

Committee(s): Planning and Transportation Committee	Date(s): 8 October 2018
Subject: Green Initiatives in the City	Public
Report of: Director of the Built Environment	For Information
Report author: John Harte, Planning Officer (Policy)	

Summary

This report presents information on green initiatives in the City of London and outlines the results of a study into the use of a technique called Urban Greening Factor (UGF) as a means of delivering additional greening. It explains the rationale behind the Urban Greening Factor and how this will be used to deliver additional greening of development through the Local Plan and London Plan.

Recommendation(s)

Members are recommended to:

- Note the green initiatives being undertaken in the City outlined in this report and the potential for further progress using the Urban Greening Factor (UGF).

Main Report

1. This report has arisen from a Member request for further information on greening initiatives in Dowgate Ward. Specific data was provided regarding greenery in Dowgate Ward earlier in the year and this report provides a wider context. It provides information on initiatives City-wide, recognising that increased greening is an ambition across all wards.
2. The report also sets out developing policy work on Urban Greening Factors, which will provide the basis for requiring additional greening in and around new development through the Local Plan review.
3. The City has through the Local Plan actively encouraged the installation of green infrastructure such as green roofs, green walls, trees and amenity such as roof terraces, recognising that such infrastructure enhances biodiversity, reduces rainwater run-off, improves insulation, moderates the local climate and, if appropriately implemented and managed, makes buildings more attractive.

Open Spaces

4. There are over 350 open spaces in the City, covering 32 hectares of which 25 hectares are public open space. A map of existing open spaces in the City is included in Appendix 1. These spaces include parks, gardens, churchyards and hard open spaces such as plazas and highway amenity areas. Most of the open spaces are small, with approximately 80% of sites less than 0.2 hectares in size and only 11% above half a hectare. Ground level space is at a premium in the City, so it is vital the provision of 'green roofs' and other green infrastructure is promoted alongside enhancements at street level. All these open spaces offer an important resource for biodiversity. Further information on biodiversity networks can be found in the [City of London Biodiversity Action Plan \(2016-2020\)](#). This report is available on the City Corporation's website at: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/city-gardens/wildlife-and-nature/Pages/biodiversity.aspx>.
5. Planning guidance in the Open Spaces Strategy Supplementary Planning Document sets out how the gardens and spaces in the City are protected and enhanced. The report prepared for the City of London Corporation by BOP Consulting 'Green Spaces: The Benefits for London' recognises the environmental, social, economic, physical, mental health and well-being benefits the spaces have in a dense urban area. This report is available on the City Corporation's website at: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/economic-research-and-information/research-publications/Documents/research-2013/Green-Spaces-The-Benefits-for-London.pdf>
6. The City Corporation publishes an annual Open Spaces Monitoring Report on its website at: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/development-and-population-information/Documents/local-plan-monitoring-report-open-spaces-2017.pdf>. Also available online is the City of London Open Spaces Audit which focusses on spaces in the City, see <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/development-and-population-information/land-use/Documents/open-spaces-audit-2017.pdf> .
7. The City Corporation also maintains and manages 11,000 acres of green space beyond the City, including Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest and Highgate Wood. These form a green lung for the metropolis and a resource for Londoners and its wildlife.

Trees

8. There are approximately 2,400 trees in the City of London and most City trees (62%) are in gardens rather than along streets. A map showing the distribution of trees across the City is included in Appendix 1. The Tree Strategy SPD provides information on planting new trees and work to existing trees. This report is available on the City Corporation's website at: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/heritage-and-design/Pages/tree-strategy.aspx>. Some trees in the City are specifically protected through Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), and the City Corporation is

required to be notified of works to trees in conservation areas. The range of trees in the Square Mile can be explored through the City of London Tree Trail which is available on the City Corporation's website at:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/city-gardens/Documents/Tree-trail-City-of-London.pdf>.

