forward, two steps back

“SLOAP landscaping”



Green spaces

- Residents (of all kinds) have a different view (or views!)
- Often very vocal and polarised... trying to keep everyone happy
- Large body of research showing benefits - includes study focused on HA residents which showed positive influences on mental wellbeing (Winson)



The aim:

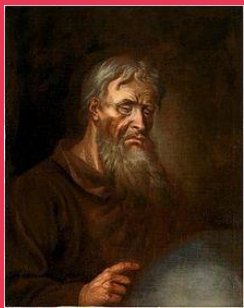
1. Maintain all grounds areas in good condition at a reasonable cost in line with legislation and the Financial Regulations
2. Implement the Tree Management Policy, including managing the risk from trees to a reasonable level and new planting
3. Ensure that green space at new developments is of good quality
4. Staff to manage GM leaving me free to deal with trees & developments



The reality:

1. GM contract management and procurement takes up enormous resources, and is very emotive when things go wrong
2. Not enough time dedicated to tree management as a result – firefighting risk management and responsive works
3. Not enough time to dedicate to new builds (design/implementation/defect checking)
4. Time is the problem, not money...





If you don't have time
to check...



Time for a change (again)

Change is constant, as is restructuring...

Continual change of management and team – where does this function fit?

Need to make sure that GI is championed and properly resourced.

Need to use research and evidence to demonstrate the value of trees and green space

Enter i-Tree...



Valuing LiveWest's Urban Forest i-Tree Eco Inventory Report

Prepared by:

James Watson -Treeconomics

Checked by:

