



# WHO'S WITH US?

Bringing community along  
on the green space journey

**202020<sup>TM</sup>**  
**VISION**  
20% MORE GREEN SPACES  
IN URBAN AREAS BY 2020



# BRINGING COMMUNITY ON THE GREEN SPACE JOURNEY

“*If you get the community offside,  
it doesn't matter what you do, it's going  
to be a long drawn out process.*”

Barney Oros, Development Director, HPG

## What is green space?

2020 Vision defines green space as parks, verges, street trees, nature strips, green walls, community gardens, large parks, small parks, playgrounds and other shared greened areas.

Choose anything you want to change in this world and chances are, one thing will determine your success: how many people you can bring along with you on the journey.

Urban greening is no different.

Whether you work in council or development, one audience is always key: the local community.

Work with them and they can be one of your most useful resources. Get them offside and you could be in for a long, complicated, and drawn out process.

This guide brings together research on how community views green space, as well as how councils and developers who engage well do so.

It's designed to deliver tools and information to help you engage community in a genuine way to create green spaces that everyone has a say in and loves.

# THIS GUIDE BRINGS TOGETHER FIVE PIECES OF RESEARCH

1

## COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

We surveyed 1,684 people  
nationally

to understand community attitudes  
to urban green space, including most valued  
benefits and familiarity with often used  
terms. This work was performed by Mosaic  
Insights, a specialist community  
research company.

2

## COUNCIL LANGUAGE AND BENEFITS

We looked at 120 council urban  
greening strategies

to understand the words and benefits they use  
to describe urban greening.

3

## COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

We spoke to 15 councils  
of different sizes and locations

to understand the approach they have  
taken and tools they have used to engage their  
local community.

4

## MEDIA LANGUAGE

We looked at over  
60 articles

from across national, local, mainstream and  
specialised media to understand what media talks  
about when talking green space and the language  
used, both positive and negative.

5

## DEVELOPER LANGUAGE AND ATTITUDES

We asked 246 people working  
in top tier developers

from across national, local, mainstream and  
specialised media to understand what media talks  
about when talking green space and the language  
used, both positive and negative.

## WHAT WE DIDN'T DO

Speak to small scale  
developers,

who will likely have a different perspective  
to top tier developers.

Dig deeply into attitudes  
towards trees and plants on  
their own land.

While this guide provides a little information  
on this, it is more concerned with helping create  
community support for shared green spaces.

# THE FOUR THINGS

you need to bring community  
along for the journey.



## 1. A good understanding of existing attitudes

How people speak, what they like,  
what they don't.

## 2. A great process for working with community

A step by step approach to consultation  
and co-creation.

## 3. Programs that involve the community in greening

Ways for those who want to get involved  
to get involved easily.

## 4. Communications that spread the word

Ready-made videos, posters and social  
media posts to keep people informed.



— 1 —

# COMMUNITY ATTITUDES

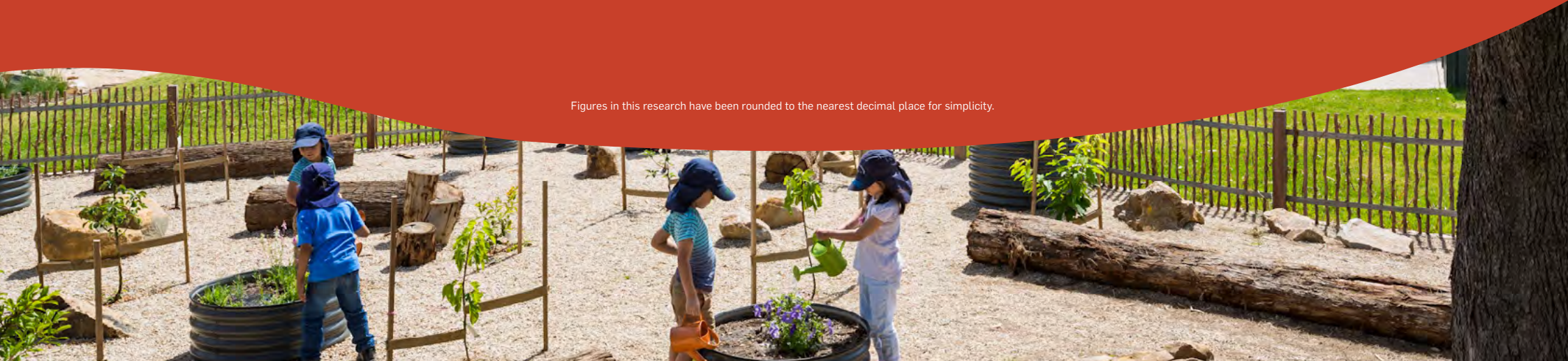
“

*Demonstrating the benefits for local community  
really helps get council across the line.*

”

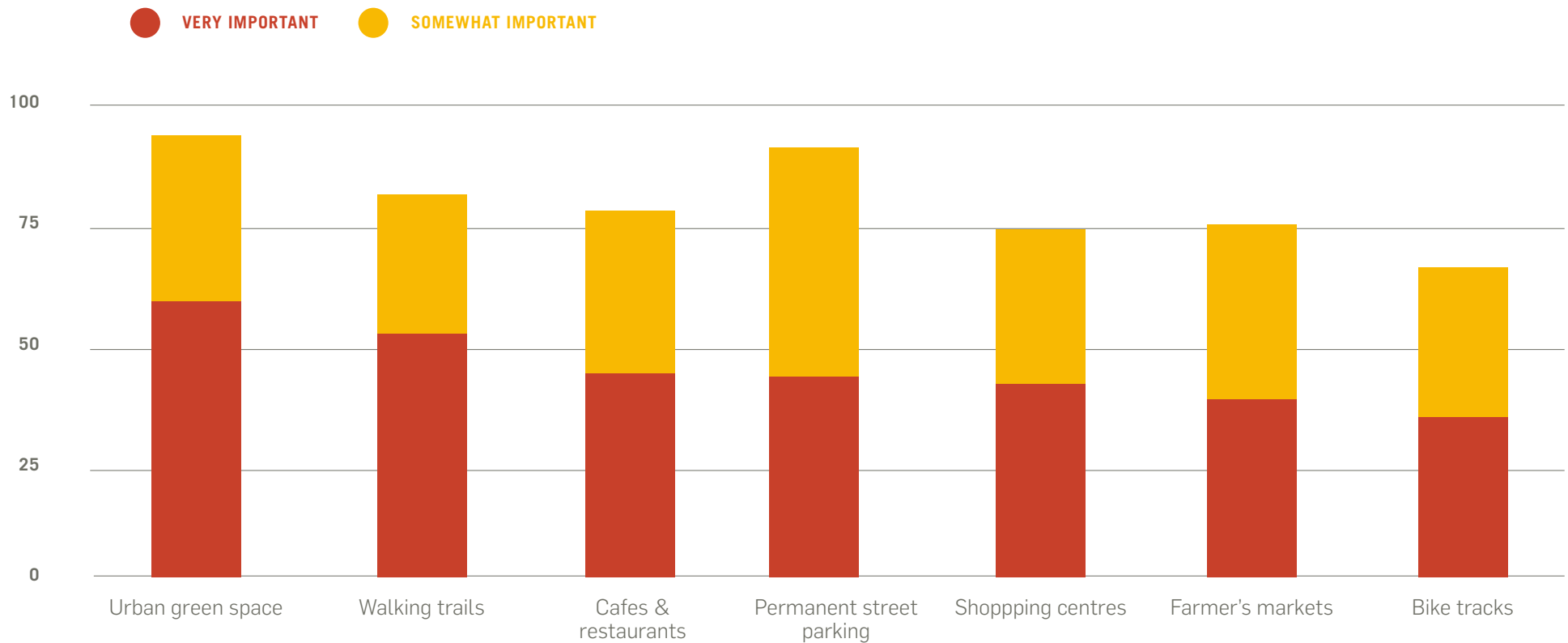
Natalie Pelleri, Senior Planner, Inner West Council

Figures in this research have been rounded to the nearest decimal place for simplicity.



# GOOD NEWS

Green space is seen as an essential part of local community, and is therefore a topic that should be high on the local engagement priority list.







# 85%

of people say one or more benefits of urban green space are somewhat or very important to them.

## BUT



# 12%

of people find them a nuisance and would prefer fewer urban green spaces.

So while there's always going to be some push back, it's important not to underestimate the community support that urban green space has.



People with higher levels of formal education are **less likely** to find trees a nuisance.

# COMMUNITY SPEAKS ONE LANGUAGE

When it comes to urban green space, people think of terms that relate to the benefits they experience and their observations of the areas.



1

Beautiful

Green

Nature

## AESTHETICS

Beauty

Pretty

Clean

2

Relaxing

## RELAXATION

Calming

Peaceful

3

Fresh

Cool

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

Air

Oxygen

Healthy

Shade

4

## WILDLIFE

Wildlife

Birds

Q: Name three words that come to mind when you think about urban green spaces.



# COUNCILS & DEVELOPERS TEND TO SPEAK DIFFERENTLY

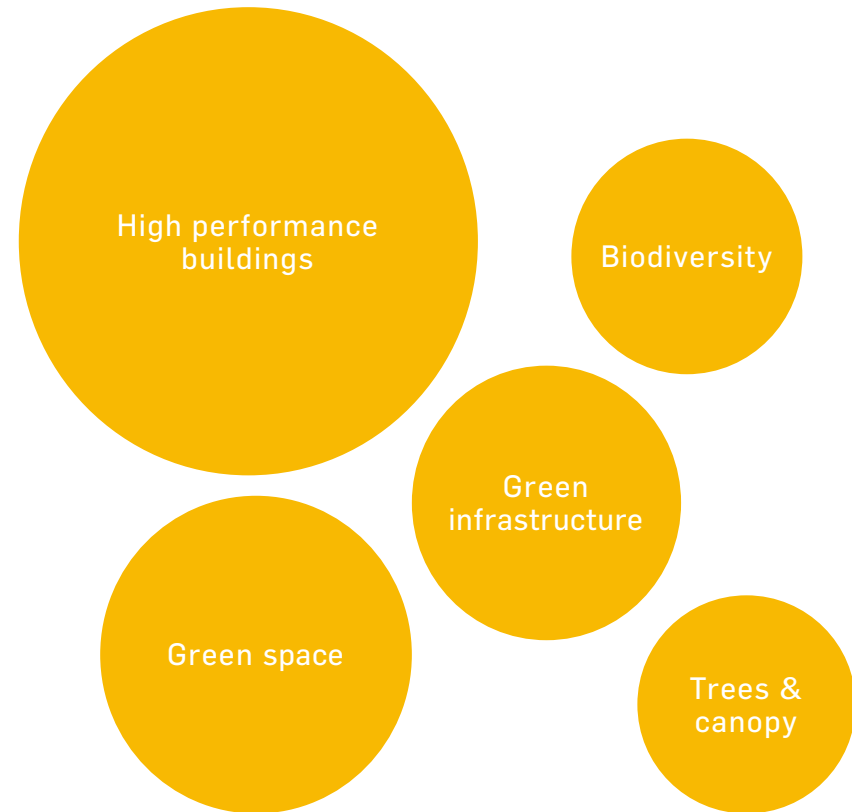
When you look at the words most used by councils and developers, you'll see it doesn't always match the language used by community when it comes to green space.

