



Greater Perth holds the unenviable record for being the **worst city for tree canopy in Australia** – with only **16%** as determined in 2020 by the Department of Planning, Lands & Heritage (DPLH)

## UBC GUIDE to WA Government's Urban Greening Public Survey

Diminishing tree canopy, further clearing for housing developments, removal of mature trees on urban blocks, heat island effects, Polyphagus Shot Hole Borer (PSHB), a drying climate and a long hot summer that doesn't want to end are all reasons why we should contribute to the development of the 'Perth & Peel Urban Greening Strategy'.

The WA State government is committed to developing an urban greening strategy by the end of this year. They have a community survey out for comment, with a closing date of Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June.

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-and-agencies/departments/planning-lands-and-heritage/perth-and-peel-urban-greening-strategy>

Whilst the Urban Bushland Council (UBC) is pleased to see the WA Government focussing on 'Urban Greening' we are most concerned:

- The focus appears to be limited to 'planted' vegetation at the exclusion of natural areas
- Whilst the community is becoming better informed about the causes and impacts of 'Urban Heat Island Effect' and 'Climate Change' we still do not have an enforceable government and community target for 'tree cover' nor essential climate adaptation measures such as retaining vegetation (natural, private, public) to moderate the climate and provide habitat for wildlife
- Similarly, large trees and shrubs (that also provide temperature regulation, fauna habitat, aesthetics and carbon sequestration) are being cleared for residential, commercial, industrial and government developments – without consideration of their critical contribution to improving where we live &/or where of native plants and animals live
- Bushlands and wetlands are still being cleared
- Bush Forever Sites are still being cleared, disturbed &/or impacted (eg via impacts on hydrology, reduced buffers)
- Proposed Regional Parks (including Gnangara, Lower Serpentine, Swan & Helena Rivers, Peel and Yule Brook) are not being gazetted – whilst the quality of the vegetation communities is being affected by little or no active conservation management
- The allocated budget for good conservation management by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions (DBCA) continues to be totally inadequate
- Community groups are not listed as 'stakeholders' for Stage 2 of the consultation.

The ecological and wellbeing benefits of 'tree canopy' and 'ecological linkages' cannot be created in isolation of our natural areas. Natural areas make up a significant percent of the Perth and Peel canopy. As such, the Urban Bushland Council calls on the WA State Government to set and regulate a **30% Tree Canopy Target by 2040**.

**To meet such a target, native vegetation has a crucial role to play.** The following list identifies some of the ways we can protect our existing native vegetation canopy, thus mitigating the loss of canopy elsewhere from other human activities:

- increase the understanding in our governments and the community of the value and function of our natural areas and the important role they play in the urban canopy debate
- protect and manage those areas for conservation or we will lose canopy along with habitat
- redouble efforts to restore ecological communities within original ranges by active abatement of threats (eg illegal tracks, illegal rubbish dumping, weeds, fire, feral animals), revegetation, and other conservation initiatives
- **end clearing of the Swan Coastal Plain**
- acquire remaining sites and gazette all Bush Forever Sites for purpose of conservation, vesting in either Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions or Local Government Authorities

Between 2011 – 2020, canopy cover in Perth dropped 25% (WA Tree Canopy Advocates)

- assist community bushcare groups in their volunteer efforts to care for natural areas
  - properly fund responsible agencies such as the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) for conservation management
- 
- include dedicated, informed community organisations in your extended community engagement including Urban Bushland Council (UBC), Birdlife WA (BWA), Ecovision, The Beeliar Group (TBG), WA Insect Study Society, WA Naturalists Club (WANats), WA Tree Canopy Advocates (WATCA), Wetlands Conservation Society (WCS), Wildflower Society of WA (WSWA) and.

In your survey, don't forget to ask for the **3:30:300 rule of thumb** – which provides clear criteria for the **minimum provision of urban trees & canopy in our urban communities**:

- **3 trees** seen from every home
- **30 % tree canopy cover** in every neighbourhood / suburb
- **300 metres** from the nearest public park or green space – including natural bushland/wetland.

Does your neighbourhood / suburb meet this?



