



**PUBLIC  
COUNCILLOR BRIEFING**

**AGENDA & SUPPORTING MATERIAL**

**Commencing at 1.30pm  
Wednesday 27 November 2024  
Council Chambers**

*This meeting will be recorded and livestreamed.*

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>PUBLIC COUNCILLOR BRIEFING</b>		
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 27 November 2024	<b>Time</b>	Commences at 1.30pm
<b>Location</b>	Council Chambers		

<b>AGENDA</b>			
1.30pm– 2.00pm	Trees for Tomorrow Engagement Summary and Ecosystems Info	Ben Baird, George Sariaik	

Public Meeting Ends



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Chief Executive Officer

**From:** George Sariak – Senior Strategy Planner

**Date:** 20/11/2024

**Subject:** Summary of the Trees for Tomorrow Engagement

This memo summarises the comments from the recent Trees for Tomorrow engagement. Following the Council Briefing on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2024, Council Staff undertook early engagement on the review and update of T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, Council staff developed a survey that focused on trees on public land managed by Council. This was presented to the community as the Trees for Tomorrow engagement.<sup>2</sup> The Trees for Tomorrow engagement took place between Wednesday 18 September and Sunday 6 October 2024. Over this time, there were 987 total visits to Trees for Tomorrow page on Your Say Selwyn (EngagementHQ), which raised awareness and informed a significant number of our community about this subject. This resulted in 138 completed surveys through Your Say Selwyn and 3 submissions made by email.

The engagement provided an opportunity for communities to put forward their views about trees on public land managed by Selwyn District Council. The engagement also offered Council staff the opportunity to test early policy ideas with the community, as part of the review and update of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy. The current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy was scheduled for a review in September 2024. The engagement was upfront with communities about the end-use of their feedback being to inform this review.

The Trees for Tomorrow engagement was structured around early policy ideas on the review of the T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy which are as follows:

- Planting and Tree Cover
- Caring For Our Trees
- Tree Removal and Replacement
- Retaining and Working Around Trees

Council staff have collated and analysed the feedback and prepared the Trees for Tomorrow Engagement Summary Report (appendix 1) This is an initial high-level summary of the feedback received during the engagement; however more detailed analysis will be undertaken in early 2025.

There were 13 questions in the survey, 8 of these questions were multiple choice. Multiple choice questions included an 'other' option, which provided a free-text box. Each section also included free-text questions that provided respondents with the opportunity to outline the reasons for their answer or tell us anything else about the subject matter of that section. The end of the survey also included an opportunity for respondents to tell Council anything else about trees on public land managed by the Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Selwyn District Council. Policy Manual: T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy.

[https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/983202/Selwyn-District-Council-Policy-Manual-CURRENT-Updated-8-10-2024.pdf](https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/983202/Selwyn-District-Council-Policy-Manual-CURRENT-Updated-8-10-2024.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Selwyn District Council. Trees for Tomorrow Engagement on Your Say Selwyn.

<https://yoursay.selwyn.govt.nz/tree-policy-pre-engagement>



Council staff intend to further analyse the feedback, and to ensure the views of the community are reflected in the review and update of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy. This will be coupled with working with wider Council staff that interact with the policy to ensure that operational concerns are also addressed.

Feedback that was out of scope of the Tree Policy itself, but related to strategic work on the blue-green network will be carried forward by the relevant teams for Area Plans and Action Plans. Feedback that was out of scope of the Tree Policy, and strategic work will be collated and passed on the appropriate team(s) and/or staff.

It is intended that draft changes will come before Council (and the appropriate subcommittee) in Q1 2025. At that time, the draft will be assessed against the Significance and Engagement Policy to determine whether public consultation on the draft would be required.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G Sariak'.

George Sariak  
**STRATEGY TEAM LEADER**

***Endorsed For Agenda***

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Carnoutsos'.

Sarah Carnoutsos  
**ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ENABLING SERVICES**

# **Trees for Tomorrow**

## **ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT**

**20<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**



## Executive Summary

The Trees for Tomorrow engagement took place between **Wednesday 18 September** and **Sunday 6 October 2024**. Over this time, there were **987 total visits** to Trees for Tomorrow page on Your Say Selwyn (EngagementHQ), which raised awareness and informed a significant number of our community. This resulted in **138 completed surveys** through Your Say Selwyn and **3 submissions** made by email.

The Trees for Tomorrow engagement was an opportunity for communities across Waikirikiri Selwyn to provide feedback about trees on public land managed by Selwyn District Council. The Trees for Tomorrow engagement also provided the opportunity for staff to test early policy ideas that have been considered during the review and update of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy.

The Trees for Tomorrow engagement was structured around these early policy ideas, which are as follows:

- Planting and Tree Cover
- Caring For Our Trees
- Tree Removal and Replacement
- Retaining and Working Around Trees

## Table of Contents

<a href="#">Executive Summary .....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Overview .....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Survey Design.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">Survey Respondents.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Survey Structure.....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">Planting and Tree Cover .....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Caring For Our Trees .....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Tree Removal and Replacement .....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Retaining and Working Around Trees .....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">End of the survey .....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Report Structure .....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Planting and Tree Cover .....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Overview .....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Question 1.....</a>	<a href="#">8</a>
<a href="#">Question 2.....</a>	<a href="#">10</a>
<a href="#">Question 3.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Caring For Our Trees .....</a>	<a href="#">14</a>
<a href="#">Overview .....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Question 4.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Question 5.....</a>	<a href="#">16</a>
<a href="#">Tree Removal and Replacement .....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Overview .....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Question 6.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Question 7.....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Question 8.....</a>	<a href="#">22</a>
<a href="#">Question 9.....</a>	<a href="#">24</a>
<a href="#">Question 10.....</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Retaining and Working Around Trees .....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Overview .....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Question 11.....</a>	<a href="#">28</a>
<a href="#">Question 12.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">Anything Else About Trees on Public Land Managed by Council .....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Question 13.....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Next Steps .....</a>	<a href="#">35</a>

## Overview

The Trees for Tomorrow engagement took place between **Wednesday 18 September** and **Sunday 6 October 2024**. The Trees for Tomorrow engagement consisted of an online survey available through Your Say Selwyn (EngagementHQ).

The engagement provided an opportunity for communities to put forward their views about trees on public land managed by Selwyn District Council (Council). The Trees for Tomorrow engagement also offered the opportunity for staff to test early policy ideas with the community, as part of the review and update of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy.<sup>1</sup> The current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy was scheduled for a review in **September 2024**. The engagement was upfront with our communities about the end-use of their feedback, being to inform this review.

## Survey Design

The survey was carefully developed and included input from the project team working on the policy review as well Marketing and Communications Teams. The survey considered best practice for survey design and was guided by 'Stats NZ (2019) A guide to good survey design: Fifth edition'. The following principles guided the survey:

- Survey length, respect our communities time, recognising a survey too long will see response rates drop-off and a survey too short may not glean the information needed to be helpful for policy decisions and/or require returning to the community on the topic in an unreasonable return period.
- Simplified language, particularly regarding complex and or technical arboriculture terminology.
- Neutral and balanced language throughout regarding the subject matter.
- Questions straightforward and unambiguous.
- Visually accessible, easy to follow layout, sensible question grouping under titles, with a logical sequence and flow.