How councils speak



Top 5 terms used by councils to name their urban greening strategies. Based on a survey of 120 urban councils, each circle represents the number of public facing strategies which lead with that term.

How developers speak



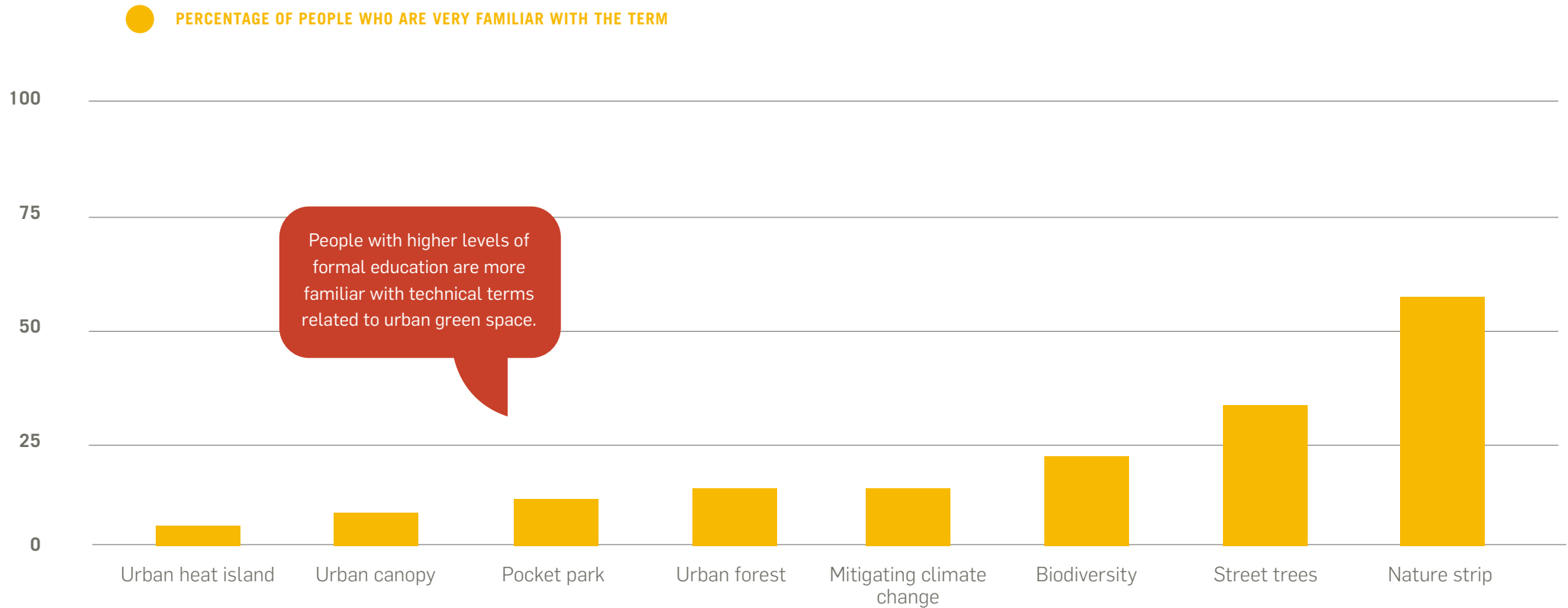
Top 5 most preferred words and terms based on a survey of 246 representatives of GBCA members. Expressed as a percentage of people who responded they favour that term.

# COMMUNITY STRUGGLES TO UNDERSTAND DEVELOPER LANGUAGE

While people can understand everyday terms like nature strips and street trees, they do not understand more technical, industry terms like urban heat island, urban canopy and pocket parks.



Q: How familiar are you with these terms?



# WHAT ABOUT MEDIA?

The most used term in media to describe plants, trees and parks is:



When talking positively about green space, the most used terms in media are:

- #1 Health & wellbeing
- #2 Liveability
- #3 Walkability



When talking negatively about green space (or lack thereof), the most used terms in media are:

- #1 Overdevelopment
- #2 Urban heat
- #3 Concrete jungle

# WHAT DO PEOPLE USE URBAN GREEN SPACE FOR?



**74%**  
RELAXATION



**61%**  
EXERCISE



**51%**  
WORK / LUNCH BREAKS

So it's important in our commercial areas too, regardless of private green space individuals may have.



# THE MOST VALUED BENEFITS MATCH COMMUNITY USAGE & EXPERIENCE

But almost all benefits are highly valued.

Aesthetics

Physical health

Recreation

Conservation

Mental health

Nature &  
biodiversity

Cooling

Responses do not confirm whether cooling the city was valued because of its links to climate change or human comfort. Considering the high value placed on physical health and relaxation, it is reasonable to expect it is more about human comfort.

Unsurprisingly this differs between **home owners at 67%** and **renters at 49%**

Social  
interactions

Property  
values

Climate change



Use benefit focused communications.

Use a mix of benefits, including aesthetics, recreation, mental and physical health.

Q: Which of the following do you see as the benefits of urban green spaces?

# COUNCILS & DEVELOPERS PRIORITISE BENEFITS DIFFERENTLY



Percentage of urban council greening strategies that highlight which benefits based on a sample of 20/130 urban councils.

Answers to the questions 'What do you see as the benefits of including green space in developments?' as asked of 246 GBICA members.

# MAINTENANCE IS COMMUNITY'S MAIN CONCERN

## #1 MAINTENANCE

58%

of people are concerned that urban green spaces in their local area will not be maintained - including problems with litter.

## #2 SAFETY

45%

of people are somewhat or very concerned about the safety of green spaces.



Communications should give a clear idea of how maintenance of green spaces will be carried out, and what measures are taken to keep them safe.

## IN GOOD NEWS

**36%** of respondents stated no dislikes at all with urban green space, and even of those who did - 'not enough green space' was one of the most common answers!

## IT'S ALSO WORTH NOTING

**81%** of people agree or strongly agree that they take an interest in and notice how healthy the trees, nature strips, grass, plants and parks look in their local area.

**62%** are not concerned or are indifferent about the cost of maintaining urban green spaces in their area.

# THE COMMUNITY LACKS KNOWLEDGE ON WHO'S RESPONSIBLE

55%

of people don't know who looks after their local green spaces.

72%

don't know if their local council is actively pursuing the expansion of urban green space.

The higher a person's education level, the more aware people are of whether their local council is actively pursuing the expansion of urban green spaces.

Younger people prefer SMS and social media.

## BUT THEY WOULD LIKE TO KNOW. HERE'S HOW:

Email me a link to a survey



SMS me some questions



Host a public event



Ask my opinion via social media



Set up a stall at a local community event



Call me on the phone



I don't want council to contact me



Most people **want** to be contacted in some way.

People over 65 are more likely to want to be contacted by phone.

Councils could do more when it comes to communicating. Digital channels (including SMS) will engage more people, especially younger people. Communications that ask people's opinion rather than just tell them are preferred.



# SUPPORT IS STRONG IN APPRECIATION, BUT WEAK IN ACTION

92%

support urban greening.

BUT

59%

of people are either unable or unwilling  
to devote time to volunteering in the  
maintenance of urban green spaces.

The older the respondent, the  
**less likely** they are willing  
to volunteer with maintenance.

67%

are unwilling to help petition government  
to increase local urban green space.

# THERE IS NO DEFINITIVE 'FAVOURITE TYPE' OF URBAN GREEN SPACE

When asked to order the kinds of green space they prefer in their area people stated:

- #1 Large parks
- #2 Street trees
- #3 Sport & recreation fields
- #4 Nature strips
- #5 Wetlands
- #6 Community gardens
- #7 Pocket park

The gap between the most popular and least popular options was comparatively small - which means opinions are likely to vary depending on the local area.

But keep in mind most people don't know what a pocket park is.

# 68%

of people agree a mix of low lying grasslands and shrubs and thicker bushland is good.

# 62%

of people prefer urban green spaces to be planted with natives.

# 11%

dislike spaces planted with natives.

# 28%

don't care either way.

# WHAT ABOUT AT HOME?

Private green space is viewed in a similar manner to public green space, but with less focus on aesthetics.

# 82%

of people have access to some private green space including balcony boxes, garden, kitchen garden and large or small backyards.



