

NOTICE OF MOTION**ENHANCING BRIGHTON & HOVE'S TREES AND WOODLAND**

"This Council recognises the hugely important role that is played by Brighton & Hove's 9,000 street trees, and 500 hectares of woodland. In particular:

- Woodlands and parks provide invaluable space for recreation and exercise for residents.
- Trees and woodland play a crucial role in global climate regulation and, therefore, help to enable people and wildlife to adapt to climate change.
- Trees and woods also help in the reduction of urban temperatures, alleviate flooding, absorb pollution, and provide sustainable building materials.

Furthermore, Brighton & Hove plays a national role in tree conservation and biodiversity, hosting the official National Elm Collection and the former National Lilac Collection at Withdean Park. The Council also runs a successful Tree Trust, which enables residents to have a dedicated tree planted on their behalf to mark a significant event or simply to enhance the character of their chosen area.

This Council notes the woodland access standard developed by the Woodland Trust, which has a goal that no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size, and that there should be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km of people's homes. Currently access to woodland within 500m is 3.6% for Brighton and Hove, which compares to an average of 13.2% for East Sussex and 15.6% for the UK.

This Council is also pleased to note that the coalition government has been forced to abandon its plans to sell off England's treasured 1,400 national forests, including nearby forests visited and enjoyed by the people of this city, thanks to the Save Our Forests Campaign, organised by 38 Degrees and backed by organisations including the Woodland Trust, Greenpeace, the WWF, the National Trust, and the Ramblers, heralding a victory for people power with over 530,000 people signing a petition opposing the Government's plan to privatise public forests.

This Council is, however, disappointed that this government still plans to sell 15 per cent of the Public Forest Estate, the maximum sales allowed under the law as it stands, where they have simply delayed the sale until the autumn. This will concern local people who enjoy visiting adjacent natural forests and woodland, such as the nearby Friston Forest,

Therefore, this Council resolves to:

1. Congratulate all Brighton & Hove residents involved in the Save Our Forests Campaign for their success in achieving a u-turn from the coalition government on these unpopular proposals to sell off our national forests;

2. Request that the Cabinet Member for Environment:
 - a) Works with the Woodland Trust to examine options for further woodland creation and tree planting in Brighton and Hove, with particular reference to the Mayor of London's Street Trees campaign which aims to plant 10,000 new street trees in the capital;
 - b) Investigates the possibility of a developing a stand alone trees and woodlands policy, in consultation with the relevant scrutiny committee.
 - c) Explores the option of a free tree scheme, such as the one in Kent, which enables residents to apply for up to 25 free trees, of which nearly 7 tonnes of CO2 would be absorbed in their lifetime, and can be planted as single trees or used to create a woodland or hedgerow.”