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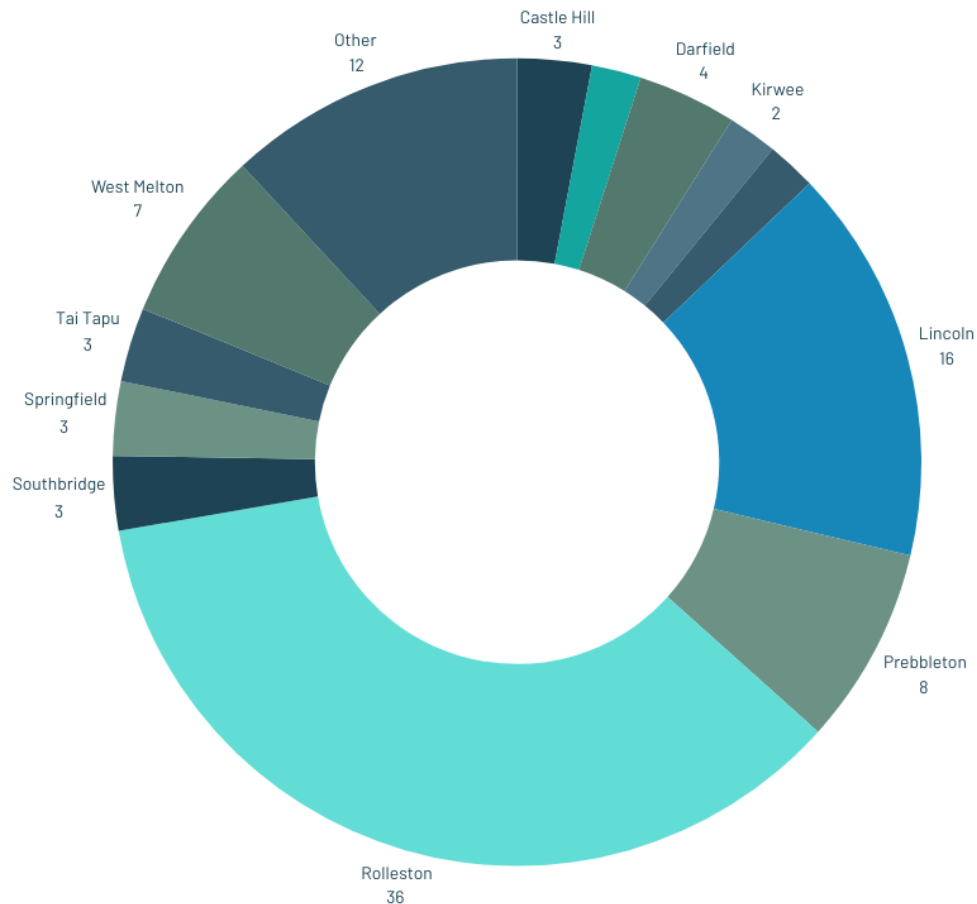
<sup>1</sup> Selwyn District Council. Policy Manual: T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy.  
[https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/983202/Selwyn-District-Council-Policy-Manual-CURRENT-Updated-8-10-2024.pdf](https://www.selwyn.govt.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/983202/Selwyn-District-Council-Policy-Manual-CURRENT-Updated-8-10-2024.pdf)



- Clear and engaging content, engaging visuals and intuitive navigation.
- Clear and balanced explanations that provided the necessary context without leading.
- Likert scales that are symmetrical and balanced (where possible).
- Unconstrained feedback, provide 'other' as an option with free-text options for people to express their reasoning as well as a 'anything else' option at the end for any matters not covered in the survey

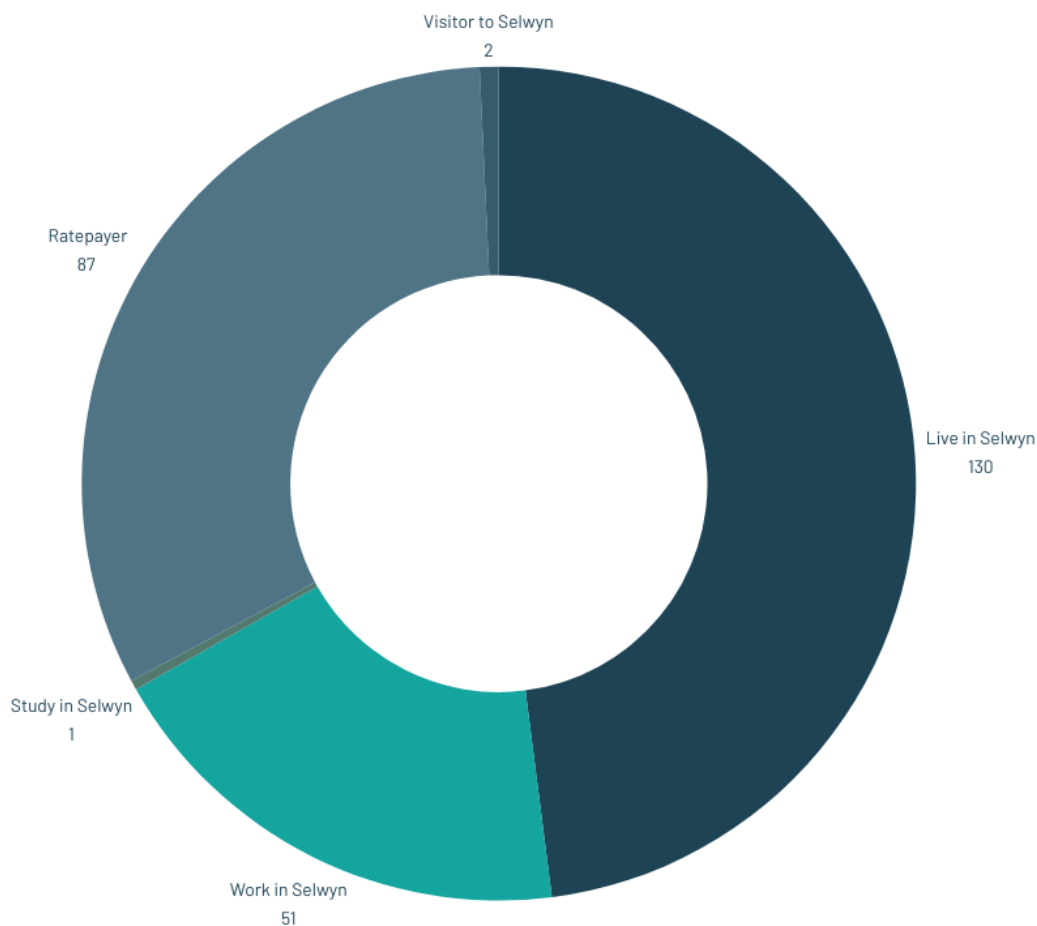
## Survey Respondents

The survey received **138 responses**. Responses were received from across the district. Over two thirds of respondents were from the main towns in Greater Christchurch, being Rolleston, Lincoln, Prebbleton and West Melton.



Respondents were asked about their connection to Selwyn.

Respondents were able to select more than one option, therefore the responses will not equal to 138. Of the 138 respondents, 130 (94%) live in Selwyn and 87 (63%) are ratepayers.



## Survey Structure

The survey was structured around early policy ideas for the review of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy.



The current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy has policies under three sections; tree planting, tree maintenance and tree removals. Early policy ideas largely correspond to these sections of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy. Early policy ideas do however include a greater focus on retaining trees on public land where appropriate, and tree protection which is ultimately related to tree retention, but also safety and risk. These were

grouped together for the purpose of the survey as 'Retaining and Working Around Trees'.

There were thirteen questions in the survey, eight of these questions were multiple choice. All multiple choice questions included an 'other' option, which provided a free-text box. Each section also included free-text questions that provided respondents with the opportunity to outline the reasons for their answer or tell us anything else about the subject matter relevant to that section. The end of the survey also included an opportunity for respondents to tell us anything else about trees on public land managed by the Council.

Section		Multiple Choice Question(s)	Other Question(s)
1	Planting and Tree Cover	2	1
2	Caring For Our Trees	1	1
3	Tree Removal and Replacement	4	1
4	Retaining and Working Around Trees	1	1
End of the survey		0	1

The survey questions are included in subsequent sections of this report.

## Report Structure

The structure of the Trees for Tomorrow Engagement Summary Report follows the structure of the survey.

## Planting and Tree Cover

This section of the survey did not have a specific introduction to the subject matter. The section included three questions (questions 1, 2 and 3).