Green Roofs

9. Since the mid-1970s the creation of over 80 green roofs in the City has made it one of the densest clusters of green roofs in the country. From 2006 to 2018 the number of green roofs in the City increased from 11,000sq.m to 43,000sq.m, equivalent in area to six Wembley football pitches. A map of green roofs in the City is included in Appendix 1.
10. It is estimated that there will be a gain of 22,700sq.m in green roof space between 2018/19 and 2023/24 across 32 green roofs, potentially increasing the total green roof space in the City of London to 65,800sq.m by 2024. The City is therefore forecast to have in total 120 green roofs by this time.
11. The City of London has led on planning and delivering green roofs in London and was a winner in the category 'Excellence in Planning for the Natural Environment' at the RTPI National Awards for Planning Excellence 2017. Information on green roofs in the City is available on the City Corporation's website at:
<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/development-and-population-information/Documents/local-plan-monitoring-report-green-roofs-2017.pdf>

Public Realm

12. City Public Realm in the Department of the Built Environment have led the preparation of area strategies across the City, which provide the framework for specific enhancement schemes relating to open spaces, gardens and churchyards where provision is made to improve the public realm through trees and green spaces. Within the City of London Public Realm Technical Manual there is information on trees, planting and planter beds. The team have contributed to many enhancement projects including Aldgate Square, St Pancras Church Garden, St Andrew Holborn Churchyard, replacement of the coach park at St Paul's Churchyard and the on-site public garden at 2-6 Cannon Street.
13. A recent example is the Green Corridors Project which involved the planting of over 40 trees on the highway from 2011-2014. The Greening Cheapside Project was identified as an area in the City which had potential for further greening and re-landscaping. The project was developed with the support of the Cheapside Business Alliance (CBA) and the Diocese of London. The project proposes public realm enhancements in the area around St. Paul's tube station and 5 Cheapside to enhance greening and improve wayfinding and movement throughout the site.

Emerging Planning Policy

14. The City's Local Plan 2015 is being reviewed and the new Local Plan will set out the out the City of London Corporation's vision, strategy and objectives for planning for the next 20 years, together with policies that will guide future decisions on planning applications. The draft City Plan 2036 will be brought to this Committee in late October for approval to publish for public consultation in late 2018 and subsequent public examination and adoption. The new Plan will include a section on green infrastructure.
15. The Mayor of London is currently reviewing the London Plan, which forms part of the development plan for the City alongside the City's Local Plan. The Mayor aims to make London at least 50% green by 2050 and has proposed a green infrastructure approach in the draft London Plan which recognises that green infrastructure needs to be planned, designed and managed in a more integrated way. The draft London Plan requires major development to consider greening as a fundamental element of site and building design and requires boroughs to use an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) concept to identify the appropriate amount of urban greening required in new development and to assess proposals against it.
16. The UGF scoring should be tailored to local circumstances, but in the interim the Mayor recommends a target score of 0.4 for developments that are predominately residential, and a target score of 0.3 for predominately commercial development. The London Plan is supported by a detailed research report 'Urban Greening Factor for London' prepared by The Ecology Consultancy/The Green Infrastructure Consultancy.

City of London Urban Greening Factor Study

17. Consultants Green Infrastructure Consultancy were commissioned in February 2018 to provide advice to the City of London Corporation on the appropriate level of Urban Greening Factor to be applied to developments in the City of London and to inform the emerging Local Plan review.
18. Using London Plan criteria, the consultants examined the existing level of UGF for nine case studies in the City which included a range of development types and locations. The consultants then looked at what additional types of greening could be applied to developments in the City. Details of the UGF methodology are set out in the consultant's report which is available on the City Corporation's website at: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/Documents/urban-greening-factor-study.pdf>
19. The consultants have recommended that the City Corporation adopt a modified scoring scheme for the UGF from that used by the Mayor to further encourage tree planting and the establishment of high quality green roofs and green walls reflecting the specific circumstances of development in the City. UGF scores may be calculated for application sites, buildings and their ground-level curtilage or street-level public realm.