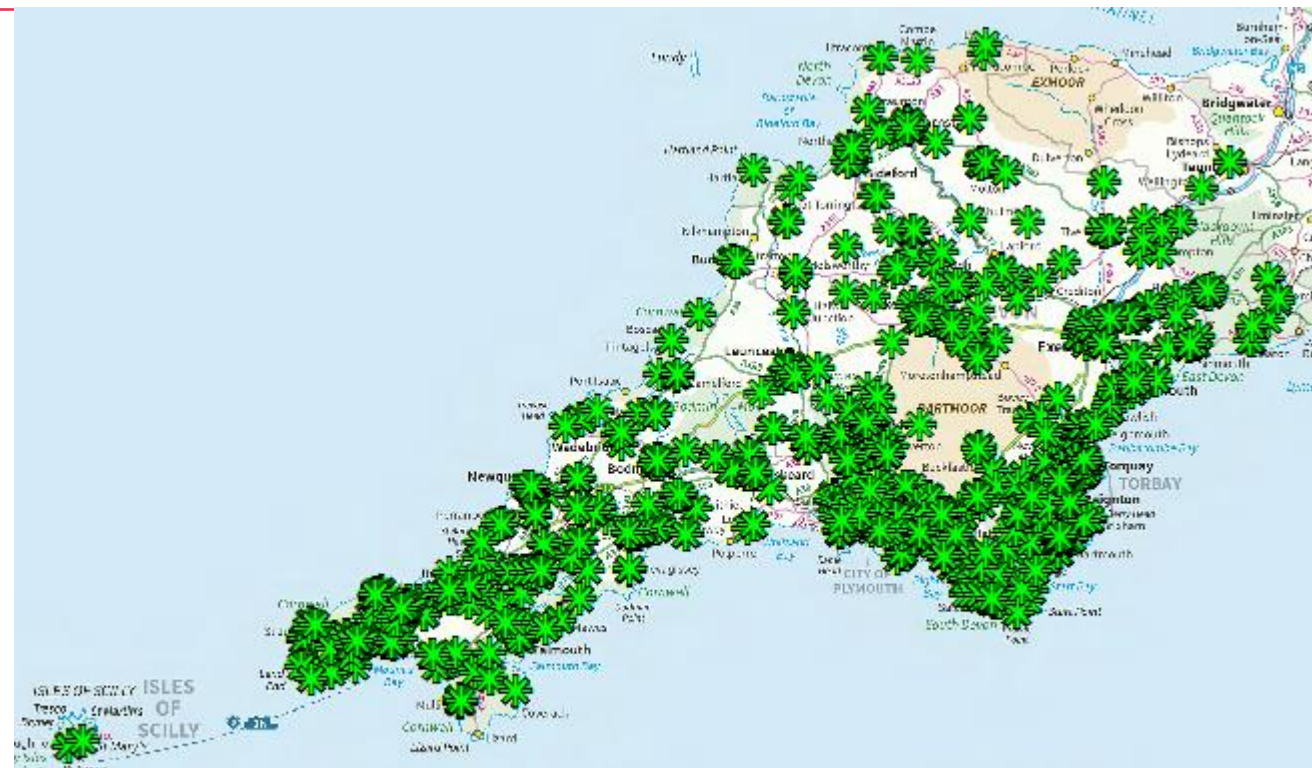
Kenton Rogers -Treeconomics

Checked & drafted
for LiveWest by:

Rob Scholefield - LiveWest



- First proposed in 2013 following the Torbay trial. Not implemented due to the fragmented nature of our stock.
- i-Tree Eco's ability to use inventory data opened the door in 2018
- All former DCH stock mapped on GIS database
- Former KHA stock recorded on spreadsheet (communal only, no DBH data)
- Some assumptions made about trees mapped as groups
- Let the machines do the work...



TW_Trees

	FID	Shape	TREEID	TAGNO	OWNERNAME	PYEAR	COMMONNAME	NORTHING	EASTING	PLOTTED	CREATED	LOCKED	REGIONNAME
▶	6719	Point	6736	YOFD003	DCH	2009	Rowan	98860.12777	278251.27988	17/01/2014	3	0	Yeoford
	6720	Point	6737	YOFD002	DCH	2009	Rowan	98865.68995	278247.99093	17/01/2014	3	0	Yeoford
	6721	Point	6738	YOFD001	DCH	2009	Rowan	98891.49366	278248.95827	17/01/2014	3	0	Yeoford
	7528	Point	7545	YLMP159	DCH	1990	Ash	52358.42391	258819.61638	11/02/2015	3	0	Yealmpton
	7529	Point	7546	YLMP158	DCH	1980	Ash	52401.43344	258654.86754	11/02/2015	3	0	Yealmpton
	3472	Point	3489	YLMP157	DCH	1900	Lime	51584.59938	257154.33343	01/03/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3473	Point	3490	YLMP156	DCH	1900	Native Oak	51580.41124	257138.17978	01/03/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3699	Point	3716	YLMP155	DCH	1962	Beech	51424.5503	257421.0591	09/08/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3700	Point	3717	YLMP154	DCH	1987	Cypress	51457.56807	257497.07134	09/08/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3701	Point	3718	YLMP153	DCH	1982	Native Oak	51452.315	257414.37785	09/08/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3705	Point	3722	YLMP152	DCH	1992	Rowan	51445.65537	257340.74469	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3706	Point	3723	YLMP151	DCH	1982	Ash	51375.95875	257305.52338	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3707	Point	3724	YLMP150	DCH	1992	Rowan	51423.3216	257304.23834	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3708	Point	3725	YLMP149	DCH	1992	Rowan	51422.15171	257298.2027	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3709	Point	3726	YLMP148	DCH	1977	Japanese Cherry	51422.06721	257291.27444	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3710	Point	3727	YLMP147	DCH	1977	Japanese Cherry	51423.41907	257285.78252	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3711	Point	3728	YLMP146	DCH	1977	Japanese Cherry	51430.85428	257275.89708	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3712	Point	3729	YLMP145	DCH	1977	Japanese Cherry	51427.98159	257278.93875	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3713	Point	3730	YLMP144	DCH	1972	Ash	51443.01549	257212.01843	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton
	3714	Point	3731	YLMP143	DCH	1977	Japanese Cherry	51438.50848	257104.16284	06/09/2007	3	0	Yealmpton

