



SHEFFIELD TREE ACTION GROUPS (STAG)

PRESS RELEASE

www.savesheffieldtrees.org.uk

Bishop of Sheffield, Pete Wilcox, to chair long-awaited meeting between representatives from STAG, Sheffield City Council and Amey.

STAG has accepted an invitation to independently-facilitated talks at the end of August.

In a letter to Chris Rust and Paul Brooke, Co-Chairs of STAG, Cllr Lewis Dagnall referred to new proposals and options that the Council and Amey have been working on. However, no decision had yet been made on sharing these with STAG.

Chris Rust said: “Cllr Dagnall has indicated that he wants to engage in a meaningful dialogue about the proposed replacement of the remaining 306 trees from the original felling programme and the wider issue of how to look after Sheffield street-tree stock over the coming 20 years and beyond.

“Naturally, we welcome the invitation for talks but this is just an initial meeting and we won’t get to know about their new plans. We hope that the Council is sincere in wanting to work with us on a solution rather than just to consult us on a plan that they’ve already decided on.”

Paul Brooke said: “We’ve talked with campaigners across the city and we are clear on the broad issues we need to talk about, which are that:

- there should be no further reduction of the mature tree canopy in Sheffield by the unnecessary removal of healthy street trees;
- any proposals made should be based on current urban forestry good practice with independent expertise provided to the Council from outside of the contractor Amey;
- the future work by Amey on the management and maintenance of street trees should have proper, independent oversight;
- Sheffield City Council should adopt and implement a proper tree strategy for the sustainable stewardship of our street-tree assets and the wider urban forest.

“We also believe that for this once-proud green city to move forward there needs to be an independent inquiry into how we got into this mess. We support the call by Lord Scriven for an inquiry, which needs to look at the contract, the incentives that led to more than 5,500 mostly healthy trees being felled, the wasteful expense of an ignored Independent Tree Panel and the events that occurred at disputed felling sites involving local residents, a private security firm and South Yorkshire Police.”

Contact:

STAG press team: sheffieldtreeactiongroupsmedia@gmail.com