### Overview



This section did not include a short introduction as this section immediately followed the landing page for the Trees for Tomorrow engagement on Your Say Selwyn. The landing page included the following:

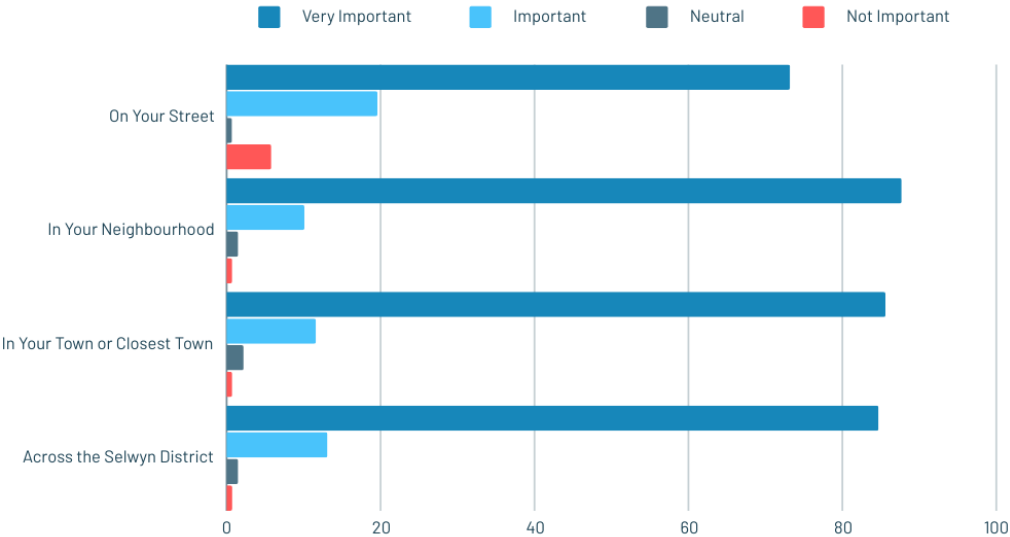
“Planting more trees ensures that we can increase and maintain our tree canopy cover over time. Proactive tree planting ensures that we have a diverse range of species and ages to avoid large portions of our trees reaching the end of their lifecycle at the same time. It is important that trees are grown in locations that allow them to reach maturity and benefit our communities as well as future generations.”

### Question 1

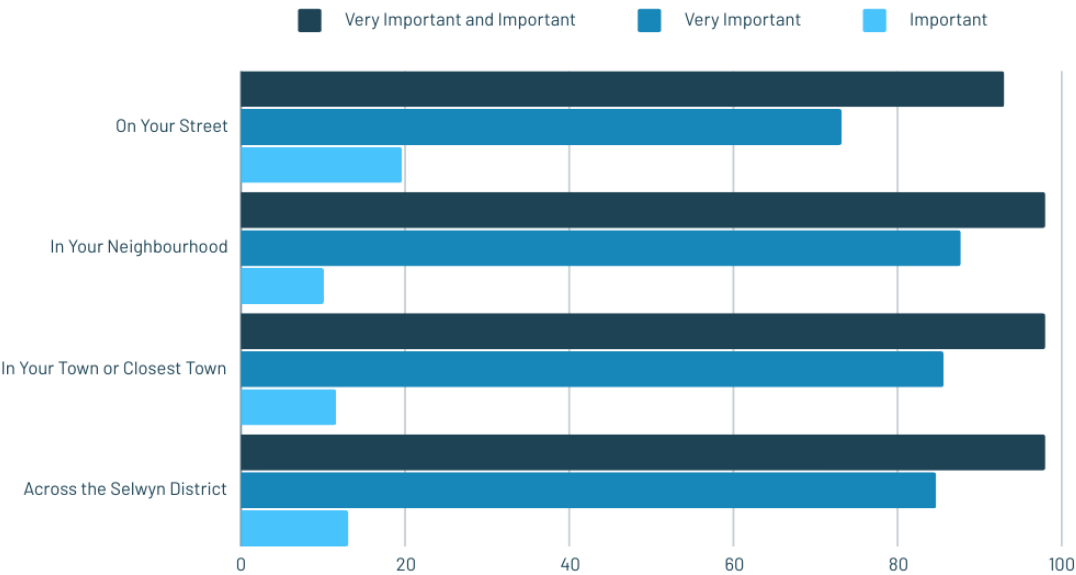
This question asked respondents how important trees are in a number of locations, including:

- On their street (138 responses)
- In their neighbourhood (138 responses)
- In their town or closest town (138 responses)
- Across the Selwyn District (137 responses)

The graph below represents the percentage of respondents that chose each option for each location.



The vast majority of respondents considered that trees were important (either very important or important) across all locations.



93% of respondents considered that trees were very important (73%) or important (20%) in their streets. 98% of respondents considered that trees were very important (88%) or important (10%) in their neighbourhood. 98% of respondents considered that trees were very important (86%) or important (12%) in their town, or closest town. 98% of respondents considered that trees were very important (85%) or important (13%) across the Selwyn District.

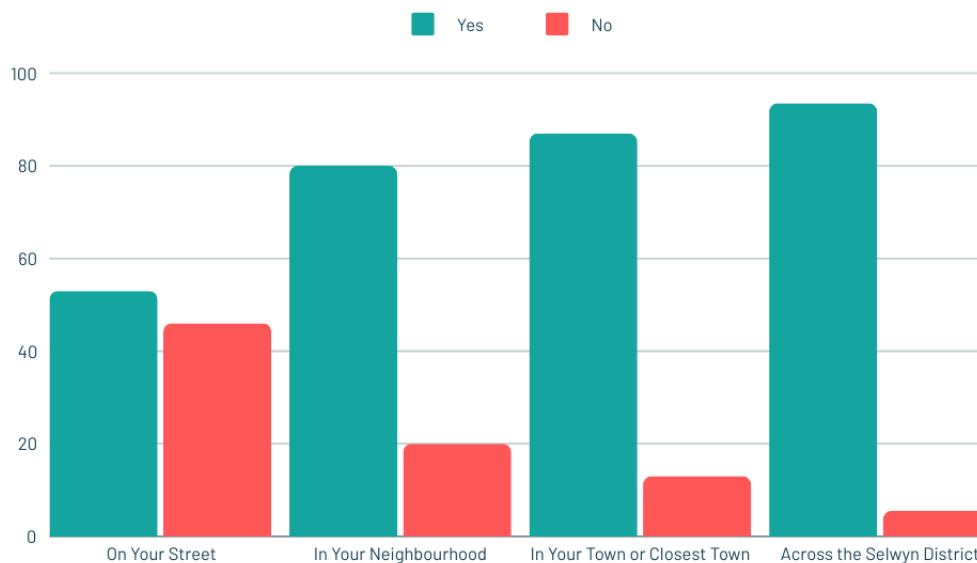
## Question 2

This question asked respondents if they think there needs to be more trees in the following locations:

- On their street
- In their neighbourhood
- In their town or closest town
- Across the Selwyn District

Respondents could select either yes or no to this question.

138 responses were received to this question. The question asked respondents if they think there needs to be more trees in particular locations.



Respondents were split 53% (yes) and 46% (no) as to whether there needed to be more trees on their street. The majority of respondents, 80%, considered that there needs to be more trees in their neighbourhood. The majority of respondents, 87%, considered that there needs to be more trees in their town or closest town. The majority of respondents, 94%, considered that there needs to be more trees across the Selwyn District.

The survey suggests that respondents were less supportive of trees the closer to their immediate place of residence. There was still considerable support for more trees across all the locations included in the survey.

### Question 3

This question asked respondents what reasons they had for their answer. This may include the reason for questions 1 and/or 2.

132 responses were received to this question. 4 respondents provided additional feedback that was considered to be out of scope for not only this question, but the subject of this engagement. Therefore, 128 responses were analysed for general themes and are summarised below.

### Planting and Canopy Cover

As questions 1 and 2 focused on planting, a number of respondents provided additional feedback on tree planting and/or canopy cover.



A number of respondents consider that there is not enough trees and/or canopy cover, with feedback focused on encouraging increased tree planting and/or canopy cover. A few respondents considered that where they live was sufficient in terms of tree cover, but identified that more planting and ultimately tree canopy cover is needed within towns and urban areas. A number of respondents took a district-scale perspective, and considered that there were not enough trees across the Selwyn District, or identified large areas to focus planting or canopy cover increases, such as the lowland plains. The district-scale perspective also included feedback about planting to focus on sequestering more of the greenhouse gas emissions, providing habitat for biodiversity, restoring/connecting ecosystems and facilitating the movement of avifauna through “native corridors”.

A number of respondents identified opportunities for planting and/or increasing tree canopy cover. These included underutilised public land, larger open parks, and particular streets (many of which form the key routes for pedestrians to destinations such as schools or supermarkets).