## Key benefits



- Mental wellbeing  
(‘relaxation’, ‘relax’, ‘fresh air’)



- Wildlife  
(‘birds’, ‘wildlife’)

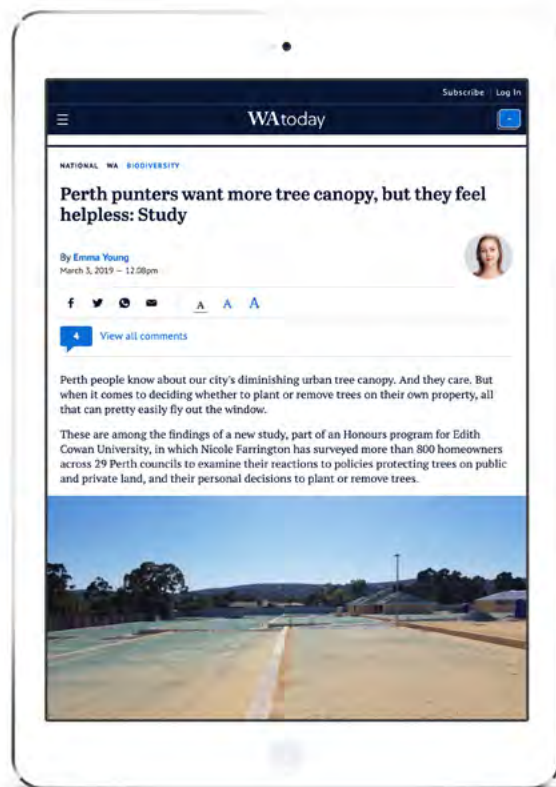


- Comfort  
(‘space’, ‘privacy’, ‘gardening’)

# WANT TO LEARN MORE?

This article offers excellent, more qualitative, insights into how and Perth residents value trees on both public and private land.

Its findings are broadly in keeping with the research above.



*One of the things we measured was egoistic values – caring because it might affect your own health or prosperity... But actually ... values didn't play a very big role. People's environmental values, their awareness of consequences to the environment, or their level of social responsibility ... weren't connected to private behaviours or policies.*

*People's motivations were more pragmatic... People actually planted trees because of a direct impact on their personal space and lives – the biggest reasons to plant trees were shade, aesthetics, wanting to attract birds and wildlife and fruit production.*



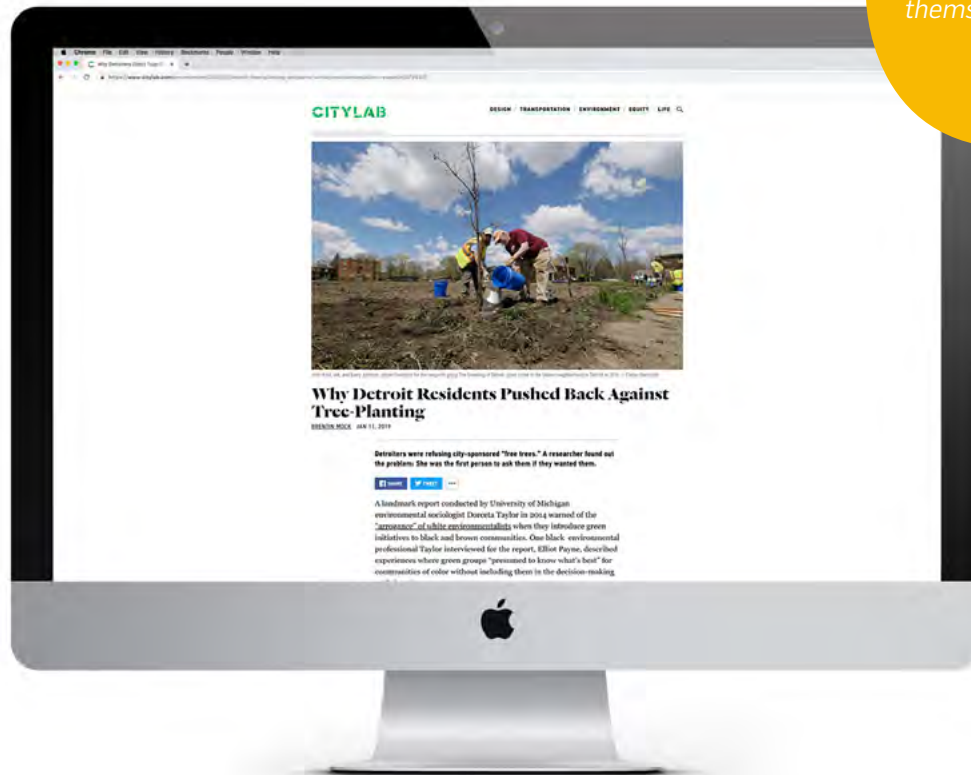
*80 per cent "strongly agreed" that neighbourhood trees made a major contribution to local identity and character, and 80 per cent "strongly agreed" that neighbourhoods without trees were unattractive and sterile*



*While they were highly in favour of council actions on public land, they didn't want to be told what to do in their own backyards.*



This article offers a uniquely US perspective, however its key out-take, that residents declined urban greening efforts not because they disliked trees but because they distrust the motivations and actions of their local government, is still an insightful cautionary tale.



*Roughly a quarter of the 7,500 residents they approached declined offers to have new trees planted in front of their homes.*

*...the rejections had more to do with how the tree-planters presented themselves and residents' distrust of city government than it did with how residents felt about trees.*

*It's not that they didn't trust the trees; they didn't trust the city.*

# HAVE YOU SEEN PLACESCORE?


It shows how each community in Australia values nature, trees and greenery compared to 50 other different place attributes - both the soft and hard infrastructure as well as social, physical, cultural or economic aspects.

GO TO WEBSITE



Your place will be more appealing to more people by delivering:

**Unique and respected landscape features including street trees, vegetation, water, views or topography**



Across all our research the community values places that integrate nature as a point of difference, something that makes the area unique or special - and it is equally important that these natural features are cared for and respected.

**Don't underestimate the power of GREEN!**

- Consider how you can use landscape or vegetation as a unique point of difference in your project
- Create a landscape landmark with a mature ficus or a row of unique trees such as jacarandas or pine trees
- Retain view corridors or highlight with a look out

**2** In Meadowbrook 56% of respondents chose 'Elements of the natural environment' as being important to them in their ideal Town Centre (62% Australia-wide)

**Cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces and infrastructure**



With centrally managed shopping centres providing the competitive advantage of a highly controlled environments, more people, especially the young see cleanliness as an important place attribute. Balancing cleanliness with your town centre's inherent diversity and interest is key.

**Don't underestimate the power of CLEAN!**

- Plan for the ongoing care, cleaning and maintenance of shared or public spaces and amenities
- Consider materials that look clean (not grey) and are easy to maintain over time
- Ensure rubbish bins are accessible but not overwhelming or dominant

**1** In Meadowbrook 66% of respondents chose 'Cleanliness of public space' as being important to them in their ideal Town Centre (67% Australia-wide)

– 2 –

# THE PROCESS OF ENGAGEMENT

“

*Breakthrough moments happen when you stop  
and listen to the community*

Davina Rooney, CEO, GBCA

”

What is engagement? Good question. In our experience it gets mixed up with communication.

We define engagement as the process of listening, understanding and co-creation, while communication is providing a clear explanation of what you're doing, why, and how you'd like your audience to play a role.





# TEN STEPS

We spoke to leading councils around Australia and collated their successes to come up with the ultimate 10 step process. It is equally relevant for developers too.





# 1 SET THE STAGE

Before you start consultation, it's important everyone in your team is clear on the parameters of what is possible and what is not.

Are you looking for input into a major strategic planning process that determines land use across your whole LGA or is this about tree canopy targets or street level plans? How will community input inform policies and decisions?

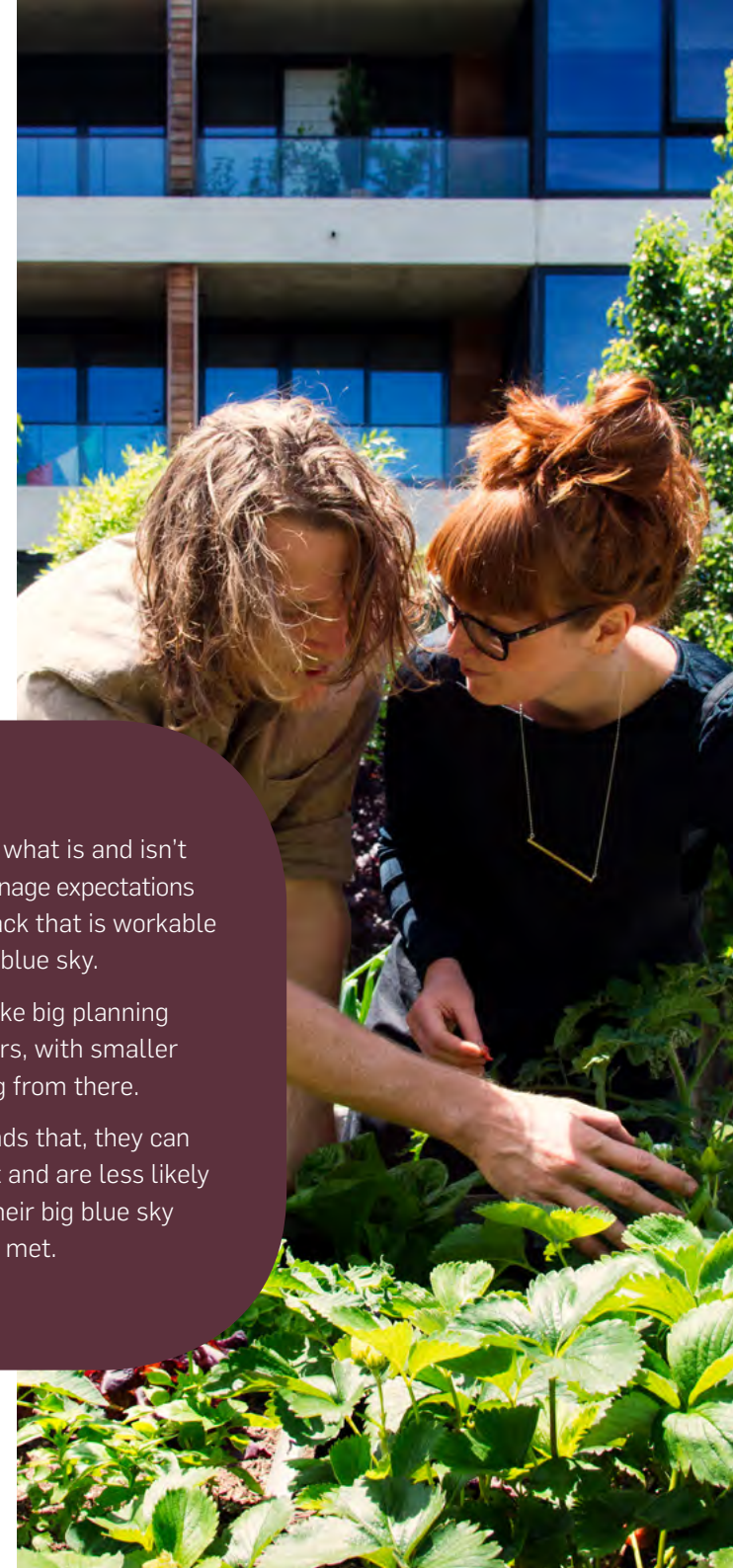
One example of a well defined question is, 'how do we ensure new green spaces are safe?' Another is, 'how do we create a feedback loop for community to tell council if maintenance is needed?'