GRAPHIC CREDIT: treelouisville

## Other Guides for this 'Urban Greening Strategy Survey' we encourage you to dip into:

**The Strategy: A Cloak of Sustainability**

- Lack of Legal Enforceability
- An Inadequate Response to Ecological Crisis

**The Urgency of Legislative Reform**

- Preserving the rural zoned lands of Perth
- Legislating Minimum Canopy Targets
- Empowering Environmental Protections
- Implement Stringent Penalties and Audits
- Protect Ecologically Significant Sites
- Enhancing the Support for Environmental Agencies

**Conclusion: Toward Substantive Environmental Reform**

[Find the report here.](#)

[WATCA Guide](#)

[Enviro House](#)

Urban Greening Strategy - have your say  
Have your input into the State Government's urban greening strategy - prior to the survey closing on Friday 7th June 2024.



### HOW TO USE OUR UBC GUIDE....

1. Keep our UBC GUIDE open on your computer.
2. Open link to [WA Govt Urban Greening SURVEY](#)
3. Work thru your responses – whilst you refer back to our UBC GUIDE.
4. Sometimes we have recommended things to consider including in your responses.
5. Sometimes you might like to follow a link in our UBC GUIDE for more information.
6. SHARE this UBC GUIDE with EVERYONE – members of your group, family, neighbourhood, LGA, work, etc, etc. Encourage them to complete the survey too!
7. Contact UBC 9420 7207 or [ubc@bushlandperth.org.au](mailto:ubc@bushlandperth.org.au) if we can assist.
8. If you get a chance – give us some feedback! What worked well? & What could be improved?

UBC recommends adding...



# Urban Greening

Public survey

[WA Govt Urban Greening SURVEY](#)

## Tell us about you

To help us understand the composition of the community with views on urban greening, we have some broad questions about you:

Q1. What is the name of your suburb

Q2. What is your connection to Perth or Peel (tick all that apply)?

- Resident for 0-5 years
- Resident for over 5 years
- Work
- Study
- Visitor
- Arborist, landscaper or gardener
- developer/builder
- Live elsewhere but interested in urban greening
- Prefer not to say
- Other, please specify in the option below

Active member bushcare group / urban landcare group / volunteer for nature

UBC recommends adding...

NOTE: You can tick more than one.

Also take the opportunity to tell them about your volunteering efforts!

## Urban greening

Urban greening is about making cities healthy and attractive places to live and work. It involves retaining and planting as many trees and plants as possible, ensuring our neighbourhoods have adequate shade and protection from hot weather, and retaining and enhancing habitat for our native plants and animals. Urban greening is an important part of the Government's plans to improve the liveability of our suburbs and urban centres as they grow and develop.

Q3. On a scale of 1 to 10, please rate how green (vegetation wise) you currently think the Perth and Peel regions are? (10 being highest, 1 being lowest)

2

UBC recommends adding...

Please help us understand your response by providing additional comments below:

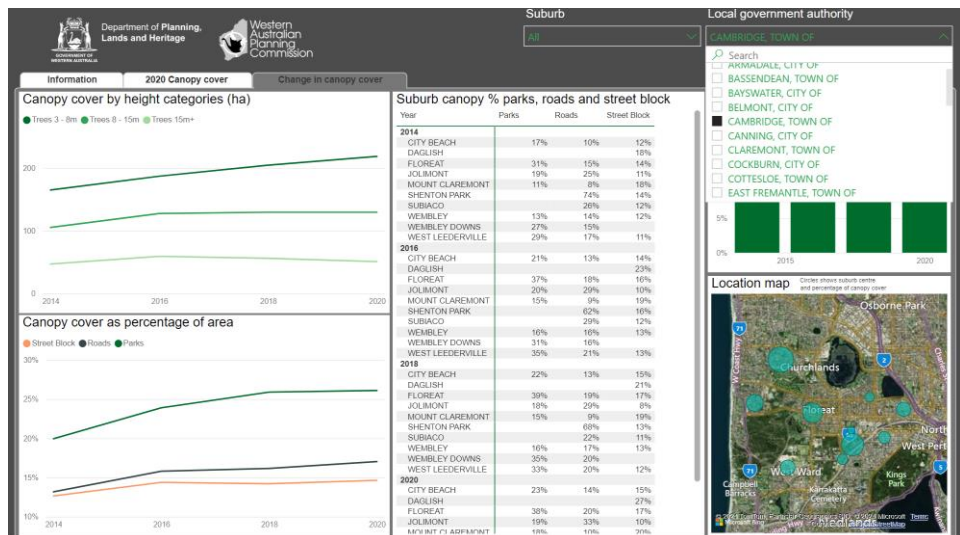
Make this personal...  
 Include % cover for your local council... (refer LGA Canopy Cover table below)  
 Tell them what you are noticing in your suburb and as you walk, cycle, drive...  
 Tell them of your frustrations about clearing of bushland, wetlands and mature trees on residential blocks...  
 Alert them to your concerns about the impact of Polyphagus Shot Hole Borer (PSHB) and our drying climate (all the dead & dying trees/bushland)...