### Value of Trees

A strong theme in the feedback from respondents were the benefits or value from trees and/or canopy cover. These benefits are often thought of in terms of ecosystem services, and are classified by:

- supporting services, (eg, nutrient cycling, soil formation, habitat creation):
- provisioning services, (eg, food, freshwater, wood, fibre, fuel):
- regulating services, (eg, water purification, climate regulation, flood regulation, disease regulation):
- cultural services, (eg, aesthetic, spiritual, educational, recreational).

A large number of respondents provided comments on the value or services provided by trees. These included providing shade, shelter, protection from UV, providing habitat, regulating temperature, purifying the air, managing stormwater, noise reduction, improving mental health, sequestering carbon, wind protection, providing recreation and play opportunities, their visual appeal / aesthetics / amenity and or softening of hard urban landscapes, connecting to the past and/or nature, defining the character and rural identity of the district, and can provide physical resources such as food. This indicates that there is a deeper level of understanding amongst our community of the

value of trees, beyond more easily identifiable values, such as shade and shelter.

A number of respondents identified particular ecosystem services important to them or for where they live (shade, wind protection, habitat etc), and/or particular trees that they value, by their location, species, age, height, size or personal associations (e.g. the one my children like to climb). A number of respondents identified particular ecosystem services that they considered would be important to consider for the future, such as temperature regulation due to climate change and the urbanisation of certain parts of the district which brings urban heat island effect.

Aside from the biophysical benefits of trees, respondents also provided feedback on visual, aesthetic, character and identity benefits from trees. A number of respondents identified the opportunity to either match Christchurch City or forge Selwyn's own tree identity. In this question, and throughout the Trees for Tomorrow engagement, respondents highlighted the identity that Christchurch City has around being a 'Garden City' and that there is a lack of any such identity for Selwyn.

### **Tree Removal and Replacement**

A number of respondents provided feedback on the removal of trees (despite this also being addressed under section 3), either on public land managed by Council or on the urban land development process (subdivisions). Most of the feedback focused on private trees that are to be vested in Council through the subdivision process.

Respondents considered that there needed to be stronger requirements and or incentives for developers to retain trees. A number of respondents expressed concern for maintaining tree cover in towns, due to the size of sections decreasing to a size were accommodating larger trees, and or trees in general, become seemingly impossible. A number of respondents identified that the loss of trees coupled with higher density developments will put pressure on private green space and increase reliance on the public realm for the provision of green space and tree cover.

A few respondents provided feedback on the removal of trees on public land managed by Council and expressed their desire for better consultation on tree removal and communication around the plan for tree replacement. A number of respondents considered that trees that had been removed had not been

replaced, or that it had not been communicated where/how they had been replaced.

### Tree Selection

A number of respondents provided feedback stating that they consider that various aspects of tree selection require greater consideration. This included feedback on tree height, size and shape, suitability as habitat for native biodiversity, ongoing maintenance requirements, drought tolerance, and trees that can provide greater canopy cover.

A large number of respondents provided feedback on species selection. Feedback included a number of respondents outlining a preference for native species, and/or the eventual replacement of exotic species through native replacement planting. Other respondents outlined a preference for deciduous trees, that are flowering and/or have autumnal colouring. A number of respondents stated a preference for fruit and nut trees. A small number of respondents considered that tree selection should focus on trees that are low maintenance and drought tolerant, to take into account for the changing climate. A number of respondents did not preference particular species over another, but generally encouraged greater diversity of species, ages and heights.

A few respondents provided feedback on how newly planted trees had not survived, noting particular locations and species. Related to this, a few comments were received on ongoing aftercare and maintenance to support the survival of newly planted trees as well as to reduce nuisance effects, such as leaf litter. A few respondents considered that careful tree selection was needed for trees on public land managed by council and in new subdivisions where trees are causing conflicts/damage to infrastructure (such as footpaths and pipes), and that repairing the infrastructure without addressing the cause (the tree) was not an efficient use of ratepayer money.

## Caring For Our Trees

This section of the survey included a short introduction to the subject matter and two questions (questions 4 and 5).

## Overview



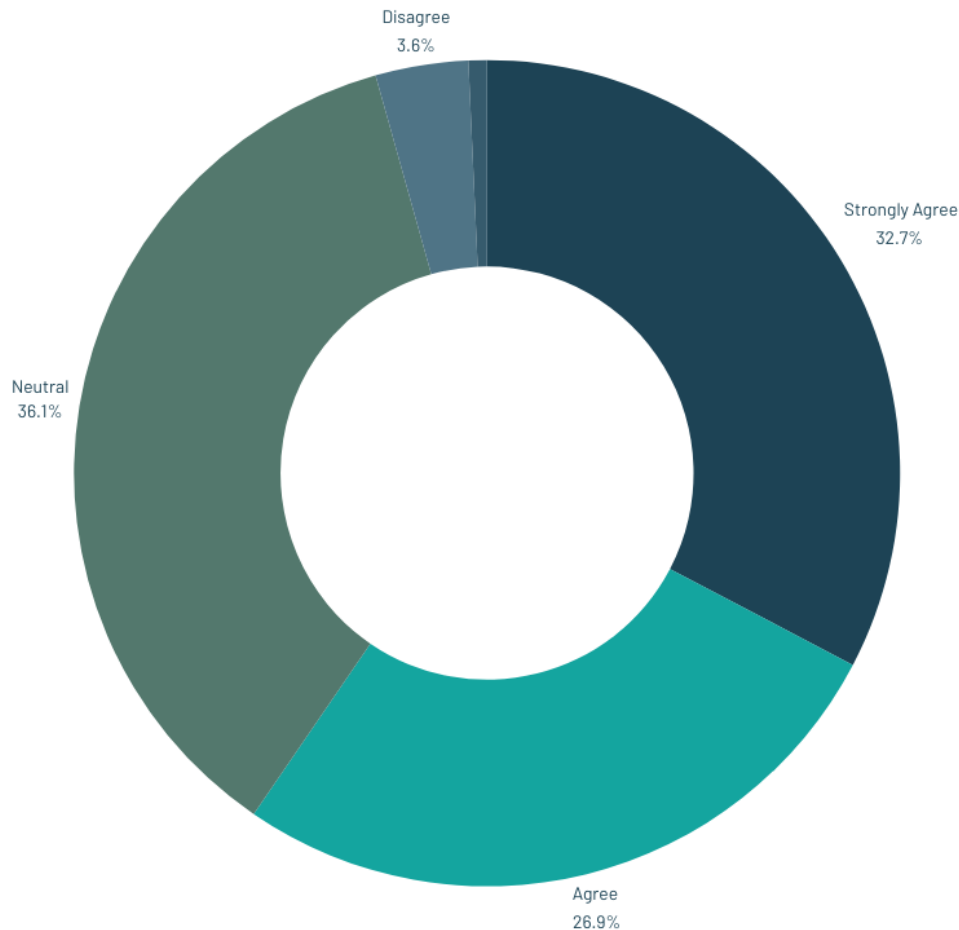
The short introduction was as follows:

“Council cares for and maintains trees on public land so they are healthy and thriving. Caring for our trees extends their life so we can continue to receive the benefits they provide. Some trees can be perceived as a nuisance and can conflict with infrastructure above and below ground. Tree maintenance is one way of ensuring benefits of trees are maximised, while minimising some of these challenges.”

### Question 4

This question asked “do you think the Council needs to do more to maintain trees on public land managed by the Council?”. Answers were received by a five-point scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

138 responses were received to this question. The chart below represents the percentage of respondents that chose each option.



73 respondents (just over 59%) strongly agree or agree that Council needs to do more to maintain trees on public land managed by the Council. 6 respondents (just over 4%) strongly disagree or disagree that Council needs to do more to maintain trees on public land managed by the Council. 42 respondents (just over 36%) were neutral.

### Question 5

This question was a supplementary question and asked, “what were the reasons for your answer(s) on caring for trees?”.

120 respondents provided reasoning for their answer to question 4. These were analysed for general themes and are summarised below.

#### Strongly Agree and Agree

The 73 respondents that provided reasoning for their answer that and strongly agreed (42) or agreed (31) provided various reasons for their answer.