20. The study results suggest that the draft London Plan target of 0.3 would be a challenging and appropriate target for both commercial and residential developments in the City and would result in an increase in greening compared with recent developments. To achieve this increase, the provision of additional greenery and landscaping will need to be factored into the early stage of scheme design. The consultants noted there are issues associated with the external greening of taller buildings due to their exposed situation. Therefore, further consideration is being given to the applicability of the UGF tool to tall City buildings.
21. The UGF policy could be used as a planning tool for major developments and applicants would be expected to submit a UGF calculation and provide justification for levels of greening which fall below the minimum target. The UGF would be applied as a separate consideration to other certification or benchmarking methods designed to measure the sustainability or environmental performance of developments such as BREEAM.
22. The consultants were asked to consider the impact of the UGF on the viability of development. Although increased greening would add additional cost, this is considered to represent a relatively small proportion of the overall costs of the scheme. The UGF approach was part of the viability testing of the draft London Plan and was not considered to jeopardise overall viability.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

23. Delivery of additional greening in the City will contribute towards meeting Outcome 11 of the Corporate Plan – *We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment* by providing a clean environment, green spaces, biodiversity and influence UK and global policy.

Conclusion

24. The City Corporation has been active for a number of years in requiring development to provide additional building greening, encouraging the provision of green roofs and delivering greening directly through public realm enhancement schemes. The City Corporation commissioned a study into appropriate levels of greening through the implementation of an Urban Greening Factor. This study is informing green infrastructure policy work being undertaken as part of the Local Plan review.

Appendix

Appendix 1 provides maps extracted from various Local Plan Monitoring Reports:

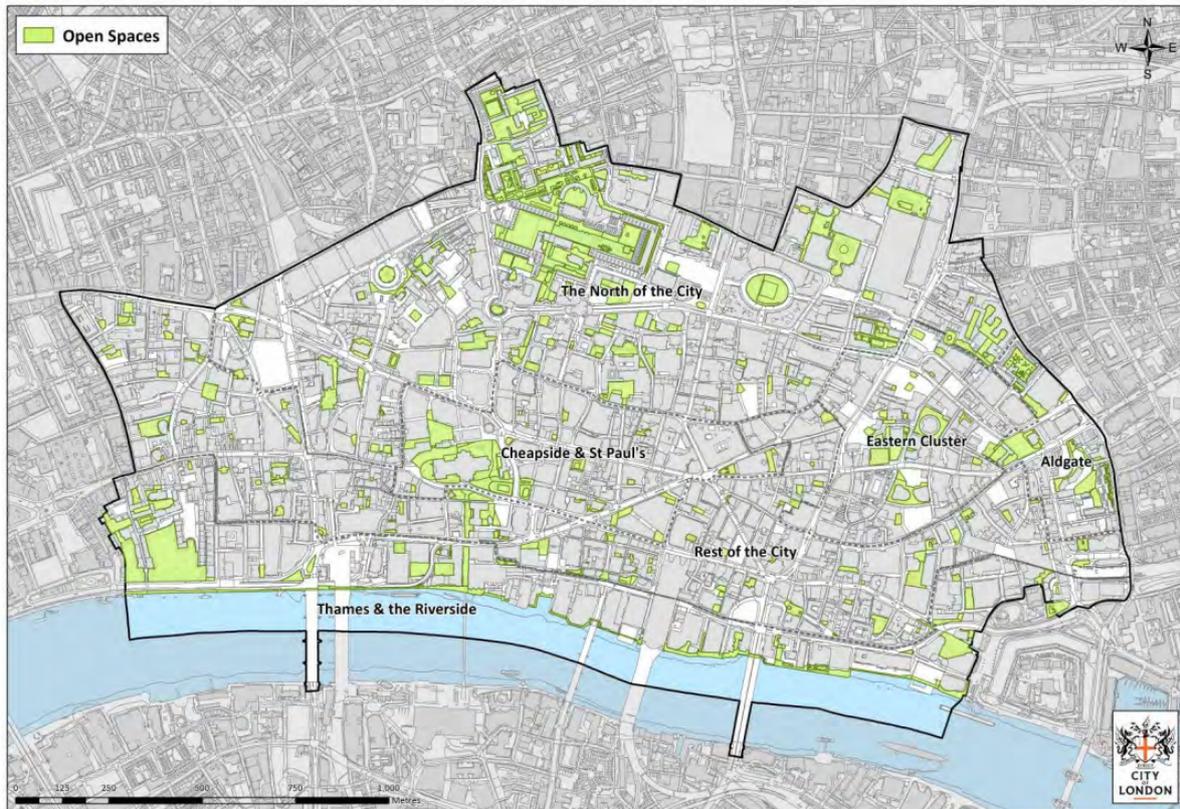
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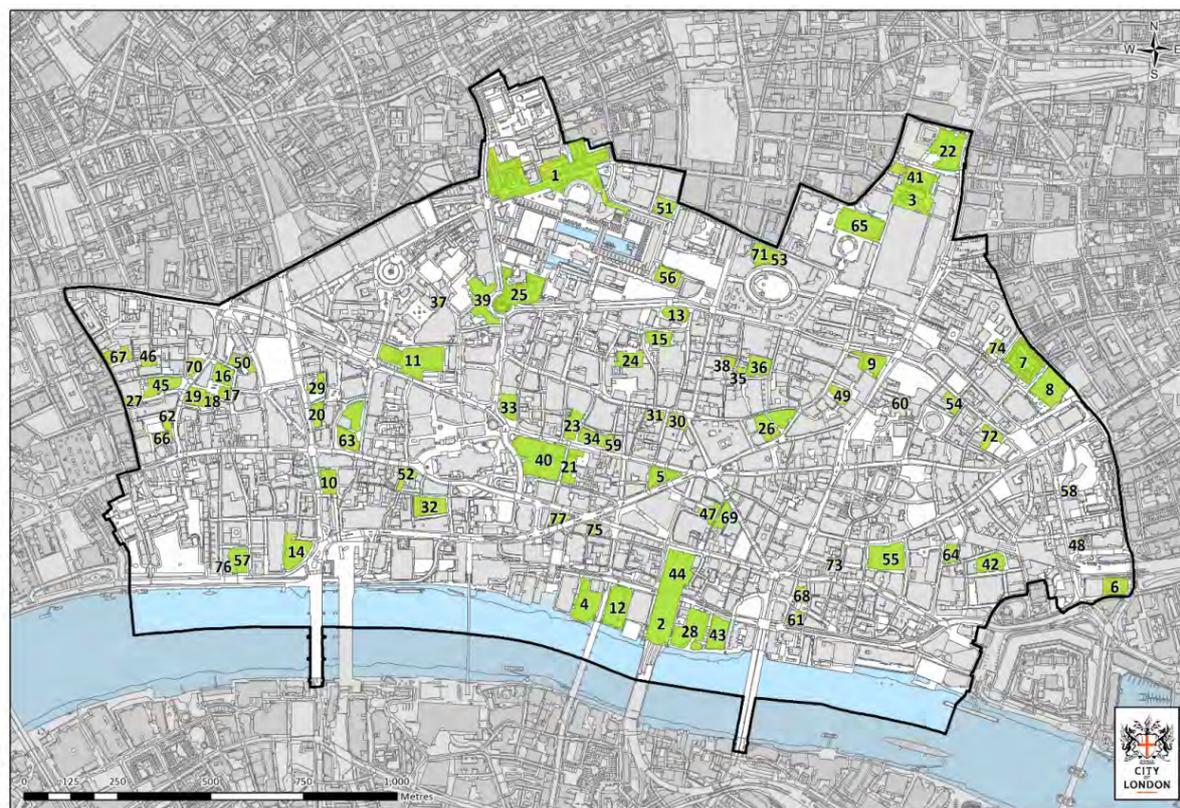
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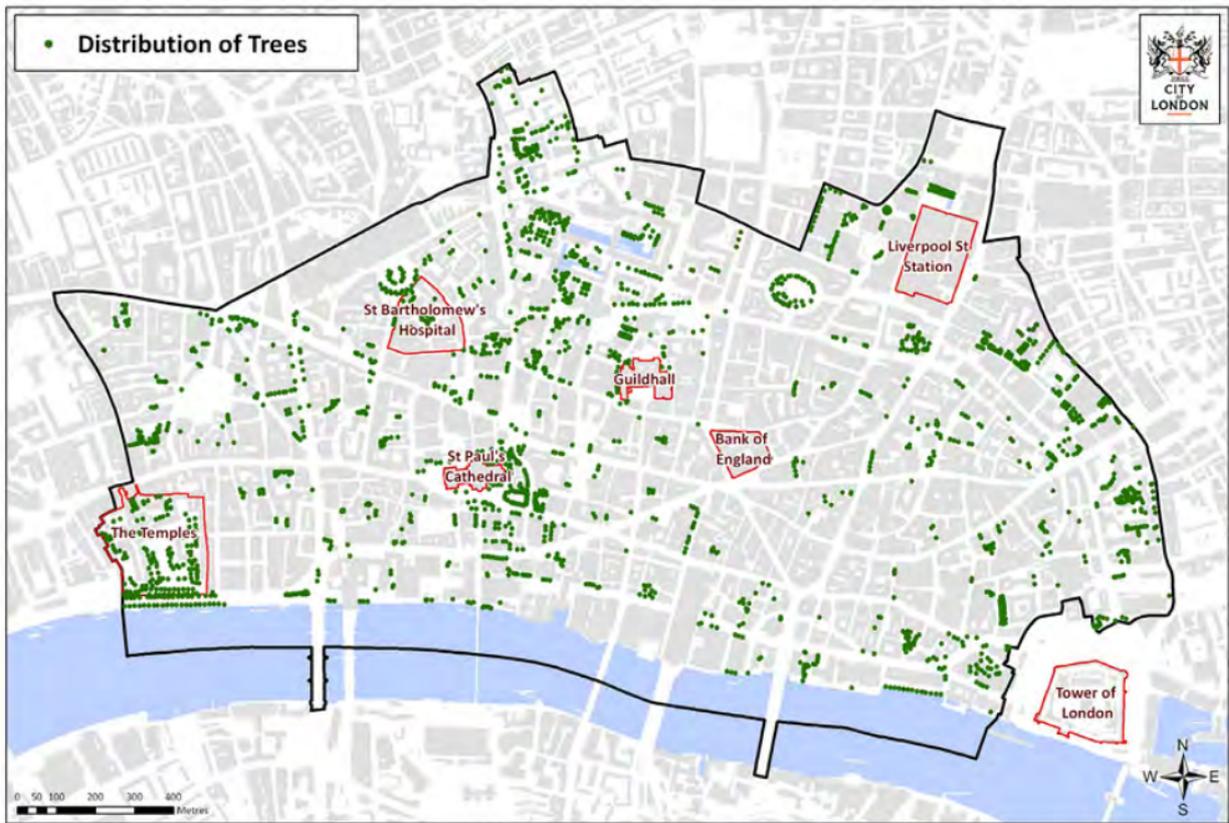
Appendix 1



Map 1: Open spaces in the City of London (as at 31st March 2017)



Map 2: Roof space with green roofs in the City of London (as at 31st March 2017)



Map 3: Distribution of trees across the City (as at 30th June 2010)