### WAPC & DPLH URBAN CANOPY DASHBOARD

When you want to dig deeper and explore data for your suburb, LGA, local neighbourhood patch

<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/document-collections/better-urban-forest-planning-perth-and-peel#urban-tree-canopy-dashboard>



Q4. On a scale of 1 to 10, please rate your level of support for additional urban greening in the Perth and Peel regions? (10 being highest, 1 being lowest)

10

Please help us understand your response by providing additional comments below:

Highlight your concerns if we DON'T increase urban greening...  
 Don't want to lose more habitat and native animals from my neighbourhood...  
 Money and resources needed to manage natural areas and to plant and maintain new plantings...  
 Want to reverse the loss of tree canopy to improve health and wellbeing...  
 What are the 'carrots & sticks' to have private landholders retain mature trees...  
 Need to counteract heat island effect and climate change

Q5. What do you consider the most important benefits of urban greening? Please number the options in importance to you from 1-10 (10 being highest, 1 being lowest)

	Importance to you 1-10
Better looking gardens, streets and neighbourhoods	5
More shade to provide a canopy for people to spend more time outside	9
Reduced heat in urban areas	8
Creates a habitat for local plants and wildlife	10
Improved air quality	7
Physical and mental health benefits	6
Economic benefits, including reduced energy costs and increased property values	
Spiritual or cultural values	
Improvements to walking and cycling options	
Other, please specify in the box below	10

Other

Community development thru caring for local patches of bushland with others

Please provide details above

Q6. Have you heard of the “urban heat island effect” and its consequences for the community?

- Yes
- No
- have heard of it but don't fully understand

Next

NOTE: Personal response – Our Government needs to understand community levels of knowledge – so they can respond accordingly.

## Tree retention and planting

A key component of urban greening is the retention and enhancement of tree canopy cover. To help us understand community attitudes to tree retention and tree planting please answer the following questions.

Q7. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the current level of tree canopy cover in your suburb? (10 being highest, 1 being lowest)

Please Select



Q7a. Which suburb did you rate?

Please provide a name of the suburb above

UBC  
recommends

Q8. Do you support increasing the number of trees in your suburb?

- Yes
- No

Q9. Thinking of anywhere in Perth and Peel region, where would you like to see more trees or other vegetation planted?

- Parks
- Neighbourhood streets (median strips, verges, on street carparking etc)
- Car parks
- Verges
- Private properties
- New developments
- Railway corridors
- Highways and freeways
- Government buildings/development
- Hospital/health related facilities
- We don't need more trees
- Other, please help us understand your response by providing additional comments

Natural areas that require conservation rehabilitation - to maintain health & canopy



Purple-backed Fairy-Wren  
Mosman Park Bushlands [John Baas]



Jewel Beetle – Anstey-Keane Dampland [Bryony Fremlin, Friends of Forrestdale]

#### Urban Greening UNDERSTOREY for small animals

Birds, insects, reptiles, frogs and other wildlife require shrubs, sedges, grasses, mosses, lichens, fungi – not just trees for connectivity in the urban landscape.

Fragmentation caused by habitat removal severely impacts small resident native animals with small home ranges.

Green understorey corridors have an important role to play in creating ecological links for these creatures and should be explicitly included in the urban greening strategy. These understorey corridors should be of local native plant species to provide the most appropriate shelter and to avoid spreading invasive species. Characteristics of great understorey corridors include plant diversity; use of local species; close planting to provide protection and contiguous plantings.

Q10. How many trees (above approximately 2m) do you have in your front or back garden or front verge?

- 1-3
- 4-5
- More than 5
- None

**Q11. What are barriers that prevent you from planting a tree or more trees in your front or back yard or on your front verge?**

- There's no room
- I already have enough established trees on my property
- Overhead powerlines
- They are a nuisance (eg messy or shade my solar panels)
- Present a risk to my property (eg roots might interfere with paving/plumbing)
- Present a health risk or safety hazard
- Not allowed to (eg rental property or council restrictions)
- Do not want to
- No barriers or difficulties
- Other, please help us understand your response by providing additional comments

**Q12. Have you removed a tree front or back yard or on your front verge in the last 5 years?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

**Q12a. Why was the tree was removed?**

- Tree was damaged by disease/dead/old
- Roots causing damage to housing, paving, pipes or similar
- Tree replacement
- Tree was too big
- As part of a development
- Tree damaged by pests
- Tree caused a mess
- Complaints by a neighbour
- Tree presented a health risk or safety hazard
- Council or other authority requirement
- Other, please specify in the box below



Q13. Is there anything else you would like to say about trees in your nominated suburb or Perth and Peel?

