



## BOOK REVIEW

*Trees in Towns II: A New Survey of Urban Trees in England and Their Condition and Management.* Edited by Chris Britt and Mark Johnston. Dept. for Communities and Local Government, London, 2008, 646 pp. ISBN: 978 185 112 8891

*Trees in Town II* is a national survey of England's urban trees and their management. What makes this a particularly useful and interesting publication is that it builds on the first *Trees in Town* survey and publication that was undertaken in 1992/93, thus providing a description of England's urban trees over time. Far too many surveys are not repeated and can only give a snapshot of what is a dynamic process. The overall aim of this survey was to provide current information on the state of urban forests and their management.

The project addressed three interrelated tasks; 1) conduct a national tree survey, 2) survey local authorities responsible for tree management, and 3) integration of these two tasks. A project advisory group was formed to provide support and advice to the project.

Comparisons with the earlier survey indicates a small increase in the number of urban trees over much of England, however it appears that the rate of planting has declined since the early 1990s. A majority of trees were found to be in good condition (70%) in the recent survey, but the percentage is slightly lower than in the 1992 report. A substantial percentage of trees (82%) were reported to be making a positive contribution to urban environments.

A survey of local landscape authorities was conducted via a questionnaire to determine resources and budgets, strategies and planned management, level of systematic management, extent of tree preservation orders and conservation areas, integrated management, SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, and tree officer information. Among numerous findings, Landscape Authorities spent nearly GBP £106 million (USD \$149.9 million) on urban trees in 2003/04, but most budgets were not sufficient to provide a planned level of service for urban trees.

This report is lengthy (646 pages) and very comprehensive with much useful information for Landscape Authorities in England, and useful information to anyone developing surveys and tree management strategies. All thirteen authors undertook a huge task and did an excellent job, and the multi-layered results are proof of this. *Trees in Town II* presents a useful guide to establishing baseline information over time to assess the status of tree populations and tree management. Results are also presented in an easy to use 34 page summary with the full report on a compact disc. This publication provides a useful addition to a researcher's library, a reference in educating urban foresters and arborists, and a strategic reference for practitioners.

*(Reviewed by Dr. Robert W. Miller, Emeritus Professor of Urban Forestry, University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point)*