Giving your engagement clear purpose will create a pathway to using it to solve real problems rather than engaging for the sake of it.

By setting the limits on what is and isn't on the table, you help manage expectations and ensure you get feedback that is workable rather than too blue sky.

Typically, councils make big planning decisions every 10 years, with smaller decisions cascading from there.

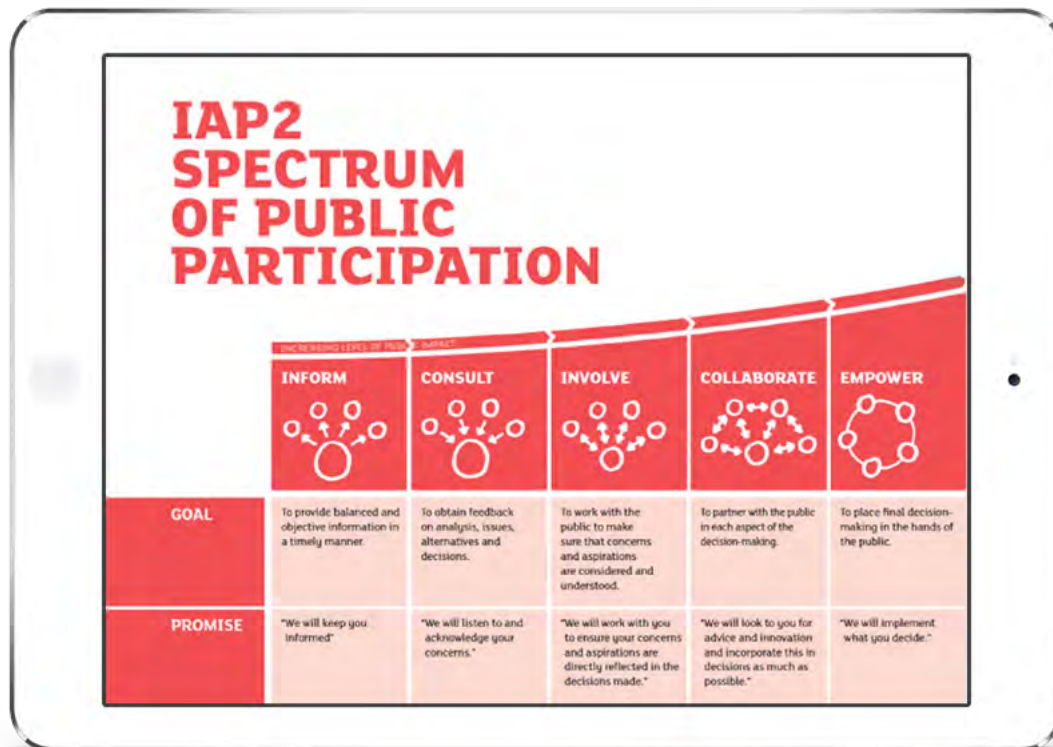
If community understands that, they can provide more useful input and are less likely to be disappointed if their big blue sky ideas aren't met.



## ◀ HAVE YOU SEEN THE IAP2 SPECTRUM?

This internationally recognised measure of public participation is designed to help understand the level of participation that defines the public's role in a community engagement process or program. It clearly outlines goals and the associated promise to the public that applies to different levels of engagement.

Read more at: [www.iap2.org.au](http://www.iap2.org.au)



# 2 CREATE THE CONVERSATION

You needn't dive headlong into surveys and dedicated green space forums.

Simply opening up the channels between your organisation and the local community is a big leap in many cases.

Begin with an open conversation. Discuss the role of trees, plants and green space within the community in broad terms and grow the conversation from there.

The earlier you open the channels and create a broad conversation, the easier it will be to create a genuinely democratic process.

Opening the conversation means opening it with other people within your council too.

Too often, planners and technical experts are left out of these opening forums.

They can help explain where the role of council ends and the role of the State Government begins... and what the potential unforeseen risks are. For example, residents might wildly advocate for street trees and get them, only to have the land on which they are planted resumed for a major infrastructure project - like light rail.

If you, a broad group of experts from your team and a good cross section of community are all part of the first engagement then you have an excellent platform to build upon.

One place to begin a conversation is via your council's guest speaker program, if you have one.

Invite an urban greening professional, academic or health professional to share their knowledge. An outsider can be a great person to begin these conversations and a good neutral way to open the conversation around benefits in preparation for a new process of consultation.





# 3 SHARE THE SCIENCE

Provide the data and science on why urban greening is important and the ways it can benefit the area suburbs. Community members are able to take this information, process it and begin thinking of localised solutions.

Sharing the data at the beginning and exploring it together will make sure everyone is starting the conversation with the same information and help you to walk the journey of increasing urban green space together.

## Do you have local data?

We've shared our national data above, now we encourage you to build on this with local data to better understand the attitudes and behaviours of your residents.

Comparing national with local data is a great way to open up conversation with community as it helps them understand you are seeking a truly local solution.

We've provided a survey template based on our own research questions that you can use.

It's also worth looking at existing tools like Place Score to see where green space fits in with other priorities for your community.





# 4 PLAN YOUR PATHWAYS

Establish which ways you want to connect with your community. There isn't going to be a one-size-fits-all conversation for you to have with your community, so you will need to have a variety of engagement processes in place to engage with the motivations of different people.

By offering a variety of points to listen, you will hear from diverse voices in your community.

It really is a case of different strokes for different folks.

Make sure you include some simple and convenient methods such as SMS and emailed surveys. The easier it is, the more likely people are to take the time to show their support for your green space project.



# 5 CHOOSE YOUR CHAMPIONS

Having community champions on your side gives you a well informed group of helpers who can both help you spread the word and also bring back responses that may not otherwise reach your ears.

Champions can be made up of community group members, dedicated individuals, enthusiastic businesses and council staff.

Ensure a cross section of your community is represented and look beyond the usual suspects (though you will want some of them too).

You can do this by using a number of outreach methods, including randomised emails or letter box drops.

You can take this a step further and establish a Community Reference Group. Such a group provides continual consultation group throughout your urban greening process.

Councils that have used this method have referenced it as a successful step to increasing support for greening amongst the community and creating both an efficient and effective process.

This option helps ensure that councils efforts are created alongside community without the need to re-start the consultation processes from the very beginning at each step.





# 6 LET THEM DO THE FIRST DESIGN

Your first design should be a community created design - with support from technical experts to help guide what is possible. Draw on the collective knowledge that exists in your community and make this the first draft.

From there, sense check your draft with them (or your newly formed Advisory Group) and ask if it represents what they want to see. From there you can start to add council expertise and adapt it. What this ensures is that all the key ingredients the community wants are included.

This not only creates a smoother process and a more engaged community, it also help make sure new green spaces are the right kind for your community, Resulting in well loved spaces and inspiring more people to increase and protect the greening on their private property. After all, it's their plan now, not yours.



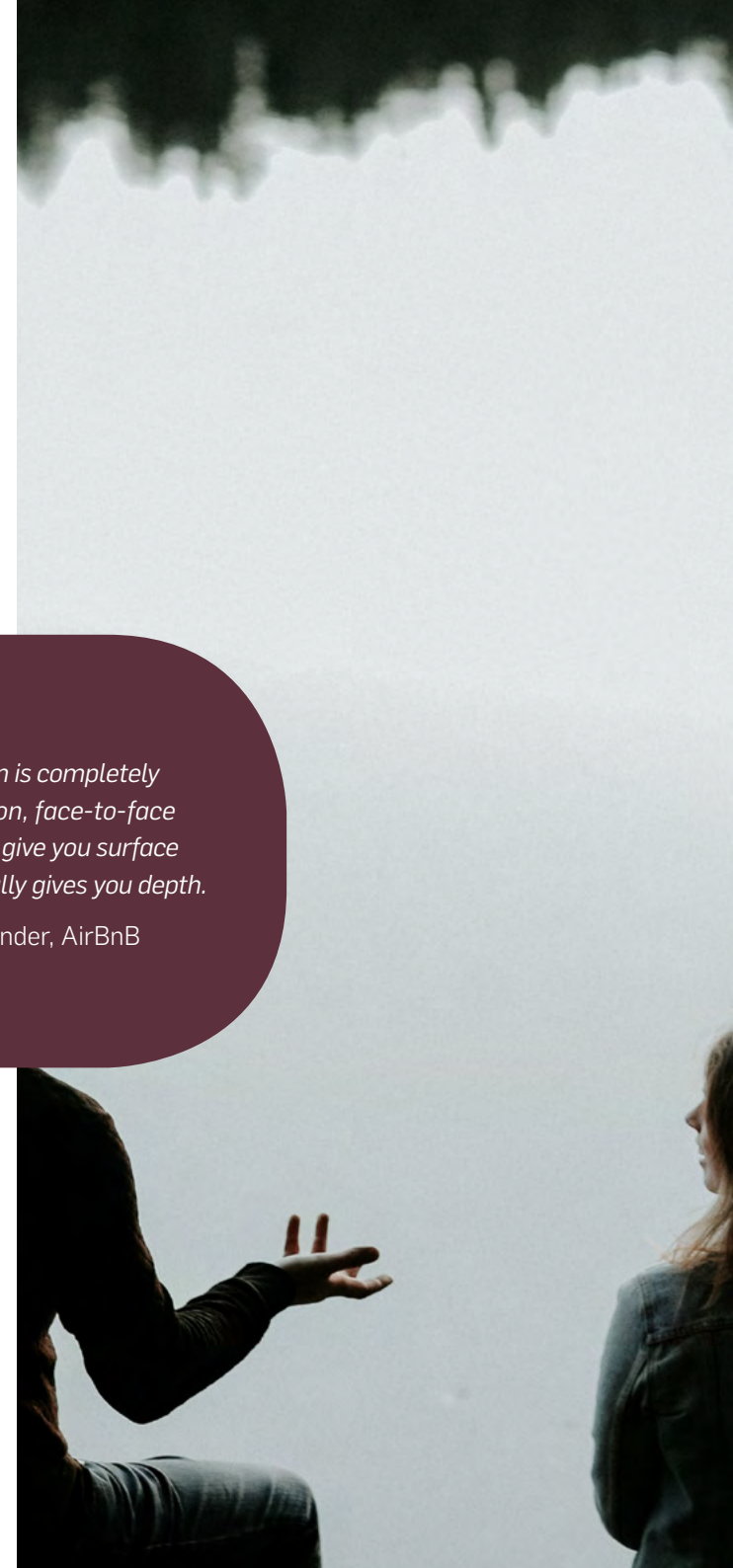
# 7 DON'T HIDE BEHIND EMAIL

Sure, it's easier to sit behind a desk all day. But, when it comes to engagement, that just won't cut it. You can't develop real rapport with a screen and a contact form.

