

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Léonie Cooper AM**

Chair of the London Assembly Environment  
Committee

C/o [Saleha.Fazal@london.gov.uk](mailto:Saleha.Fazal@london.gov.uk)

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Dear Léonie,

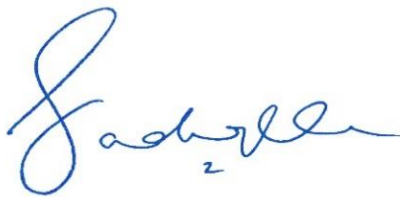
Thank you for your letter outlining the Environment Committee's recommendations on managing London's trees for a changing climate. I appreciate the Committee's careful consideration of this important issue and your ongoing work to safeguard London's urban forest for future generations.

The Committee's recent work, including its visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and engagement with sector experts, highlights the vital role of evidence-based species selection, effective aftercare, and community involvement in supporting tree resilience across London.

I note and welcome the Committee's six key recommendations, my response to which can be found in the annex to this letter.

Thank you again for the Committee's valuable contributions. I look forward to working together to protect and enhance London's trees as we face the challenges of a changing climate.

Yours sincerely,



**Sir Sadiq Khan**

Mayor of London

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## Annex

### Mayor of London's response to the recommendations of the London Assembly Environment Committee's investigation on 'Managing London's trees for a changing climate'

#### Recommendation 1

Following the completion of research by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the GLA should publish clear, evidence-based tree species selection guidance, based on current and projected climate conditions in London. This should include guidance around structured aftercare (including watering, mulching and pruning).

As set out in the [London Urban Forest Plan 2025 Actions Update](#), the development and dissemination of enhanced guidance on climate-resilient tree species is a priority action (Action 1D) that the Mayor is committed to leading, in partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. The Greater London Authority (GLA) has already commissioned research to assess the climate resilience of London's public realm tree stock. Once completed, this work will also provide evidence-based recommendations for future-resilient species, offering alternatives to those identified as most vulnerable. These recommendations will be made publicly available through the [London Urban Forest Resource Hub](#) – an online platform created by the GLA to collate and share practical resources on urban trees and woodland. The Resource Hub already includes guidance on structured aftercare practices, such as watering, mulching and pruning<sup>1</sup>, and will continue to be developed as a central point of reference for tree managers across London.

#### Recommendation 2

The GLA should work with the London Urban Forest Partnership to develop and publish an action plan with nurseries, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and trade representatives to identify priority climate-resilient species, and set agreed milestones to increase their commercial availability by 2035.

The Mayor's work with the [London Urban Forest Partnership](#) is guided by the London Urban Forest Plan 2025 Actions Update, which recognises strengthened cross-sector collaboration as a core principle for success. In alignment with this, the GLA has embedded engagement and partnership-building into its ongoing research on the climate resilience of London's public realm trees.

As part of this work, the GLA convened a workshop on 24 June with representatives from key UK-based tree nurseries and public realm tree managers across London. The purpose of this session was to share emerging findings from the research, raise awareness among nursery stakeholders, and invite their feedback. Importantly, the GLA also gathered input on practical next steps, which will be reflected in the final report.

#### Recommendation 3

To give nurseries greater certainty around future demand, the GLA should play a role in convening local authorities to consider pre-ordering climate resilient species and planning multi-year planting strategies.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of such reference materials includes: [Trees in Hard Landscapes: A Guide for Delivery](#) (TDAG, 2014), [The Urban Tree Manual](#) (Forest Research, 2018) and [Watering Young Trees](#) (Arboriculture Association)

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The Mayor works closely with the London Tree Officers Association (LTOA), which brings together professionals responsible for managing trees and woodland across London's boroughs. To support deeper engagement, the GLA is becoming an Associate Member of the LTOA. This will enable the GLA to contribute to relevant working groups, such as the LTOA's climate adaptation and the tree planting working parties.

Through participation in these groups, the GLA aims to develop a clearer understanding of the level of buy-in and feasibility among boroughs for improved coordination on climate-resilient tree species procurement and tree planting techniques. The Mayor's team is also keen to better identify key obstacles to tree planting, particularly in areas affected by low tree equity, where access to trees and the benefits they provide is limited despite high need.

## Recommendation 4

The GLA should provide innovation funding through the Green Roots Fund, to:

- evaluate the potential benefits of new approaches to street tree aftercare, such as QR-code based community watering schemes and specialised planting soils for street trees and disseminate the results.
- provide seed funding for nurseries to work in partnership with Royal Botanic Gardens Kew to make the most promising new tree species commercially available.

The Mayor's £12 million [Green Roots Fund](#) is open to all London boroughs and not-for-profit organisations wishing to enhance green and blue infrastructure across the city. The fund is designed to support projects that improve the urban environment for all Londoners – particularly where they deliver benefits for climate resilience, biodiversity, and social equity.

The GLA actively welcomes innovative approaches to urban greening. All applications are considered in line with the published [Green Roots guidance](#), which sets out the fund's eligibility and assessment criteria.

Proposals such as community-led watering schemes or specialist planting techniques would be considered where they align with programme objectives. Similarly, we are open to proposals that explore partnerships between nurseries and research institutions, including the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, where a clear route to impact can be demonstrated.

## Recommendation 5

The GLA should require annual updates on the survival status of funded trees and reasons for tree failure for at least the first five years post-planting. With the London Urban Forest Partnership, the GLA should work with boroughs and other stakeholders to collate and analyse London-wide data on types of trees planted and survival rates.

The GLA collaborates with Greenspace Information for London (GiGL) to compile and standardise the data shared on the [London Public Realm Tree Map](#), which collates available information on the location, species and other attributes for London's streets, parks and other public realm trees. For the first time, the update underway has secured information from all London boroughs, as well as key public realm tree owners, including The Royal Parks and Transport for London. The map will be updated later this year to reflect this, reflecting a commitment made under Action 8D in the London Urban Forest Plan 2025 Actions Update.

This represents a significant step towards enabling pan-London analysis that can benefit all public realm tree managers. The Mayor is committed to building on this success. For example, the GLA is

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currently exploring how to supplement ongoing work on climate resilience with data on tree removals.

In relation to GLA-funded tree planting, the Green Roots programme is designed to encourage all grant funding recipients to review success, based on the nature of their projects.

## **Recommendation 6**

The GLA, together with the London Urban Forest Partnership, should develop a working group to review the impact of tree-related insurance claims and develop recommendations to strengthen tree retention.

The LTOA, working jointly with the Forestry Commission (FC), has developed the Joint Mitigation Protocol, which provides a framework for addressing subsidence claims involving trees in a proportionate and evidence-based way. The LTOA's Risk Reduction Working Party is currently reviewing both its Risk Reduction Strategy for Tree Root Claims and the Joint Mitigation Protocol to ensure they reflect current best practice and the challenges of a changing climate.

As set out above, the Mayor has taken steps to enable his team to work more closely with the LTOA, including participating in relevant working groups. Once available, the GLA will promote the LTOA and FC's updated Risk Reduction Strategy and Joint Mitigation Protocol on the London Urban Forest Resource Hub to ensure they are widely accessible. This reflects the commitment made under Action 4A in the London Urban Forest Plan 2025 Actions Update to support the ongoing dissemination of best practices associated with the management of tree risks.

In addition, in collaboration with the wider London Urban Forest Partnership, the GLA will also explore ways to encourage greater uptake of the Protocol and support further knowledge-sharing on tree retention strategies, particularly in the context of managing subsidence risk fairly and effectively.