

# Dundee Botanic Garden values its trees

**Nadine Moreby**, Treeconomics

## In 2024, the University of Dundee partnered with Treeconomics to evaluate the environmental and social value of the trees in its Botanic Garden.

The study formed part of the university's Living Lab project, which aims to use green spaces as tools for education and improving campus sustainability. Using i-Tree, the team was able to quantify the ecosystem services provided by the trees in the Botanic Garden, e.g. carbon storage, air pollution and stormwater runoff.

The assessment revealed notable differences between the Botanic Garden and the rest of the university campus. While the garden is home to a diverse range of tree species which offer substantial ecosystem benefits, the main campus has less tree coverage, resulting in fewer overall environmental and amenity benefits. Knowing this is helping the university to increase tree planting across its campus, enhancing green spaces for students, staff and the local community.

A key part of the project was the involvement of students and staff, as well as external contractors, in collecting the data. This approach provided an educational experience, helping to raise the volunteers' awareness of the benefits of trees and their role in creating a healthier campus. Kevin Frediani, Curator

of the Botanic Garden, believes that understanding the contributions of trees is essential for making informed decisions about managing them effectively: he says, 'You can't manage what you don't know.'

The Botanic Garden has also served as a testing ground for new tree species and planting methods designed to adapt to Dundee's changing climate. Insights from these experiments are now being applied across the wider campus and in urban greening projects throughout the city.

The study demonstrates how assessing the value of trees can lead to better strategies for tree management and planting. It also emphasises the need for investment in green infrastructure to ensure long-term benefits for both the environment and the communities that enjoy it. To find out more, visit: [www.treeconomics.co.uk/projects](http://www.treeconomics.co.uk/projects)

## New associate member of staff

At Treeconomics, we were pleased to introduce a new Senior Associate to our team in December 2024. Catherine

Nuttgens, of Nuttgens Urban Forestry, brings extensive expertise in urban forestry and sustainable landscape practices, as well as a proven track record in community engagement. Her work will support our mission to promote the benefits of trees and provide practical solutions for managing urban forests. Our team is excited about the added value that Catherine will bring to our work, helping us to promote sustainable treescapes across our towns and cities.

## Highlights from our recent webinar

Our webinar with Dr Mark Johnston proved extremely popular and sparked lots of questions from our audience!

One notable question explored how to achieve balance in urban development with the preservation of mature trees. Dr Johnston highlighted the importance of integrating green infrastructure in development plans from the outset. Doing so ensures that trees are considered to be part of the urban fabric, reducing the risk of unnecessary removals and enhancing the overall quality of a development.

Another question addressed how to gain public support for urban forestry interventions, such as thinning or removing unhealthy trees. Dr Johnston stressed the importance of transparency, education and community involvement. By explaining the reasons behind these actions and showcasing their long-term benefits, urban forestry professionals can build trust with their local communities.

Webinars like these are an excellent way to share knowledge and promote best practices in urban forestry, and we look forward to continuing these discussions at future events. To see a recording of this webinar, visit: [www.treeconomics.co.uk/resources](http://www.treeconomics.co.uk/resources)



A glasshouse at Dundee Botanic Garden.