Provide a direct phone line to your team, get out in the community or have frequent face to face catch up opportunities. Deal with questions or complaints as soon as possible and in person where possible. This ensures that individuals feel respected and included in what happens in their community - and no gripes are left to grow and turn toxic.

*Digital communication is completely different from in-person, face-to-face conversations. One will give you surface insights, and the other really gives you depth.*

Joe Gebbia, Co-founder, AirBnB





# 8 MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO GET THEIR HANDS DIRTY

Not everyone in your community will want to get involved in planting, but there is a significant group that will - and they can ultimately become your best advocates.

Those who are most successful in this space are not only holding community workshops and 'have your say' surveys but are also providing community planting days, creating backyard fauna programs or are establishing cooling neighbourhood programs.

Utilising digital channels to make volunteering easier will help convert those who are interested.

Even if only a small part of the community get involved, it displays positive community support to everyone else.

Again, this is about offering a variety of options, as different people like to join in different ways. There are some ideas for this on the [\*\*page 36.\*\*](#)



# 9 PROVIDE PRACTICAL ADVICE

People are very practical when it comes to their own properties. So, if you want them to start greening their own land, it helps to provide practical advice that helps overcome everyday barriers.

This can include tree maintenance and selection guides, gardening principles or localised advice regarding insurance and utilities. Helping people address their fears or reservations with knowledge and skills is an important step in increasing their confidence and getting on the front foot with regard to fears such as falling tree limbs.

This is backed up by the findings of the study referenced on p18:

*'Homeowners also mentioned that they would like to receive education on how to plant and retain trees in a way that limited any real or perceived practical drawbacks. This included species selection to determine best plant size and water requirements as well as advice regarding potentially problematic roots.'*





# 10 DO IT ALL AGAIN

Engagement is an ongoing conversation.

Evaluate, iterate and prototype again. Where has your engagement been effective and where do you see possible improvements?

Continue to keep the communication lines open with your stakeholders, share the wins of your process so far and also any changes that might be introduced moving forward.

This is also your opportunity to share any insights or data with your council or organisation on the outcomes of your process, to unpack the ROI such as less complaints and increased canopy cover and celebrate the creation of better greening outcomes.

This process may need to be repeated many times. Remember, the end destination is a greener suburb or a new green space project, not simply reaching step 10.



— 3 —

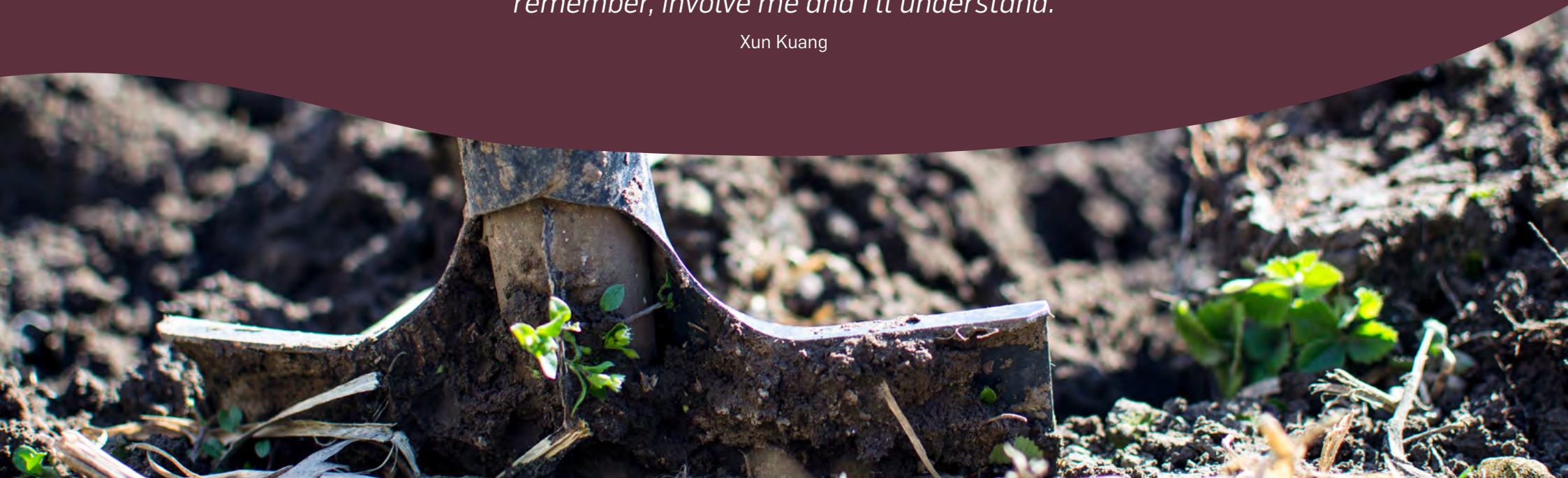
# WAYS TO INVOLVE

“


*Tell me and I'll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I'll understand.*

”

Xun Kuang







In this section you will find a collection of programs that have been successfully used to create ownership of and engagement with environmental programs within the community.

Programs such as these also create great bump-points with your community to share updates, launch new collateral, hear feedback and continue to build rapport.



# 1

## SMS OPINION POLL & EMAIL SURVEY

An easy way to engage with your residents and meet them where they are. Town hall meetings and weekend events are fantastic but there is a subsection of your community who will never be able to make it to these events (the shift worker or the working parent).

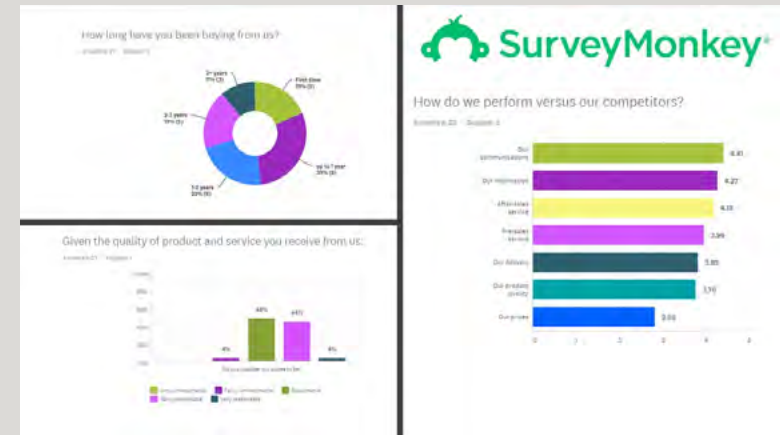
Creating easy to roll out and effective technology engagement processes are designed to catch these hard to catch community members.

Using randomised texts or email surveys, you can track your communities attitudes towards urban greening as well as their behaviours. This data can also offer an alternative to face to face engagement as people can feel it is less confrontational.

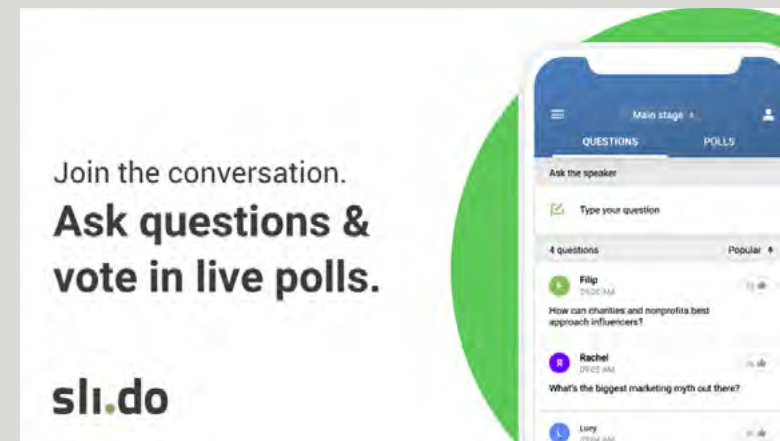
From our research, councils tend to do this late in process, to get validation and feedback on policy.

Why not be a leader by starting this style of engagement right up front, in conjunction with face to face meetings, for those who cannot make it?

You can also run live research during an event and even crowdsource the questions using tools like Slido.



Tools like Survey Monkey make it fast and easy to poll opinions



Tools like Slide make it easy to create interaction at live events

2

## FREE PLANT PROGRAMS

A giveaway program is an approachable way to get people thinking about the value of trees and plants, and consider how they can play a role in greening their suburb.

A free plant can help green a yard, verge, school, church or other space, and it all adds up.

By providing council approved plants, this program also helps ensure residents are planting the correct species and will, ideally, be motivated to continue greening beyond their first plant.

Believed to be the longest running tree giveaway program in Australia, the City of Brisbane giveaways program kicked off in the late 1960's and continues to thrive.

Over the last 10 years alone, the program has provided their residents, schools and community groups with over 600,000 plants and trees.

READ Brisbane City Council's 'Free Native Plant Program'





3

## ADOPT-A-TREE (OR VERGE) PROGRAM

In this kind of program, community members sign up to care for a specific tree or verge within the community.