- **Depreciated Replacement Cost: £15,000,000**
- **CAVAT Amenity Value - £150,000,000**
- **3.9 tonnes of pollution removed**
- **10,000m² of stormwater diversion**
- **109 tones of carbon sequestered annually**
- **Much more than just timber...**



- Asset Managers immediately understood the concept of DRC. *'We have a previously **invisible asset** with a significant monetary value'.*
- Allows trees to be 'judged' alongside other fixed assets, rather than as a more 'nebulous' neighbourhood benefit
- Very useful in making the case for sufficient (human) resources to manage the tree stock; and for spending on planting
- Budget is approx 1% of replacement cost per year to manage the asset – no request for extra budget allocation
- This investment has multiple outcomes over and above those measured by i-Tree – there is a host of other benefits including increased property value
- Important when arranging borrowing – higher property values = better gearing (loan-to-value)
- Higher property values/easier marketing of new builds for cross funding

	LiveWest Fleet	LiveWest Urban Forest
No of distinct units	250 (vehicles)	28,000 (trees)
Replacement cost	£5,000,000	£15,100,000
Carbon source/sink tonnes/yr	Source – 324 tonnes/yr	Sink – 109 tonnes/yr
Current Management time	1 x FTE	Approx 0.6 FTE

The Truth Is Out There – use other resources to support the i-Tree project. Engage other teams. Stress multiple benefits

The Urban Forest

Good for the Economy

Urban forests... grow local economies

Every £1 invested in the Mersey Forest's community trees and woodlands has created £9.20 in local economic benefits.²

London's street trees alone have been valued at £4.2bn. This places them on a par with other critical urban infrastructure such as street lighting, footways and street furniture and demonstrates the need for parity of investment in urban forests to secure them for future generations.³



...increase residential value

Creation of Bold Colliery Community Woodland has directly enhanced the value of property in the surrounding area, by around £15 million. The project has helped secure a further £75 million of new development.⁴



...are good for business

Employees with access to natural green space can be more productive⁵, with greater job satisfaction.⁶ Customers spend more time and money in retail areas with trees.⁷

The 81% of the UK that live in urban areas drive demand for the wood product economy. 1/5 of wood products we use come from UK woodland.

Good for the Environment

Urban forests... cool the air naturally

Trees in cities can cool the air by 2°C to 8°C, reducing heat-related illness.⁸

...reduce pollution, and tackle climate change

Appropriately placed trees in cities can reduce very large quantities of air pollutants⁹. In Torbay, trees provide £1.3 million worth of pollution removal, £5 million carbon storage and £173k carbon sequestration.¹⁰



...combat flooding

Trees reduce the impact of heavy rain and floods, making Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems more effective. In Milwaukee, the urban forest reduced run off flow by 22% and provided more than \$15 million in benefits.¹¹

And another thing...

Green space with good levels of trees is less costly to maintain than grass.¹²

Good for People

Urban forests... mean relaxation and enjoyment

More than 2/3 of respondents to a recent survey visited woodlands in and around towns in the last few years. The top woodland activities were exercise, relaxation and, for parents, playing with their children.¹³



...make people healthy and happy

Using the urban forest regularly improves physical health – reduced obesity, heart rate and blood pressure – as well as cognitive benefits, improved mood, increased self esteem, and social contact.¹⁴

...bring communities closer

Community groups accessing Big Tree Plant funding enjoyed multiple benefits, from developing community spirit, to improving their environment and nature conservation.¹⁵

The Urban Forest

But is green space benefiting everyone?

Half of England's population lives in or within reach of a Community Forest.¹⁶

People are most likely to visit green spaces – and therefore enjoy the benefits of urban woodland – closest to their homes.^{17, 18}



But not everyone's benefiting

Availability of quality green spaces varies, particularly in inner cities.¹⁹ People in deprived urban areas underuse the most convenient local green spaces when they are of poor quality and feel unsafe.²⁰

In inner city London, where a large proportion of residents are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME), there is 11 times less green space than in outer London where residents are mainly from non-BAME communities.^{18, 21} The Mayor of London's Street Tree Initiative is planting in areas that lack green space.

