

We have the following general comments to make on the draft strategy, which was discussed at our October meeting.

1) Our Group welcomes the draft strategy, the production of which we feel is a huge step forward. It can form a useful basis to shape the management and maintenance of the Sheffield City Council's woodlands and trees. It should also be capable of being used as an exemplar for other woodland owners and managers locally to aspire towards as well as signifying the CC's expectations of them in bringing proposals forward, for comment and approval by the council.

2) The aesthetic value and benefits of trees and woods are not mentioned anywhere in the draft, which we feel is a significant omission.

3) Heritage value receives scant consideration and more is needed on this, especially for example within Conservation Areas and in Ancient Woodlands.

4) The special qualities and needs of Ancient Woodlands (which are well represented in the CC's estate) needs to be addressed.

5) In our Group's experience, the planning, consultation and execution of works on street trees currently falls far short of the ideals set out in the draft. The City Council needs to acknowledge this in the draft and to state how they will actively get this improved and then monitor and report on the progress towards this.