A considerable number of respondents were of the opinion that the maintenance of trees has not been a priority of Council, and that more funding is needed. A number of respondents indicated that if there is to be an increase in tree planting, then a commensurate level of maintenance will be needed just to maintain current levels of service.

A number of respondents considered that caring for trees on public land managed by Council is a clear responsibility of Council, with some respondents indicating they have taken it upon themselves to support the establishment of trees planted on public land. A number of respondents considered that there has not been enough care for the establishment of trees and/or juvenile trees in new subdivisions in particular, which has not allowed these trees to thrive or reach maturity. Related to this, a small number of respondents considered that Council could focus more on public education and greater publicity for the value of trees, which may encourage more communities to care for trees on both public land and private land.

A number of respondents considered that removal has been too quick to occur, and that increasing maintenance can prevent the decline of trees and prevent removals. A small number of respondents considered that the maintenance of trees has been too short-term focused, without enough focus on the long-term health of the tree and wider network.

A small number of respondents considered that maintenance was not evenly distributed across the Selwyn District, including for trees that seemingly required attention. A small number of respondents considered that particular species are neglected, including shelterbelts, fruit trees and trees of larger stature. A small number of respondents considered that pest species and species that produce allergenic pollen needed better management.

A number of respondents considered maintenance is important due to safety concerns for road users and pedestrians. It was indicated that pruning or crown lifting / raising is needed for street trees, particularly where branches are blocking pedestrians from using walkways.

A number of respondents suggested that improved maintenance would reduce nuisance effects such as leaf litter, protect infrastructure and prevent tree removals all of which save costs in the long-run.

A number of respondents considered that if Council had better information, data, surveys, mapping and monitoring then this would be more efficient for caring for trees on public land managed by Council as well as for ensuring trees are healthy. In relation to information and data, a number of respondents considered this could support better decision-making and planning. Similarly, a small number of respondents considered that better forward-planning would ensure that there is the appropriate selection of tree species in appropriate planting locations, which would minimise the level of maintenance required over the long-run.

A number of respondents considered that areas with trees had better amenity, were desirable and could raise property prices, which is a benefit to Council. Similarly, a number of respondents considered that more care could be given to shaping trees and improving the amenity of neighbourhoods.

6 respondents provided reasons that Council needed to do more for the maintenance of private trees, including notable trees and commercial forests. These were not within scope of the Trees for Tomorrow engagement.

### **Strongly Disagree and Disagree**

The 6 respondents that provided reasoning for their answer and strongly disagreed (1) or disagreed (5) considered that the trees they observed seemed to be in a good condition, well looked after, well maintained, or similar language.

### **Neutral**

The 42 respondents that provided reasoning for their answer that were neutral provided various reasons for their answer. 23 respondents consider that the maintenance of trees on public land managed by the Council is adequate, appropriate, or similar language. 4 respondents consider that retention and replacement of trees is needed. 4 respondents consider that the adequacy of maintenance was dependent on the area, the selection of the tree and/or species, and/or the appropriateness of the planting location. 9 respondents consider that they did not have the knowledge of Council's tree maintenance activities either overall or across the Selwyn District to provide an answer.

# Tree Removal and Replacement

This section of the survey included a short introduction to the subject matter and five questions (questions 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10).



## Overview

The short introduction was as follows:

“Trees can live for a very long time and be thought of as intergenerational assets.

However, like all living things, trees grow, age and eventually die. When development occurs, tree removal is often part of the process. The removal of trees is an important decision that must balance conflicting priorities.

Although tree removal will continue to be part of our future for managing our trees, best practice is for tree removal to be considered only as a last resort. Where a tree is in a state of irreversible decline or is a public health and safety risk, sometimes tree removal is the only option.

If we want to maintain tree canopy cover and maximise the benefits from trees on public land, we can require the replacement of the trees that have been removed or even look to increase canopy cover with additional replacement trees.”

## Question 6

This question asked respondents whether they agree that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort in the following locations:

- On streets?
- In parks?



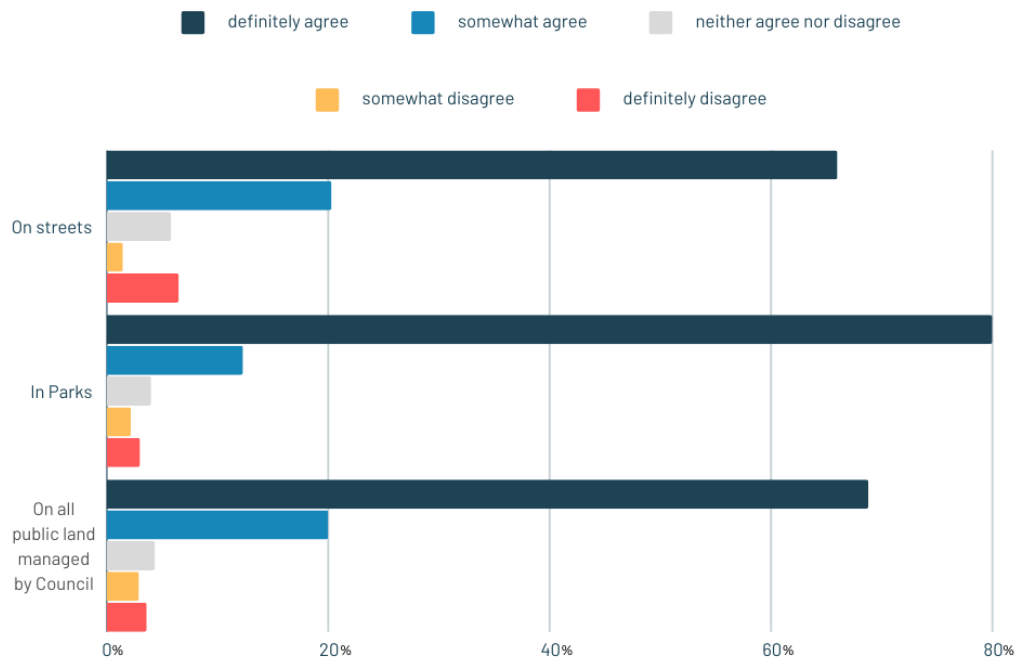
- on all public land managed by the Council?

Respondents could select whether they definitely agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree or definitely disagree.

138 responses were received to this question. Respondents were asked whether they agree that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort in the following locations:

- On streets?
- In parks?
- on all public land managed by the Council?

The graph below represents the percentage of respondents that answered definitely agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree or definitely disagree for each location.



### On Streets

86% of respondents definitely agree (66%) or somewhat agree (20%) that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort on streets. 8% of respondents somewhat disagree (1%) or definitely disagree (7%) that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort on streets. 6% of respondents were neutral (neither agree nor disagree).

### In Parks

92% of respondents definitely agree (80%) or somewhat agree (12%) that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort in parks. 5% of respondents somewhat disagree (2%) or definitely disagree (3%) that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort in parks. 4% of respondents were neutral (neither agree nor disagree).

### On all public land managed by the Council

89% of respondents definitely agree (69%) or somewhat agree (20%) that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort on all public land managed by the Council. 7% of respondents somewhat disagree (3%) or definitely disagree (4%) that the removal of healthy, established trees should be a last resort on all public land managed by the Council. 4% of respondents were neutral (neither agree nor disagree).

## Question 7

This question asked respondents when trees are removed on Council land, whether those trees should be replaced?