Generally the council or developer puts in the tree or verge and a community member signs up to water and maintain it.

This provides ownership over public spaces, allows individuals to get involved with greening without having to invest in or change their own space. It's also great for people for whom home greening isn't an easy option, such as apartment dwellers and renters.

[READ 'Adopt a Tree'](#)

[READ 'Adopt a Verge'](#)

City of Vincent's 'Adopt-a-Verge' program includes provision of any necessary earthworks (boxing out and levelling) as well as 20 native tube stock plants to approved participants.

The major benefits in the council area have not only been greener streets but also increased community engagement, the establishment of new biodiversity corridors throughout the City and increased retention of rain where it falls.



Photos thanks to Western Down Regional Council and City of Vincent

# EXCEPTIONAL / SIGNIFICANT TREE REGISTER

A significant tree register is a common tool that is used to protect and promote significant trees on both public and private land.

These can be created by council or can be built up through submissions from the public. If you decide to use the latter process, the gathering process can ultimately create great user generated content on what your local residents love about the green spaces around them.

In some local councils, significant tree registers have also gained statutory protection.

This information can be communicated through a simple list with images or turned into an interactive map, if your budget allows.

READ 'City of Sydney Significant Trees Register'

READ 'Randwick City Council Significant Trees Register'





5

## CITIZEN FORESTER PROGRAM

Similar to the door knocking program, Citizen Forester Programs enrol community members getting involved in non-planting parts of your urban greening program.

Examples include helping with monitoring flora and fauna species and undertaking research.

[READ 'Become a Citizen Forester'](#)



Photo thanks to Sans Souci  
Community Garden



# URBAN FOREST ART AND DESIGN COMPETITION

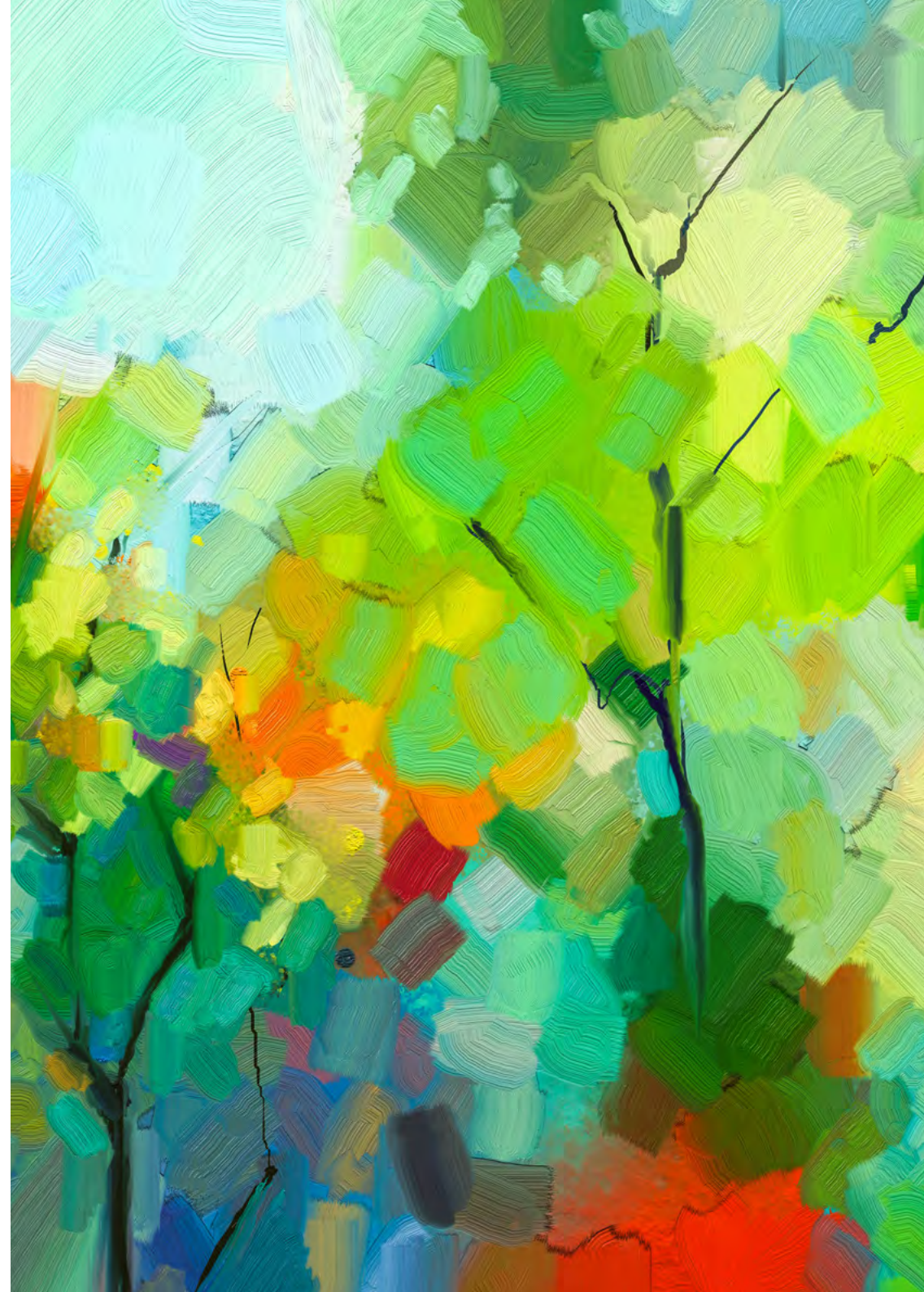
Employed by both New York City and the City of Melbourne, this is a way to celebrate and support urban greening, as well as create a visually stimulating community engagement tool.

Art and design competitions can bring together a broad demographic of unlikely community members and engage with them in the topic in a fresh way.

In 2011, as part of the consultation process for Melbourne's Urban Forest Strategy, the city ran an Urban Forest Art and Design competition to share the messages and imagery of why trees are important to their residents.

The competition received 419 entries from over 71 Melbourne suburbs. Winning entries were displayed throughout the city to promote the strategy and the consultation process.

Incorporating messaging and imagery from people of all walks of lives was a successful step in engaging with all members of the community. It also took a strategy that can feel removed from day to day life and handed the microphone to individuals to share why greening was important to them.





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## COLLABORATIVE PLANTING PROGRAMS

Utilising your eager community members (schools, universities or local environment groups) to help with planting, promotion of planting days and ongoing maintenance is a simple solution to overcoming a number of barriers faced when trying to increase urban green space.

Sufficient notice, promotion, accessibility and on-the-day communication will ensure your event is a success.

[READ Canterbury-Bankstown  
Council's Case Study](#)

[READ City of Gold Coast's  
Case Study](#)



# COOLING THE SUBURBS PROGRAM

Your conversation around green spaces needn't always be about green spaces.

One way to start the conversation is around heat - especially in parts of Australia that are away from the coast.

Starting a calling the suburbs program instantly attaches green space to one of its key benefits and starts the conversation with tangible, practical benefits from greening.

Penrith City Council launched their 'Cooling the City Strategy' in 2015 and have continued to have success with bringing their community along the cooling journey.

The council supports the strategy each year with targeted summer communications campaigns. This annual touch point updates community on what council has been up to throughout the year to alleviate the upcoming heat stress that summer brings and to provide practical tips to cool neighbourhoods.

The 2018/2019 summer campaign focused on energy efficiency tips to help people stay cool without skyrocketing electricity bills. Tips included planting trees along western facing walls.

The City tells us two pieces of communications have been particularly successful in supporting the campaign. One is 'before and 'after' images of streets using artists impressions to show the activities community members will be able to do, such as walking/bike riding, in greener streets.

Another is creating folding fans to give out at events. These are practical, provide a space for councils messaging and, at events on hot days, everybody wants one. A good reminder that a useful piece of collateral gets your message into more hands.



Programs can work together. City of Penrith gives out free plants at their 'Cooling the City' event.



READ Penrith City Council's 'Cooling the City Strategy'



# GREEN GRID PROGRAM

Another way to introduce the benefits of urban greening is through a green grid program.

Green grids connect places for both people and wildlife.

Bring together community members to consider the ways that both people and fauna travel throughout their city, map where greenery is needed the most and get to work creating a blueprint for a green grid for everyone.

This is a particularly useful approach for encouraging community members to green their own back yards.

Once wildlife is brought into the conversation, you could be surprised how many people are happy to green their private land in order to provide wildlife corridors.

READ 'Parramatta Ways'  
Green Grid Guide

READ 'Gardens for  
Wildlife' WEBSITE

READ City of Darwin's  
'Gardens for Wildlife'  
Guide

READ Knox's 'Gardens for  
Wildlife' Guide

Waverley Council has begun work on their Living Connections program with the end goal of connecting habitat corridors throughout the LGA. The current habitat corridors in the area are extremely fragmented which makes the journey for local wildlife a fraught one.

By creating fauna friendly gardens in much needed neighbourhoods, the program aims to reconnect the coastal habitat for the Superb fairy-wren and the New Holland honeyeater.

The bird friendly gardens are being planted out with plants specifically chosen for their ability to thrive in the area, to provide food and shelter for small birds, for their ease of maintenance and suitability for residential gardens.

The pilot program currently includes five properties who have collectively planted over 60 plants. Residents have conducted bird count surveys prior to planting and are in charge of maintenance. For those who had a lot of scope for planting, residents were able to consult with a local landscape architect.



# GARDENING GUIDES

Gardening isn't something that everyone in your community necessarily feels comfortable doing. To help foster these skills, some councils have created gardening guides to help increase skills and confidence.

They are also a helpful way to share updated policies and practices about species selection or water management that your keen gardeners might not have heard about.

A practical guide can help your residents to address fears they might have about greening with best management principles and builds their capacity to green their own spaces.

You can also take these guides and turn the content into workshops if there is demand in your area. This has been particularly successful with composting and worm farm workshops.

READ Brisbane City Council's Gardening Guide

READ Campbelltown City Council's Tree Guide

READ Cockburn Council's Gardening Tips



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# HAVE YOU SEEN PARK IT?