Green space is a good investment

In Birmingham, green space is mapped alongside the Potential Years of Life Lost (against national life expectancy). In areas with the most green space, total Potential Years of Life Lost was nearly 4 times lower than in the area with least green space.²²



The Trees and Design Action Group's 12 Principles for Urban Trees



Trees make places work, look and feel better

21st century towns and cities need a 21st century approach to trees – one that keeps pace with and responds to the changes of our times. Find out more in *Trees in the Townscape*, a Guide for Decision Makers, available as a free download at www.tdag.org.uk



© Trees and Design Action Group 2012

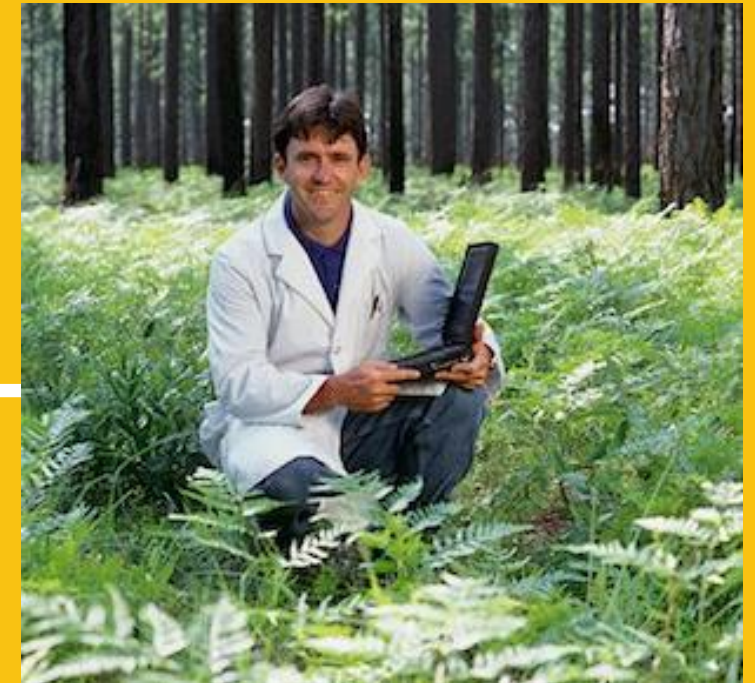
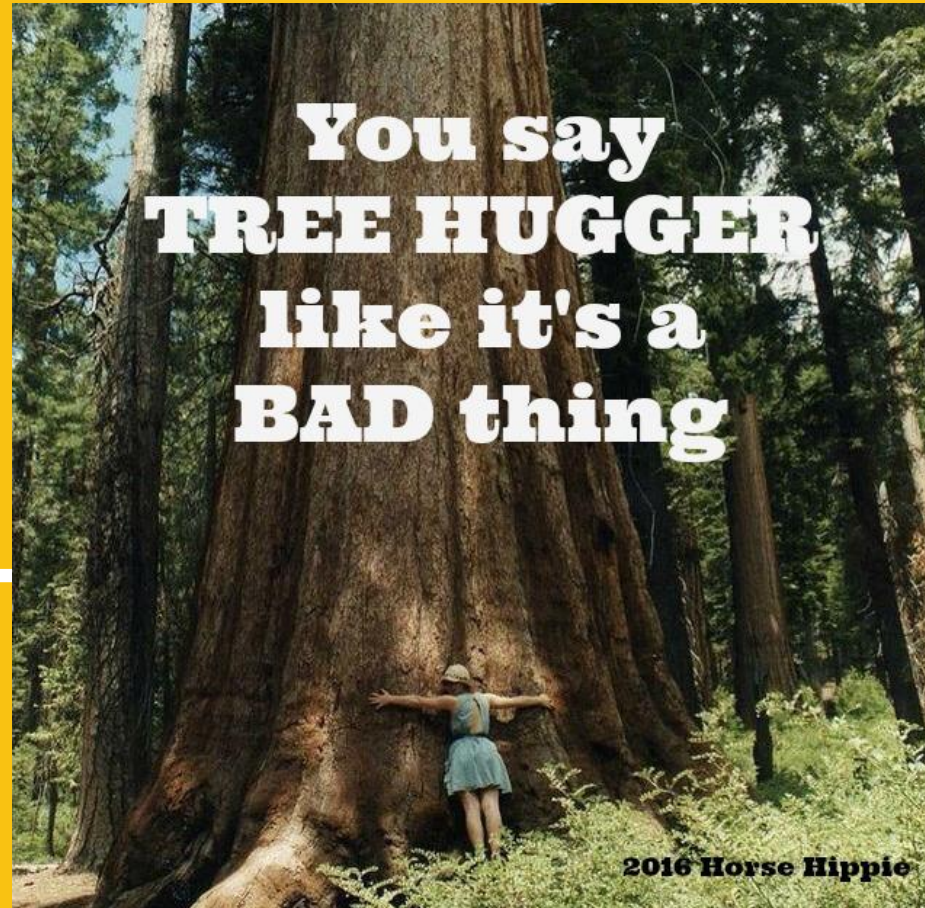
Trusted sources – Forestry Commission

