



Development Control Committee	Thursday, 12 May 2016	Matter for Information
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Title: **Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees (CAVAT)**

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1. Introduction

CAVAT is a method, developed by the London Tree Officers Association (LTOA), by which OWBC can put a monetary value on a living tree, accounting for public and social amenity factors as well as tree size and health. This report requests the committee to consider the approval of the use of CAVAT by Planning and Arboricultural Officers as a tool to inform tree preservation disputes.

2. Recommendations

CAVAT be approved for the future use of Planning and Arboricultural Officers as evidence of a tree's assessed amenity value in tree related disputes and negotiations.

3. Information

3.1. The CAVAT method of tree valuation uses a 5 step method to produce a value for a tree:

- 1.** Basic Value: This is calculated by taking the trunk area (at 1.5m) and multiplying it by the national unit value factor (updated annually to track inflation)
- 2.** Community Tree Index (CTI) Value:
 - a.** The basic value is then adjusted dependant on the CTI (CTI is a measure of the relative population density potentially able to benefit from the tree, derived from Office of National Statistics (ONS) information.) These values range from 100% - 250%
 - b.** This value is then discounted by up to 60% dependant on accessibility.
- 3.** Functional Value: The CTI Value is then decreased in increments of 10% depending on how well the tree is functioning biologically, Taking into account crown size and condition.
- 4.** Adjusted Value: The functional value is then adjusted +/- 40% depending on:
 - a.** Special amenity factors (historical, rarity, veteran status...)
 - b.** Appropriateness to the location
- 5.** Full Value: The Adjusted value is then reduced (by upto 90%) depending on it Safe Life Expectancy (80+ years retains 100%, less than 5 years loses 90%).

This then gives the Full assessed amenity value of the tree.

3.2. Uses for OWBC:

1. Damage/Destruction of protected trees: A Tree Preservation Order or Conservation Area designation allows a LA to seek a fine from any person who damages a protected tree for the amenity lost. But how much do you fine? CAVAT gives that figure, for a damaged tree you can calculate the loss in value and for a tree that needs to be removed or has been destroyed the full value of the tree (up to £20000) can be fined.
2. Damage/Destruction of OWBC trees: As trees are the property of the landowner CAVAT can derive compensation costs for damage and destruction of council owned trees.

“We claimed over £9,000 from a firm that undertook unauthorised work to a council tree adjacent to the work site, specifically for the loss of CAVAT value.”
 - Jim Chambers, Islington Urban Forest Manager

3. Subsidence: CAVAT cannot be used as the sole reason to refuse the removal of a tree due to subsidence claims. But it can help to justify the losses to an area if a tree is removed and to help justify whether it is more cost effective to retain the tree and pursue other mitigation methods.
4. Reports and Statistics: CAVAT can be used to assess the value of an existing tree stock and to track the value added or taken away by tree planting, maintenance and removal of trees within the Borough.

‘If spending £1000 on tree planting equates to £10000 boost in amenity value of an area. Is it worth it?’

CAVAT is included into Ezytreev as a plugin and automatically calculates the values as you survey the trees. Once you have a representative value for one of your parks/wards/streets/etc it is an obvious evolution to present your findings to the appropriate portfolio holders on the value for insurance purposes. I know it transformed Walsall’s tree management very quickly.

5. CAVAT is now a used by many local authorities throughout the country as well as numerous landowners and Arboricultural consultants, as an invaluable tool for the management of their trees. The ability to quantify the value of a tree based on its size, stature and position within the public eye, on top of the fact that it has been proved to stand up to legal scrutiny, is proof that the use of this system will be instrumental in the maintenance of tree and green space management and governance.

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Implications	
Financial	No significant implications.
Legal	No significant implications.
Risk	No significant implications.
Equalities	No significant implications.