

This tree provides
\$ _____
worth of benefits
over the next ___ year(s).

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An example of the publicity material used on individual trees to show value

topic in mainland Europe, as confirmed when Kenton and I attended an international conference at the University of Agricultural Sciences in Alnarp, Sweden. There, Keiron Doick, from Forest Research, examined i-Tree and its potential for wider use, while keynote speaker Dr David Howak, from the USDA Forest Service, who designed the models behind i-Tree, described its modifications and developments and how it promises to offer even more than its predecessors, including the ability to forecast how tree canopy and forest resilience can be affected under varying management regimes.

Case study from John McNeil,¹ a senior urban forester from Oakville, Canada, was of interest for our development work in the UK. As a manager of urban greenspace in one of the first towns to use the system outside the US, McNeil introduced the i-Tree model in Oakville with the branded campaign 'Our solution to our pollution'. He hasn't looked back since.

Particularly impressive was the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis undertaken before and after i-Tree Eco was used. Before i-Tree was

implemented, many of the strengths of the urban forest had not even been identified. However, after its use, John could not only identify the benefits, but also quantify them and, with the data gathered, could convey key messages about the urban forest. Hearing how i-Tree was used to develop a comprehensive management plan was particularly valuable, as this aspect of its usage has yet to fully materialise over here.

Keith Logie MICFor, from Edinburgh City Council, was among the UK speakers and he described using i-Tree and impact assessment tools to estimate the value of the City's trees and greenspaces.

It really is an exciting time for all those managing urban forests to demonstrate that trees pay us back the investment that we make in their establishment and maintenance through the benefits they provide.

Keith Sacre MICFor is also Sales Director of Barcham Trees

¹ John McNeil will address this year's Arboricultural Association Conference at the University of Warwick on 21-23 September. www.trees.org.uk/Amenity-Conference

Find out more...

For full details of i-Tree developments in the UK and advice on the implementation of new projects, email kenton.rogers@treeconomics.co.uk or keith@barchamtrees.co.uk



OUR OPINION CANDID THOUGHTS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Experts at the root of good planning



Photo: Barrer Tree Consultancy

Regular columnists Sharon and Tracy say members are vital if trees are to become integral to design development and construction.

Sharon: Involving a professional arboricultural consultant within the client design team after planning consent isn't common practice, but it's a very good start, the benefits are huge and it's what BS 5837 (2012) advises.¹

Tracy: It's tricky to get the client to see the value in this, but we're helped along the way by planning conditions which show the local authority how the roots, stems and branches of trees have been properly considered for operations on site during the demolition and construction phases of the process.

Sharon: I agree. Being part of the design team is essential. Trees take up space above and below the ground. How to work around them well relies on a combination of the design team looking to the professionals for technical expertise then working with them to achieve a successful outcome...

Tracy: ...like the design of foundations or special roads/

footpaths to accommodate tree roots. The specification's led by an engineer but, to achieve a successful solution for trees, it can only be achieved by working with an arboricultural consultant advising on the specialist needs of trees and an architect working in tandem to avoid excavations around tree roots.

Sharon: Their creative design solutions are really exciting to work with and even better when they overcome what seem like insurmountable construction problems around trees.

Tracy: And the great thing is that we're educating other professionals during this work and showing how we can apply our learning on other projects in the future.

Sharon: The planning conditions imposed by the local authority in relation to trees can be discharged without delay to the client programme because we can provide robust information that has flowed from our input in this process. So, winners all round?

Tracy: That's obvious to me. We just need to shout about it a bit more.

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Both are ICF Council members

¹ Recommendations for Trees in Relation to Design Demolition and Construction