Now's the chance to tell them more:|

- What your LGA is doing (or not [doing](#))...
- That State & Local legislation is needed to retain mature trees on private property...
- You don't want any more clearing of bushland or wetland...
- What your local 'Friends of' group is doing for natural areas and urban greening...
- What you group needs to keep doing this critical volunteer work

Back

Next

## Education Awareness

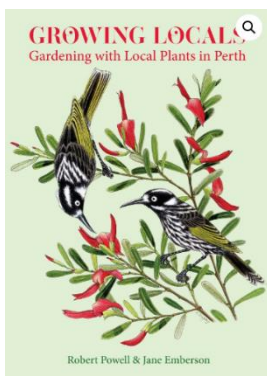
A key component of implementing a strategy will be the delivery of an education awareness program.

Q14. Please indicate what topics you would like to know more about?

- Advice on pruning and maintaining trees
- Appropriate tree and vegetation species for your property
- How to maintain and protect canopy trees
- Support to assess whether a tree poses a risk to people or properties
- Case studies and examples of good practice gardening
- How to grow an urban forest on residential land
- Permeable hard landscaping options (driveways, paving etc)
- Benefits of trees and vegetation
- Other, please specify

The benefits of natural bushland & wetlands; The economic contribution of natural

UBC recommends adding...



UBC recommends using **local native species** in plantings...

And buying & using this fabulous book that is specific for Perth!

Can be purchased from [WA Naturalists' Club](#) and [Wildflower Society of WA](#)

**Polyphagus Shot Hole Borer (PSHB)** is a serious exotic pest that is killing WA trees and shrubs – both native and exotic. A major threat to our desire to increase urban canopy – and to our natural habitats.



**300 year old Swamp Paperbark (*Melaleuca raphiopylla*) at Lake Claremont** – that is to be removed as has been infected with PSHB. An amazing giant, felled by a tiny beetle and its fungus. Its scale is demonstrated by Nick Cook (WA Tree Canopy Advocates & Friends of Lake Claremont) and Jasmin Nivethitha (UBC Intern). Imagine all the insects, reptiles, birds that are going to lose their habitat. And the cultural history that it has witnessed. **We are losing trees, canopy, habitat and Perth's SENSE OF PLACE** [Colma Keating 12/3/2024]

You may be aware of the devastation it is causing in Lake Claremont, Kings Park and Hyde Park.

The beetle carries a fungus in its mouth – this infects the tree as the beetle bores in and destroys the plant's living cells and kills the host tree. There is no cure. There is no chemical or biological control. The only treatment is tree pruning or removal and then chipping. In just over 3 years, it has spread to 80% of the Perth Metropolitan Area (now in quarantine) and is already having an impact on our urban greening. Further control methods are required.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) is the lead agency (<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/borer>). This link gives you quarantine area and rules to help limit pest, ID tips & tools and a list of HOST PLANTS including WA natives.

UBC recommends adding...

Q15. Where have you seen some good examples of tree / canopy education or retention initiatives? These can be in Australia or internationally.

**NatureLink Perth** provides a hub for people and organisations to work together to conserve our biodiversity or integrate nature into our city. We must embrace nature in the city if we are to sustain our unique plants and animals into the future.

NatureLink Perth WA actively works with 'friends of groups' to identify, design and partner in ecological linkages connecting natural areas across our suburbs. Their resources are innovative and practical <https://www.naturelinkperth.org/resources/>

Make sure you subscribe to their informative & stimulating NEWSLETTER.

Please provide your answer above

If you would like to receive a copy of this form please provide your email address.

example@example.com

Back

Submit



**Urban Bushland Council also encourages you to check out these other organisations that have very useful information and links**



[WA Tree Canopy Advocates](#)



[Wetlands Conservation Society](#)



[Wildflower Society of WA](#)



[Peel Harvey Catchment Council](#)



[Birdlife WA](#)



[Enviro House](#)



[ReWild Perth  
Perth NRM](#)



[NatureLink Perth](#)