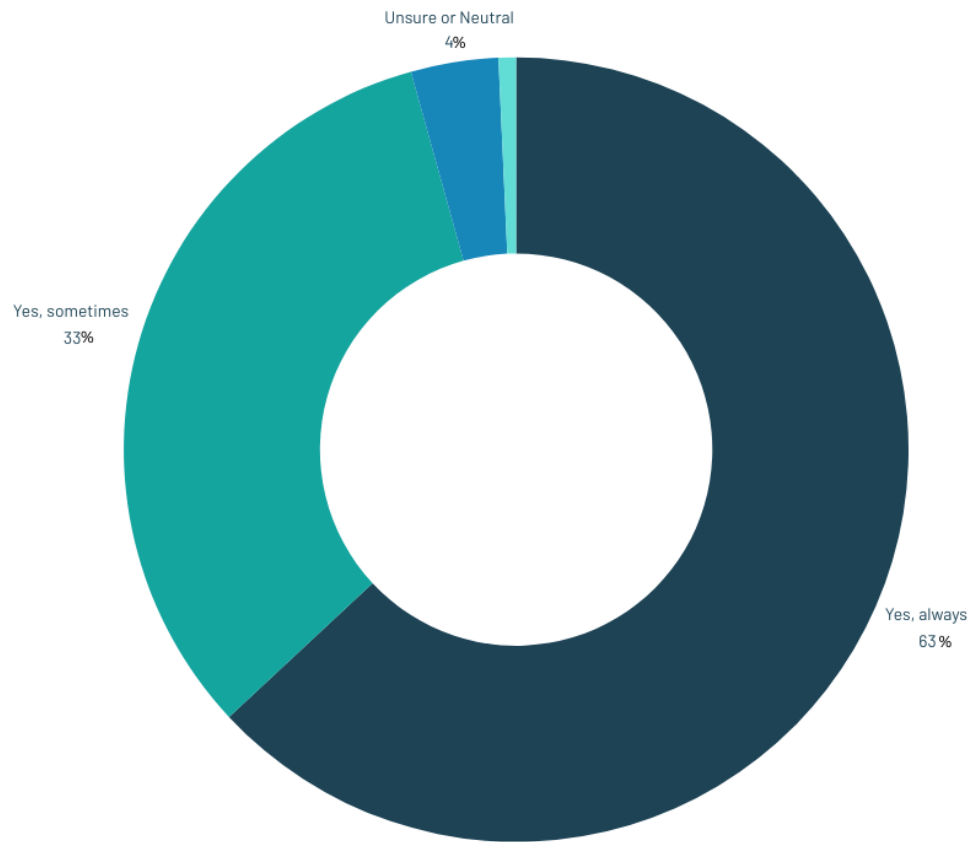
Respondents could select:

- yes always
- yes sometimes (e.g., in particular areas, urban areas, only in parks)
- unsure/neutral; or
- no

138 responses were received to this question. Respondents were asked when trees are removed on Council land whether they think that those trees should be replaced. Respondents could select:

- yes, always
- yes, sometimes (e.g., in particular areas, urban areas, only in parks)
- unsure/neutral; or
- no

The chart below represents the percentage of respondents that chose each option.



96% of respondents answered either 'yes (always)' or 'yes (sometimes)', agreeing that when trees are removed on Council land, they should be replaced. This indicates that replacement following tree removals is widely supported. Only 1% of respondents answered 'no', disagreeing that when trees are removed on Council land, they should be replaced. 4% of respondents were 'unsure or neutral'.

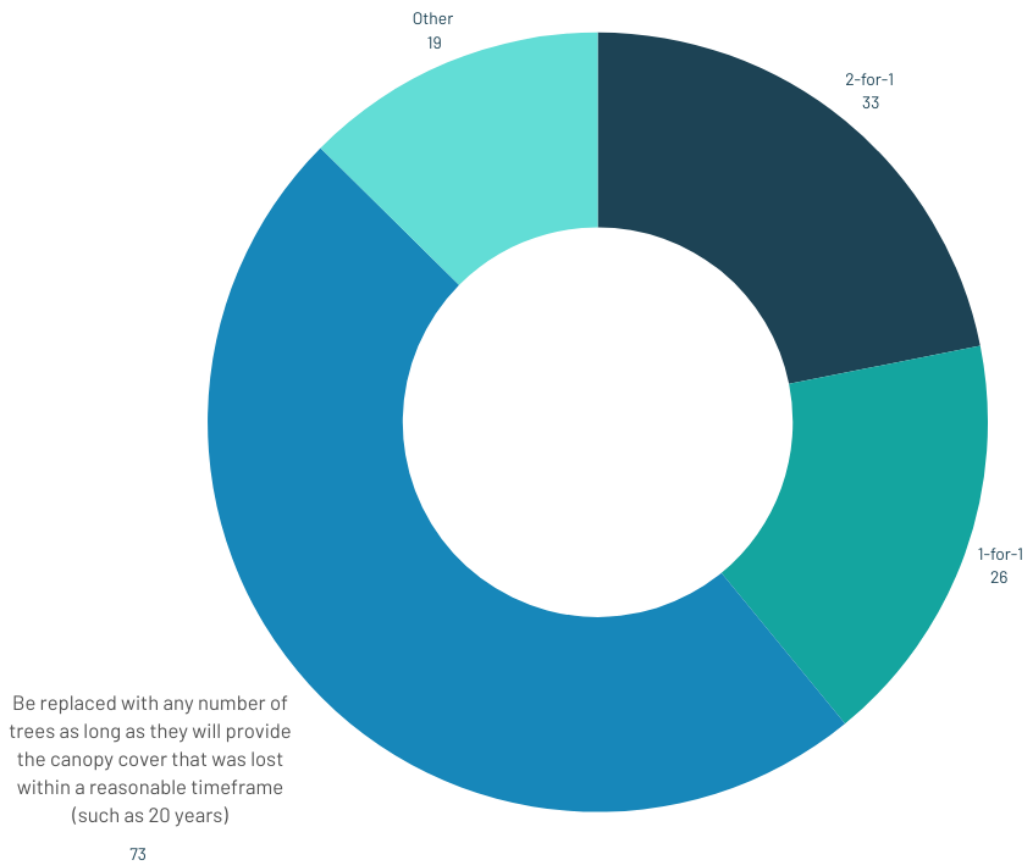
### Question 8

This question asked respondents if trees are replaced should they be replaced:

- 1-for-1
- 2-for-1
- Be replaced with any number of trees as long as they will provide the canopy cover that was lost within a reasonable timeframe (such as 20 years)
- Other (with a free-text box to provide unlisted options)

There were 134 responses to this question. Respondents were asked to share their opinions on how trees should be replaced. Respondents were given several options to choose from, as well as a 'other' option that allowed them to provide an alternative to what was listed. Respondents could also select multiple options. 15 respondents selected more than one option. Of those 15 respondents, 13 respondents selected two options, and 2 respondents selected three options.

The chart below represents the response options chosen by the respondents. Because respondents could select multiple options, the total number of responses is not equal to 134.



Of the 134 respondents, 73 selected the option that when trees are removed, that they should be replaced with any number of trees as long as they restore the canopy cover that was lost within a reasonable timeframe (such as 20 years). This is considered the most flexible replacement option, as it can be met

through a variety of replanting options. Of the 134 respondents, 33 selected the option that when trees were removed, they should be replaced 2-for-1. Of the 134 respondents, 26 selected the option that when trees are removed, they should be replaced 1-for-1.

### Other

19 respondents provided their own suggestions for tree replacement. A number of respondents cited that a blanket rule would be difficult to apply in principle due to unique circumstances of the removal and replacement location, including the area, context, and land use. A small number of respondents believed that a greater net gain was required, stating replacement options such as “3 for 1” and “as many as possible”. These respondents considered that multiple trees increased the likelihood of successful establishment and further guaranteed the replacement of what was lost.

A number of respondents provided options based on canopy cover rather than tree-to-tree ratio. A number of respondents expressed a preference for native species to replace removed species. One respondent indicated that canopy cover replacement would give preference to exotics over native species. Two respondents stated options that would form a bottom line, one stated “no fewer than 2 for 1”, which is a net gain option, and one stated “at least 1 for every 2”, which (without a canopy replacement target) could be a net loss option, if other policy objectives are not advanced.