THE MULTIPLE VALUE OF TREES FOR PEOPLE AND PLACES

Increasing greenspace and tree numbers is likely to remain one of the most effective tools for making urban areas more convivial:

Climate change contributions	Countering climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees remove CO₂ to create a carbon sink • Trees provide significant low-carbon options for building and energy
	Tempering severe weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity of trees to attenuate heavy rains and floodwater slows run-off and renders Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems more effective
	Moderating temperatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ability of trees to evaporate water, reflect sunlight and provide shade combine to cut the 'urban heat-island' effect
Environment advantages	Valuable aesthetic contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More attractive landscape • Eye-sores hidden • Greener more natural • Linking town to country
	Cutting soil erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserves the valuable soil resource and keeps carbon locked in
	Positive impact on water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees act as natural filters
	Contributing to wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased biodiversity as countryside becomes more porous with extra links • Brings wildlife closer to people
Economic dividends	Providing profitable by-products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firewood/woodchip • Compost/leaf litter mulch • Renewable fuel – via coppicing • Timber • Fruit – community orchards
	Reducing greenspace maintenance costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees are much less maintenance intensive
	Contributing indirectly to local economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People more productive • Job satisfaction increased • Jobs created • Inward investment encouraged • Retail areas with trees perform better • Increased property values • Adds tourism and recreational revenue
Social benefits	Delivering a range of health benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner air means less asthma • Lower risk of skin cancer • Quicker patient recovery times • Reduced stress • Positive impact on mental health and wellbeing • Encourages exercise that can counteract heart disease and Type 2 Diabetes
	Assisting urban living	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves buildings' energy efficiency and can help alleviate fuel poverty • Improved protection in winter • Increased pedestrian safety • Baffles noise • Moderated micro-climate • Increased CO₂ absorption • Reduced crime levels
	Adding to social values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More harmonious environments • Heightened sense of pride in place • Greater community cohesion
	Offering spiritual value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened self esteem • Puts people more in touch with Nature and the seasons • Symptoms of anxiety, depression and insomnia alleviated
	Benefiting education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration increases in 'natural' classrooms • Better learning outcomes