We've all walked past empty, sad-looking patches of our neighbourhoods and thought to ourselves  
*"imagine if that concrete patch was full of plants and trees, it would be a great place to hang out."*

With this in mind, the 2020 Vision teamed up with the CoDesign Studio's Neighbourhood Project to design a simple 10 step guide for communities wanting to design, then test, a new community-led park in their area.



SEE the 'Park It' video

DOWNLOAD the guide here



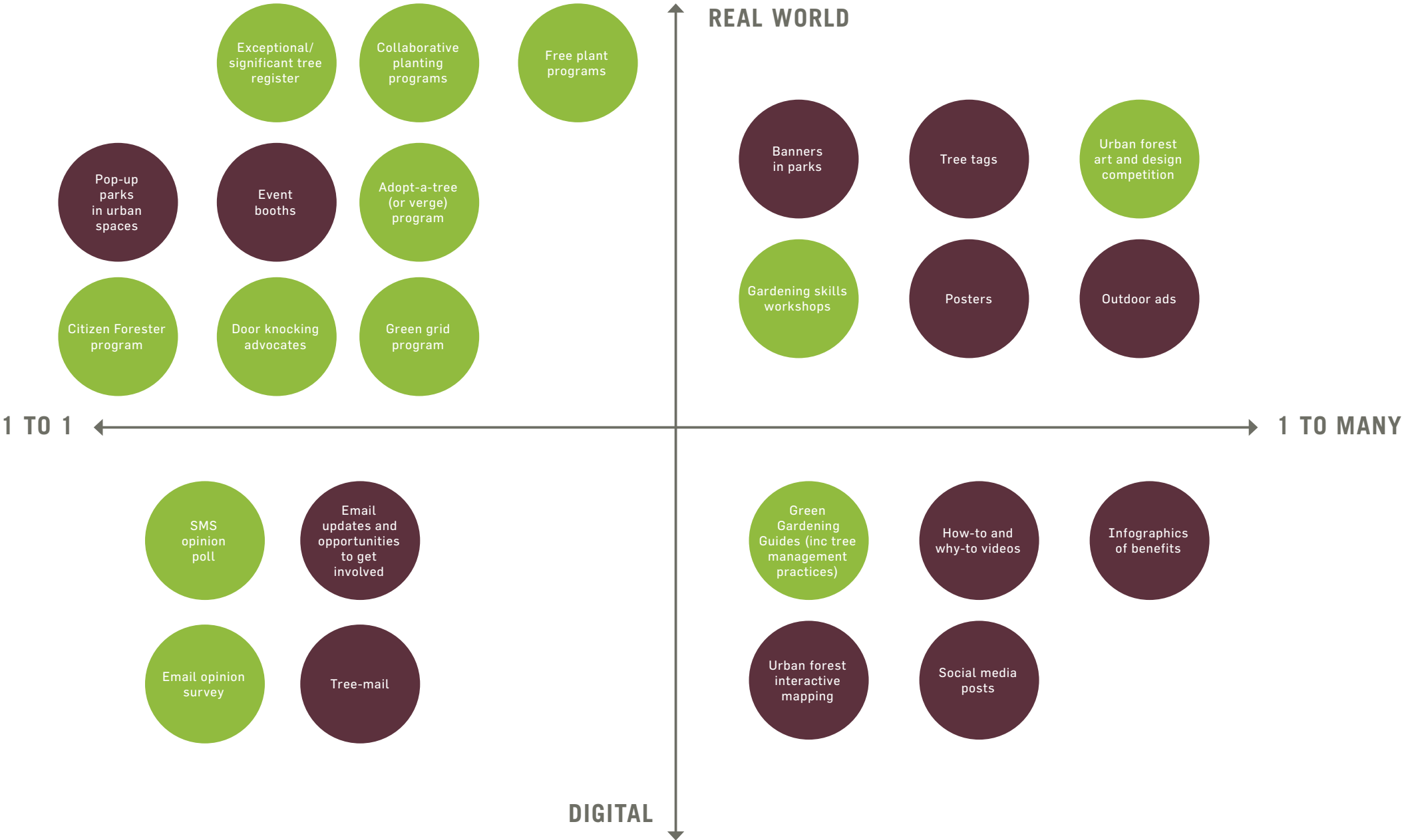


# MIX & MATCH

This page brings together the activities and communications above.



designates communications or activity that involves community rather than simply informs them.



– 4 –

# THE PLUG'N'PLAY COUNCIL COMMS KIT

“

*When it comes to dealing with the issues of most community concern, it helps to flip the mindset from 'how do we do less bad' to 'how do we do more good'.*

”

Dr Dominique Hes, School of Design, University of Melbourne





We all know trees and green space are great, but how do you get your community to know that too? We've created a ready made campaign that you can use online and in the real world to win hearts and minds.

It's all free to use and easy to customise for your council.

Download all the templates from  
[2020vision.com.au/adkit](https://2020vision.com.au/adkit)





# MEET YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD TREES

 <p>Birds &amp; bees live in me!</p> <p>GARDENER GARY GUM</p>	 <p>Swap screen time for green time!</p> <p>DR. SANDY SHRUB</p>	 <p>TRAINER TERRY TURF</p> <p>Get fit without the membership.</p>	 <p>Let me give your street a facelift.</p> <p>AUNTY GRACIE GREVILLEA</p>	 <p>I'll help you keep your cool.</p> <p>COOL CODY CASURINA</p>
<p><b>NATURE &amp; BIODIVERSITY</b></p> <p>Say hello to Gary Gum, your local nature and biodiversity expert. Gary knows everyone who lives here – birds, bees, insects and animals – and how important biodiversity is for our backyard gardens and public parks.</p>	<p><b>MENTAL &amp; PHYSICAL HEALTH</b></p> <p>Dr Shrub will see you now. A mental and physical health expert, Dr Shrub can teach you about how trees consume carbon dioxide and release clean oxygen and how spending time in nature can boost your mental wellbeing.</p>	<p><b>SPORTS &amp; RECREATION</b></p> <p>Terry Turf is old school. She believes that regular outdoor activity is the secret to a good life. What better place to get physical than in the local park? Plus, local parks are good for picnics and celebrations, too.</p>	<p><b>PLACE MAKING &amp; AESTHETICS</b></p> <p>Trees, parks and green spaces give neighbourhoods identity and encourage community while making them beautiful at the same time. Gracie Grevillea helps spread love by making sure there's enough green space for people to feel at home every day – especially kids.</p>	<p><b>COOLING &amp; SHADE</b></p> <p>Cody Casurina knows that trees help make streets and homes cooler in summer, creating a cool 'hood everyone will love living in all year 'round.</p>

The campaign features five characters.

We chose the trees and shrubs to represent the kinds found in a typical Australian urban forest. Each character represents different benefit to community.



Each character has its own ready made poster, communicating one of the benefits of your council's greening efforts.



Trees bring birdsong, bees and native wildlife, to pollinate flowers and veggies and control unwanted pests. Just one more reason to love your trees and green spaces.

Learn more at {COUNCIL URL HERE}





# POSTERS ARE DESIGNED FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE AS YOU NEED.

Rename the characters

Change the headline

Replace with  
an image of one  
of your trees  
or shrubs


Write your own copy

Add your own call  
to action and link

Drop in your own logo







**TRAINER TERRY TURF**

**Get fit without the membership.**

MEET YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD **TREES**

Did you know people living within 1km of a park are far more likely to exercise and be healthy?  
Just one more reason to love your trees and green spaces.

Learn more at [COUNCIL URL HERE]



**COOL CODY CASURINA**

**I'll help you keep your cool.**

MEET YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD **TREES**

Did you know that on hot days, it's around 10°C cooler in shade?  
Just one more reason to love your tree sand green spaces.

Learn more at [COUNCIL URL HERE]



**AUNTY GRACIE GREVILLEA**

**Let me give your street a facelift.**

MEET YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD **TREES**

Trees and parks make our neighbourhood beautiful, creating a friendly and inclusive community.  
Just one more reason to love your trees and green spaces.

Learn more at [COUNCIL URL HERE]



THERE'S A  
READY MADE  
POSTER FOR  
PLANTING OR  
REPLACING  
TREES...

PALMELA PALM

I see tree-lined  
streets in your future.

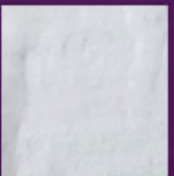


We're planting street  
trees on XXXXX

MEET YOUR FRIENDLY  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
TREES**

Trees and plants act as a natural water filtration  
system and protect against soil erosion.

Learn more at {COUNCIL URL HERE}





AND ONE  
FOR EVENTS  
IN PARKS.

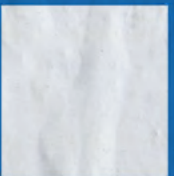


Insert event details  
here.