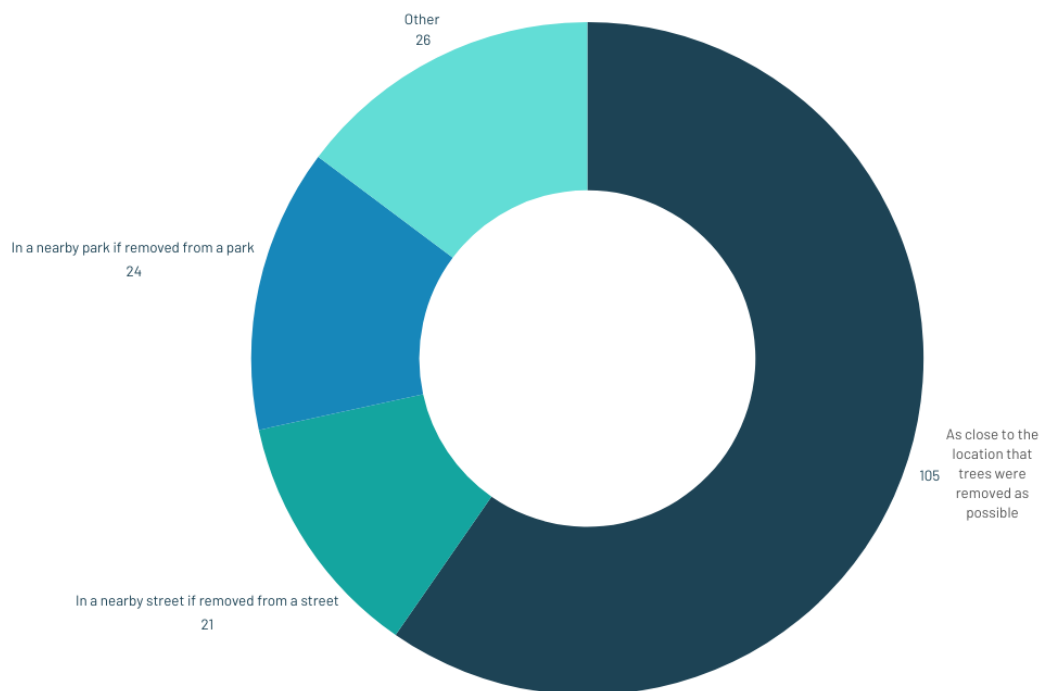
### Question 9

This question asked respondents if trees are replaced, where should they be replaced:

- As close to the location that trees were removed as possible
- In a nearby street if removed from a street
- In a nearby park if removed from a park
- Other (with a free-text box to provide unlisted options)

There were 133 responses to this question. Respondents were asked to give their preferences for where replacement trees should be planted, based on where the trees were removed. Respondents were given several options to choose from, as well as a ‘other’ option that allowed them to provide an alternative to what was listed. 25 respondents chose more than one option.

The chart below represents the response options chosen by the respondents. Because respondents could select multiple options, the total number of responses is not equal to 133.



A considerable number of respondents chose the replacement option, which would see replacement planting as close to the location of the trees that were removed as possible. This option seeks to ensure the spatial distribution of trees on public land managed by Council is maintained, whereas other options may result in unequal distribution over time.

### Question 10

This question asked respondents if there is anything they would like to add about the replacement of trees?

81 responses were received to this question. Respondents were asked if they had any further comments about tree replacement. 4 respondents indicated that they did not have anything further to add, resulting in 77 responses with additional comments. These were analysed for general themes and are summarised below.

#### Planting and Canopy Cover

25

A number of respondents stated that more planting and/or increases in canopy cover are required, irrespective of tree removal. Related to this, a smaller number of respondents provided feedback stating that they believe that greater effort needs to be made in the establishment of newly planted trees, as well as their ongoing maintenance.

### **Tree Selection and Planning**

A number of respondents stated that various aspects of tree selection require greater consideration. This included tree height, size and shape, suitability as habitat for native biodiversity, ongoing maintenance requirements and greater canopies for shade in urban areas.

A large number of respondents provided feedback on species selection. Feedback included a number of respondents outlining a preference for native species, and/or the eventual replacement of exotic species through native replacement planting. Other respondents outlined a preference for deciduous trees, that are flowering and/or have autumnal colouring. A number of respondents stated a preference for fruit and nut trees, although some also recognised that this would entail greater maintenance requirements. A few respondents provided feedback that pest species and some exotic species (such as eucalyptus) be removed.

Other respondents did not state a preference (for removal and/or replanting) but outlined a need for greater diversity in tree selection including heights, size and shape, evergreens and deciduous trees, natives and exotics, fast-growing and slow-growing, low and higher maintenance requirements (e.g., fruit and nut trees).

A smaller number of respondents considered that Council needs to develop a clear plan for the management of trees, including planting. Respondents believed that Council should be less reactive and more proactive and/or future focused, taking into account matters such as climate change.

### **Location**

A number of respondents provided feedback on specific locations for tree removal and planting. A general theme that came out of the feedback was the need for pragmatism in replacement planting, as well as the importance of selecting suitable sites for replanting. Suitable locations put forward should

reduce conflicts with infrastructure, provide the right environment for the right tree to thrive, and minimise nuisance effects (shading and leaf litter etc.).

### Community Involvement

A number of respondents provided comments that were related to community involvement. Respondents believed that greater community consultation is needed when making decisions about tree removal and replacement. One respondent considered that Council could do more to encourage more active community involvement, such as supporting volunteer or community groups, or the creation of 'tree wardens'.

### Private Trees

A number of respondents provided comments that were related to private trees. Much of this feedback focused on private trees that are to be vested in Council through the subdivision process. Respondents considered that there needed to be stronger requirements and or incentives for developers to retain trees and/or require additional tree planting. Furthermore, respondents suggested that developers be held to higher standards or stronger requirements to support the establishment and maintenance of trees. One respondent suggested that Council could do more to incentivise the planting of trees on private land.



## Retaining and Working Around Trees

This section of the survey included a short introduction to the subject matter and three questions (questions 11 and 12).

### Overview



The short introduction was as follows:

“Trees require space to grow, both above and below ground which can cause conflicts with above and below ground infrastructure. Work around trees, particularly construction, can be detrimental to the health or structural integrity of a tree if not managed appropriately. These works can affect newly planted trees as well as our established mature trees. The benefits provided by trees become exponentially greater as they mature. This means it is often more cost effective in the long run to care for and retain our mature trees, as it typically costs less than planting and caring for new trees.”

**Question 11** asked respondents how important is it to them that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council?

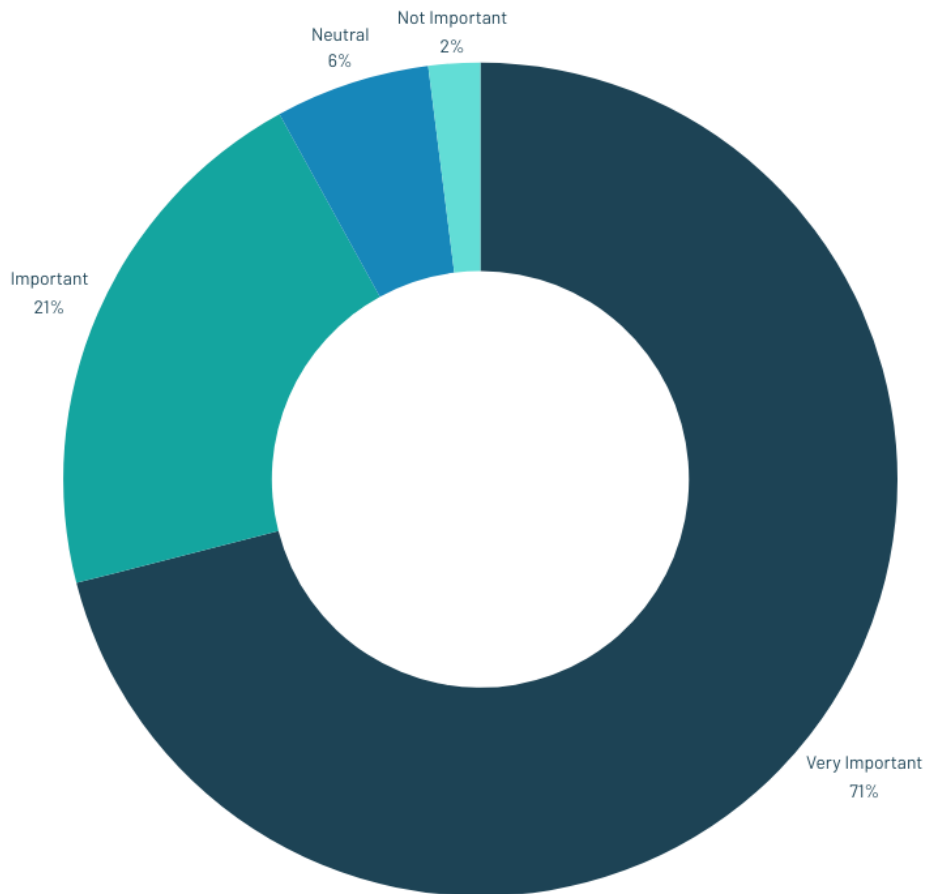
**Question 12** asked respondents what the reasons were for their answer?