Changing perceptions



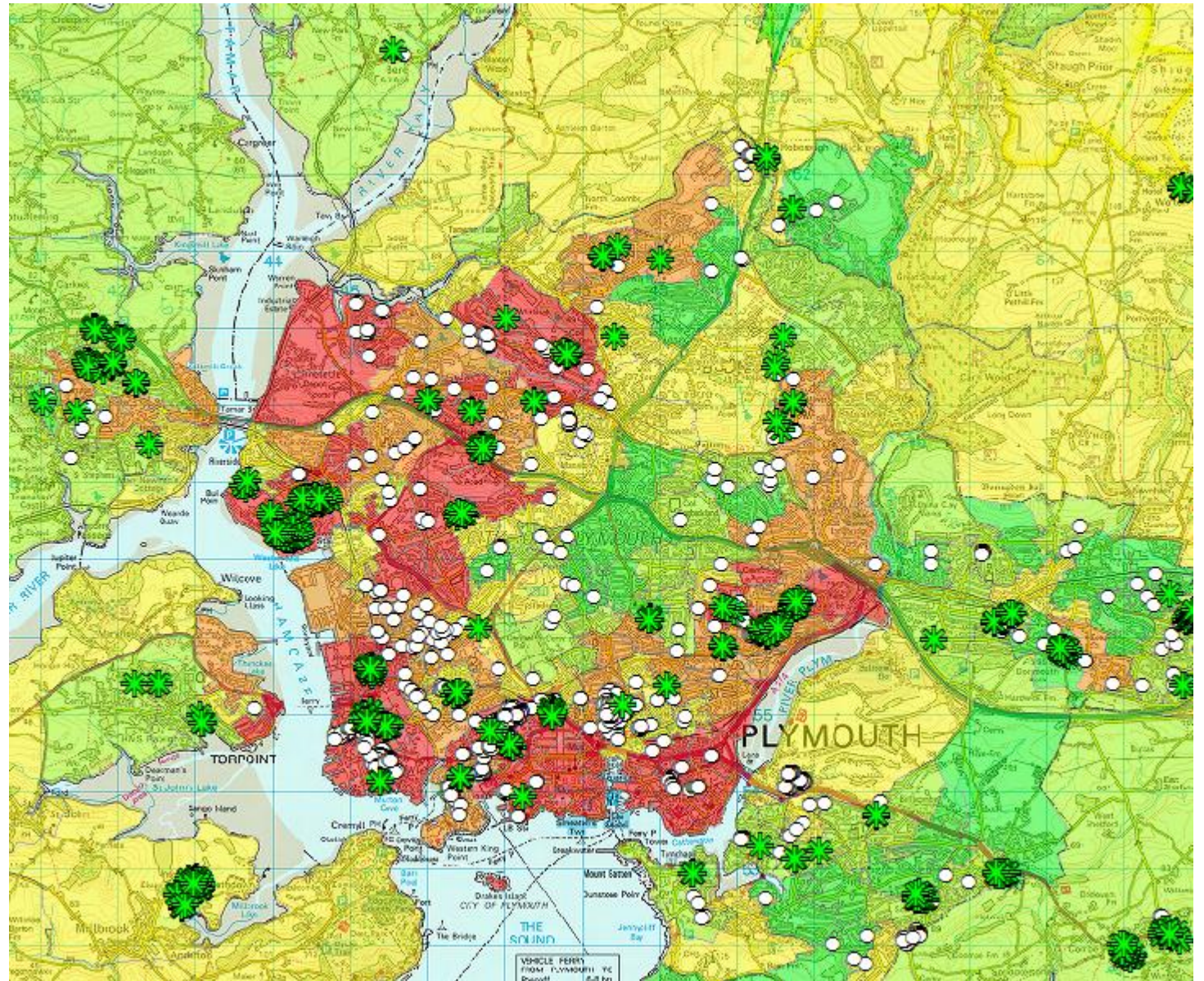
Next Steps:

- Influence the structure of new organisation's Estate Services Team, using our i-Tree project as a company specific part of the wider body of evidence for Green Infrastructure
- Create a role that has the time to properly manage the existing tree asset, and ensure that new developments have good tree provision **planned** and **delivered** - make sure that the aspiration is delivered
- Work with other teams within LiveWest, and other organisations across our area to plant trees, focusing on areas of most need



Next Steps:

- Use Index of Multiple Deprivation data with tree data to target planting in areas with most need.
- Combine with a canopy cover assessment.
- Spread the word in the Housing sector & trade press
- There could be almost 2 million trees in HA ownership in England



Final thoughts on i-Tree

- Be analytical with the data – garbage in, garbage out
- Present it well – pitched to the audience
- Tie it in with other local details
- Use other research and documents to back it up
- List other organisations who have been involved with i-Tree or have carried out projects



Thank you