xxxxxxxxxxx

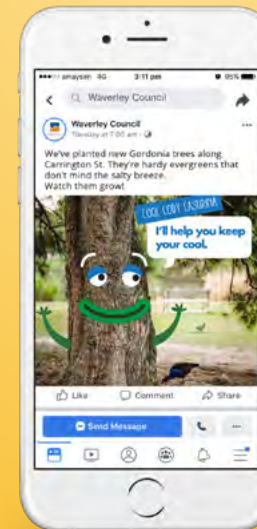
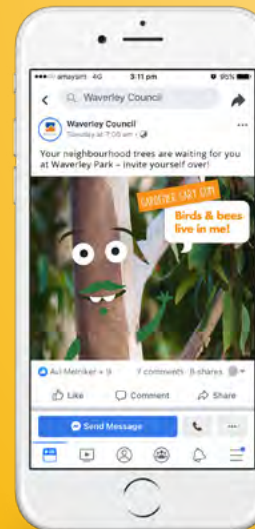
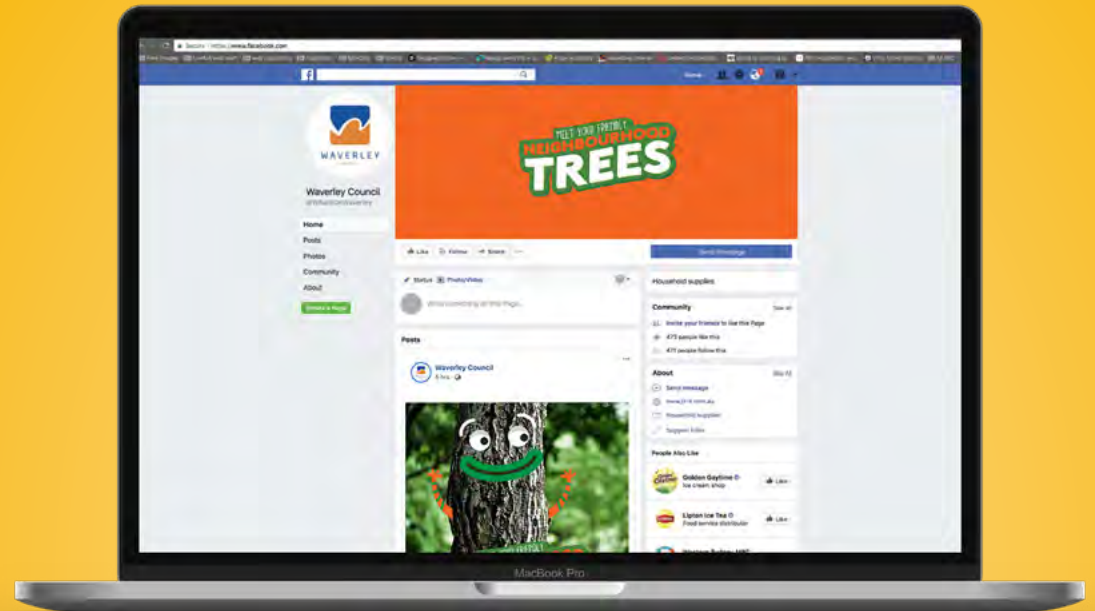
Learn more at {COUNCIL URL HERE}

MEET YOUR FRIENDLY  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
TREES**



A complete set of social media skins and assets lets you take the characters online and tell the story there too.

**WE'VE SUPPLIED  
GUIDE COPY,  
BUT WHAT YOU  
WRITE IS UP  
TO YOU.**

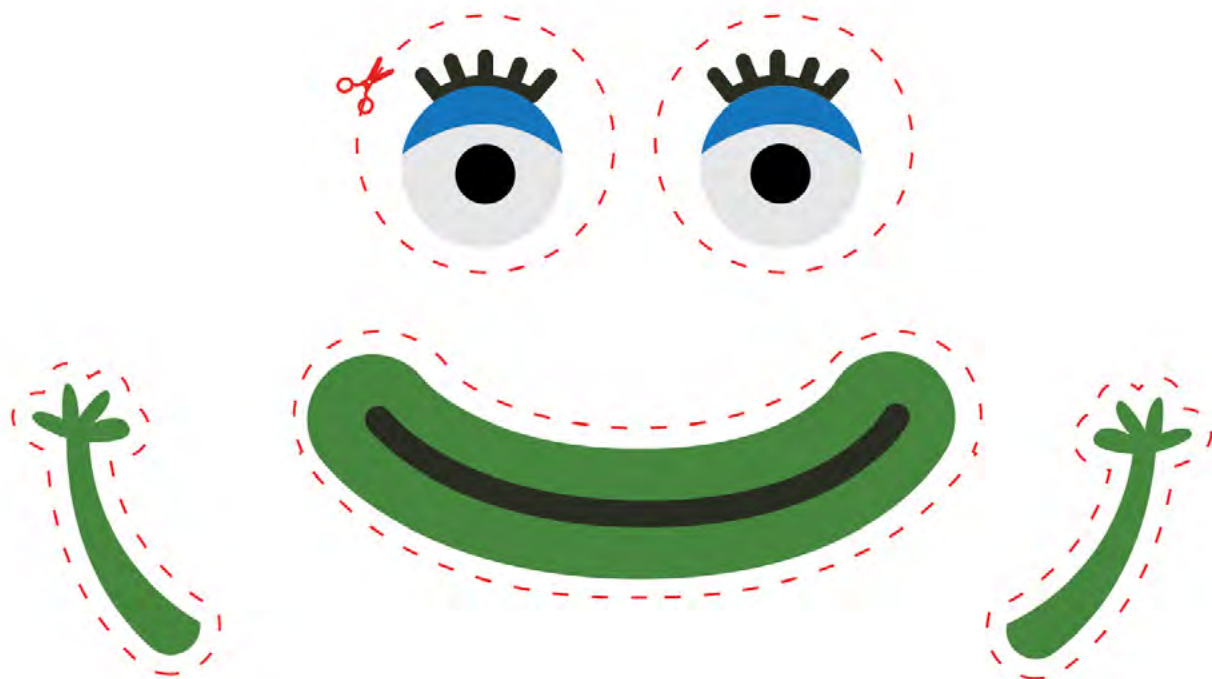




And for the real world,  
templates for easy to post tree signage.  
Simply get them printed on core-flute and put them on your trees.







**20 minutes of green  
time a day keeps  
the doctor away.**

Find out what else is growing on at  
[www.urlhere.com.au](http://www.urlhere.com.au)

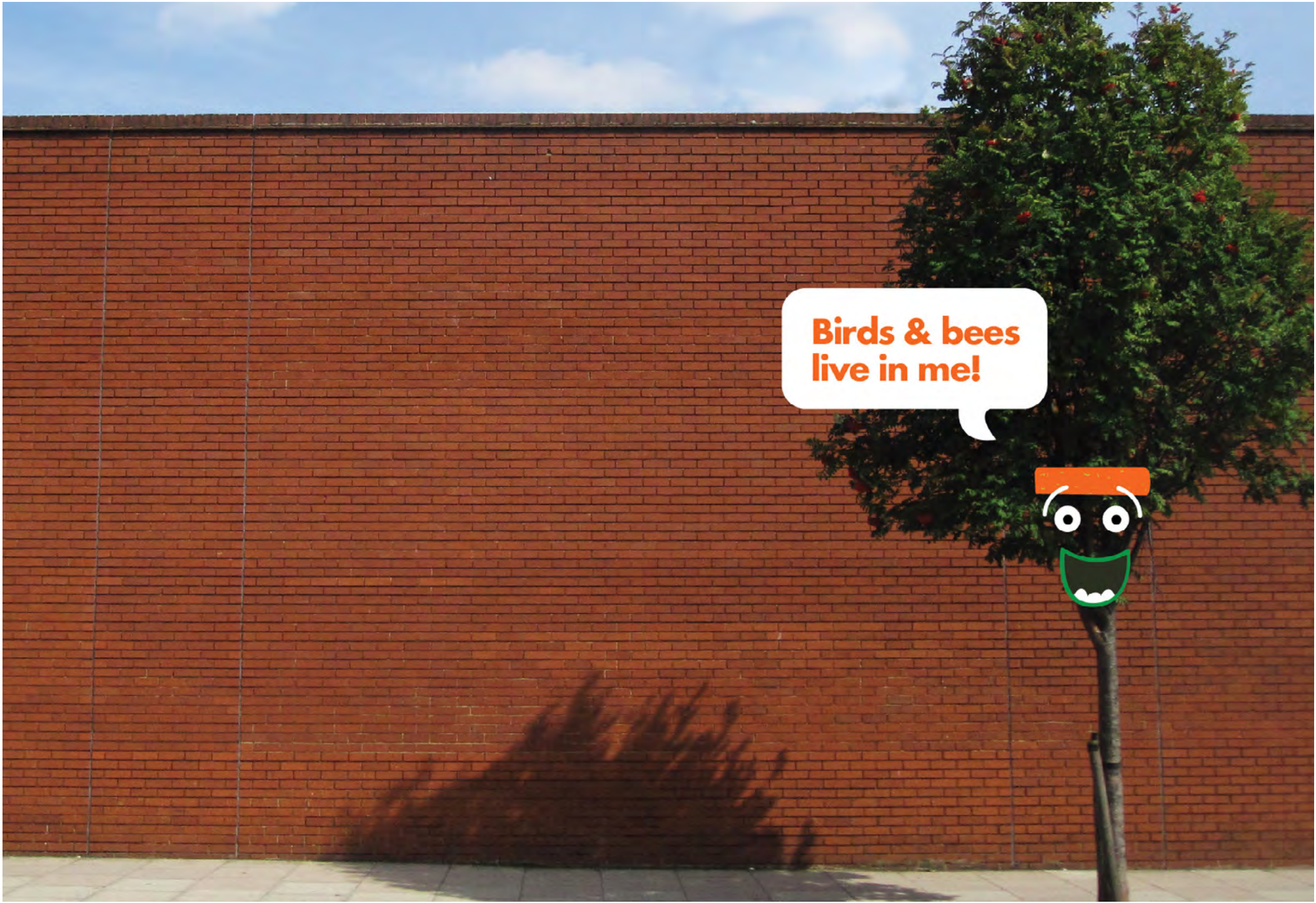
**I am one of 2,678  
oxygen-making  
trees in your suburb.**

Find out what else is growing on at  
[www.urlhere.com.au](http://www.urlhere.com.au)

**Breathe easy!  
I'm keeping the air  
clean around here.**

Find out what else is growing on at  
[www.urlhere.com.au](http://www.urlhere.com.au)





**Birds & bees  
live in me!**





Green is the new black.  
I'm not just a pretty face,  
I clean the air too.

Meet the neighbours at  
[www.urfuture.com.au](http://www.urfuture.com.au)



**An acre of trees provides  
enough oxygen for  
18 people per year.**

Meet the neighbours at  
[www.urlhere.com.au](http://www.urlhere.com.au)





**If there was a tree  
here, you'd be  
cool by now.**

Need a new neighbourhood tree? Just ask at  
[www.urlhere.com.au](http://www.urlhere.com.au)





WHY NOT TRY  
A BIT OF GRASS  
SIGNAGE TOO?





For your next council event, what about handing out Tree Hugs?

All you need is a tree suit. There are plenty for sale online.





**LIKE THE KIT?**  
**DOWNLOAD IT HERE**



# THANKS

Need more information?  
Email [hello@202020vision.com.au](mailto:hello@202020vision.com.au)