### Question 11

This question asked respondents how important is it to them that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council?

138 responses were received to this question. Respondents had multiple options for how important it is that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council.

The chart below represents the percentage of respondents that chose each option.



98 respondents (around 92%) consider that it is 'very important' or 'important' that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council. 3 respondents (around 2%) consider that it is 'not important' that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council. 8 respondents (around 6%) were 'neutral'.

### Question 12

This question asked respondents what the reasons were for their answer to question 11. 108 respondents provided reasoning for their answer to question 11.

### Very Important and Important

100 respondents provided reasons for their answer as to why they consider it is 'very important' (79) or 'important' (21) that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council. Respondents provided various reasons for their answers, which have been grouped together in themes below.

A large number of respondents considered that we need to look after and retain healthy mature trees on public land managed by Council on the account of the ecosystem services provided by trees, and that these benefits increase proportional to the maturity of the tree. Respondents identified multiple benefits and/or services such as providing shade, shelter, protection from UV, providing habitat, regulating temperature, purifying the air, managing stormwater, sequestering carbon, and acting as natural windbreaks.

A large number of respondents considered that we need to look after and retain healthy mature trees on public land managed by Council due to the intergenerationality of trees. Respondents considered trees as part of our heritage, connecting the present day with the past. Other respondents viewed trees as an investment in the future, and something not for communities of today but future communities. A number of respondents believed that our mature trees need to be retained for the benefit of communities today and that succession planting would ensure that the same, or greater, benefits are available to future generations.

A number of respondents considered that retaining trees on Council-managed public land is more efficient because it results in greater diversity in our tree assets, more canopy cover, and lower long-term costs. A number of respondents considered that the costs of planting and establishing new trees far outweighed the costs for maintaining and retaining healthy, mature trees. Furthermore, a number of respondents identified that there is an associated risk with the successful establishment of newly planted trees, which is exacerbated when mature trees are removed (due to a loss of shelter).

A number of respondents considered that mature trees provide for character, amenity, aesthetics and pleasantness, which contribute to green liveable places. Respondents considered that parts of the Selwyn District lacked green and/or natural elements, using descriptions such as barren, sterile, empty, sad, harsh, grey, stark, a biodiversity dessert and concrete jungle. Related to this, a

smaller group of respondents considered that with greater urban intensification there would be less trees on private land, which put the onus on public land managed by Council to contain trees for the benefit of the community.

A number of respondents considered that a greater amount of care is needed and higher standards to look after and retain healthy mature trees on public land managed by Council. A number of respondents considered that the right tree, in the right place, was important to balance the benefits provided by trees and minimise some of the downsides. Respondents noted particular tree species and sizes that have caused safety concerns, had conflicts with subterranean infrastructure and/or above-ground infrastructure, and cause nuisance effects like shading. A small number of respondents specifically identified that native trees should be a priority for both retention and new plantings.

Overall, respondents considered that mature trees have greater benefits and value, that they are intergenerational and take a long time to reach maturity and we should be doing more to look after and retain mature trees.

### **Not Important**

3 respondents provided reasons for their answer as to why they consider it is not important that we do more to look after and retain the trees that we have on public land managed by Council. One respondent considered that decision-making on tree selection was not good enough. Another respondent considered that there were too many exotics and that eco sourced natives should be planted in their place. The other respondent considered that there is sufficient protection for working around trees as it stands, and that there has been minimal damage to trees for excavation, trenching and other subterranean works.

### **Neutral**

5 respondents provided reasons for their answer as to why they were neutral on this matter. The reasons were mixed.

2 respondents considered that trees need to be retained, but it must be practical when a removal is required and also that replacement would therefore be needed.

## Anything Else About Trees on Public Land Managed by Council

The survey ended with a question that asked survey respondents if they had anything else they wish to Council about trees on public land managed by the Council.

### Question 13

73 responses were received to this question, however 4 respondents indicated that they had nothing further to add. There were 69 responses which provided further details. Also, the 3 submissions received by email have been included here. These 72 responses were analysed for general themes and are summarised below.

## Planting and Canopy Cover

A number of respondents to this question encouraged increasing tree planting and canopy cover. Respondents also identified ideas for new planting such as tree-lined boulevards, converting grassed areas to vegetation with trees to reduce costs on mowing contracts, stronger requirements on plantings and establishment in new residential subdivisions, wooded areas accessible from towns, integrating new plantings within wetlands, converting parks to resemble native bush rather than a few specimen trees. Related to increasing tree planting and canopy cover were a large number of comments from respondents on the value of trees, and the specific ecosystem services they provide.

## Species

Respondents provided similar comments on tree species as was received throughout the survey. A number of respondents provided comments on the need for more native species. A smaller number of respondents identified particular native species that they would like to see removed and/or not included in new plantings (such as Horoeka | Lancewood and Tī Kōuka | Cabbage Trees).

A number of respondents provided a preference for exotic species, and/or particular exotic species. A smaller number of respondents identified particular exotic species that they would like to see removed and/or not included in new plantings (such as Eucalyptus).

A number of respondents did not preference particular species over another, but encouraged greater diversity of species, ages and heights.

A smaller number of respondents stated a preference for more fruit and nut trees. A smaller number of respondents requested that there should be a greater focus on the control of pest and wilding species. One submitter noted that allergenic species (silver birch) should be removed.

## Decision-Making

A number of respondents provided comments that were related to Council's decision-making and the decision-making of others. This included a considerable number of comments on the need to retain trees where possible, prioritise trees in decision-making, and carefully consider tree removals.

Respondents all provided comments on the need to replace trees when they are removed.

Several respondents provided comments on the importance of the right tree in the right place, citing particular considerations such as deciduous trees along roads to not shade the road in winter, smaller tree heights in streets and areas with high wind speeds, trees that provide for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and trees with rooting habits compatible with below ground infrastructure to minimise conflicts. Related to this were a small number of respondents who considered that there needs to be pragmatism in making decisions around trees, and that decision-making needs to take account of the situational context and balance other requirements which may require tree removal.

A small number of respondents suggested that incentives for both developers and landowners could lead to better decision-making around trees, particularly their retention and designing around trees.

### Community Involvement

A number of respondents provided comments that were related to community involvement. A number of respondents considered that greater community consultation is needed on decision-making regarding trees, both removal, maintenance, works that affect trees and new planting.

A smaller number of respondents considered that there were other avenues for community involvement, which included volunteering opportunities, community planting days and more novel ideas such as the 'treemail' initiative undertaken by the City of Melbourne, which mapped public trees across the city and assigned an individual tree ID that could be emailed for maintenance and tree management purposes, but became an opportunity for communities to express their admiration for particular trees.<sup>2</sup>

A smaller number of respondents considered there was an opportunity for more education and promotion of the values of trees. Feedback suggested that education could discourage vandalism and provide greater community ownership and responsibility for trees on both public and private land.

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<sup>2</sup> Individual tree data for City of Melbourne trees. <http://melbourneurbanforestvisual.com.au/#mapexplore>

## Next Steps

The next steps for the Trees for Tomorrow engagement now that the feedback has been analysed by Council staff is to ensure that the views of the community are reflected in the review and update of the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy. Through the Trees for Tomorrow engagement, Council staff were presented the opportunity to test early policy ideas with the community.

Council staff will now fully develop those policy ideas into a draft Tree Policy to replace the current T201 Vegetation and Tree Management Policy. It is intended that this will come before Council (or appropriate subcommittee) in Q1 2025.

Feedback that was out of scope of the Tree Policy itself, but related to strategic work on the blue-green network will be carried forward by the relevant teams for Area Plans and Action Plans. Feedback that was out of scope of the Tree Policy, and strategic work will be collated and passed on the appropriate team(s) and/or staff.