



tree**net**

# Strategic Plan

2021 - 2026



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## Introduction

TREENET is Australia's professional and community network, committed to improving the national urban forest.

TREENET operates as an independent, not-for-profit, environmental organisation, funded by voluntary membership subscriptions.

TREENET is committed to education, research and advocacy about the multiple benefits and values of trees in urban environments.

TREENET promotes the need for functional levels of healthy and resilient urban tree canopy cover supported by adequate quantity and quality of growing spaces.

TREENET promotes the need to understand trees as major community assets – and therefore to be properly valued, protected and managed.

Originating in 1997 from the University of Adelaide's Waite Arboretum, TREENET's head office is based nearby at 334 Glen Osmond Road, Myrtle Bank, South Australia.

## TREENET – Snapshot of the last 24 years

Core mission from February 1997 still persists; supported by an updated Constitution in December 2012.

Current governance structure for TREENET's strategic, fiscal and operational oversight, established in 2002, remain robust and effective.

The model for sustaining operational revenue, derived through sponsorship, memberships, Symposium registrations, donations, the occasional research and Avenues of Honour grants, plus royalties from sale of Gallipoli Rosemary plants remains largely unchanged. The early financial model for hierarchical, tiered structure of sponsors, became redeveloped into a more stable and simplified arrangement, as Institutional Memberships.

As per the Constitution, website development, maintenance and upgrading over time to reflect currency in information technologies serves as TREENET's main point of reference for marketing and promotions and resources delivery.

Since its launch in 2004, the Avenues of Honour project has been the catalyst of significant, philanthropic revenue, supplemented by royalties from the label sales of Gallipoli Rosemary – netting on average \$10,000 per annum.

TREENET has successfully delivered 21 successive, annual Symposia since 2000.

The success of TREENET operations can be attributed to the robust team of volunteers that form the TREENET Management Committee and the urban forest reference group known as the TREENET Advisory Board.

Equally awesome are those organisations representing Government, Corporate and allied, like-minded industry Associations that provide stable financial support from year-to-year.





## Our Vision

To enhance the role of trees in the urban forest and to engage the community in this endeavour.

## Our Aims

To advocate and promote the values of the urban forest to the community;

To develop and facilitate the exchange of information among a broad range of disciplines, relating to protecting, sustaining and enhancing the urban forest;

To promote research and education, including holding symposia;

To facilitate priority projects and programs that help build community and industry partnerships in the delivery of sustainable urban forests for all.

## Our Core Business

Education - Symposium and online resources

Research – Street tree species trials resources

Research – Water Sensitive Urban Design resources

Research – Engineered spaces for growing trees in paved areas

Projects – Avenues of Honour

## Creating the Plan

Over the past 18 month TREENET's Constitution, Vision & Aims have been revisited.

An online "Report Card" survey of Advisory Board Members and Institutional Members was conducted during 2019-2020. A dedicated, targeted forum for the same Membership groups was held during the National TREENET Symposium – the Virtual Urban Forest Festival, September 2020. *[See Appendix 1 Summary Results]*

This feedback sets the 5-year framework for this Plan.

To refine the Plan, a Strategic Planning Workshop involving TREENET's Management Committee members was conducted in March 2021.





## Strategic Priorities 2021 – 2026: Key Focus Areas

### EDUCATION

#### PROJECTS

#### RESEARCH

#### RESOURCES

#### COMMUNICATION

*Our membership*

*Our staff*

*Our finance*

*Our governance*

### EDUCATION

#### Objectives

To promote the values of the urban forest to the community

To develop and facilitate the exchange of information among a broad range of disciplines, relating to protecting, sustaining and enhancing the urban forest

#### Priorities

Annual Symposium

Community and target audience outreach

#### Key initiatives

Flexible delivery options for Symposium

Inviting and sharing more successes and case studies across topical issues

Continue as a National Partner and principal Australian promoter/advocate for Tree Cities of the World

Contributing to other industry publications eg Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), Institute of Public Works Australasia (IPWEA), Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA), Arboriculture Australia, etc.

Program of regional outreach – workshops

Packaging topical Symposium topics for release (like the Bushfire response)





## PROJECTS

### Objectives

To facilitate priority projects and programs that help build community and industry partnerships in the delivery of sustainable urban forests for all

### Priorities

Avenues of Honour

Street Tree Species Trials

Water Sensitive Urban Design

Engineered Spaces for Trees in Paved Areas

AS 4970 Review

### Key initiatives

*Avenues of Honour – domestic projects:*

Westport AoH – Port Adelaide, SA project, commenced 2015

Normanville AoH, SA – a critical restoration project and identified as of national significance

*Avenues of Honour – French project:*

Appropriate placement of War Memorial Oak trees grown in France – as sponsored by TREENET

*Street Tree Species Trials*

TREENET- Which Plant Where –Best Practice Note

Regional LGA-Nursery trial collaborations

New Case Studies Portal on TREENET website

App development for portable smart devices

*Engineered Spaces for Trees in Paved Areas –*

Perth Conference – April 2021

Integrated Water Sensitive Urban Design ??

*AS 4970 Review*

Initial, informal series of collaborative workshops – 1<sup>st</sup> in March (Victorian network)





## RESEARCH

### Objectives

To support, promote and facilitate research that contributes to sustainable urban forests for all

### Priorities

Continue to seek out original and topical urban forest and arboricultural research to report at TREENET symposia

Continue to offer support for relevant collaborative institutional research

Seek opportunities to support topical research review

### Key initiatives

Participate in APR Intern program in 2021- *Identifying the Financial Value Attributed to Benefits and Services Provided by Australian Urban Trees*

As resources allow, pursue similar PhD Intern programs on an ongoing basis over the next five years.

Canvas Institutional Members to identify specific research needs/gaps for promotion to early researchers (ie. Honours and Masters students)?





## RESOURCES

### **Objectives**

To sustain and enhance the membership, financial and organisational capabilities of TREENET

### **Priorities**

Review membership structure

Meet the needs of current members and reward long-term supporters

Sustain our financial capacity, governance rigor and exemplar organisational management

Plan and support the committee and management skills and resources required to sustain the needs of our service delivery

Continue to identify and attract project specific voluntary resources

### **Key initiatives**

Succession planning for new Director

Recruitment of appropriate administrative support





## COMMUNICATION

### Objectives

- To provide an accessible source of independent and up to date educational material relevant to our target audience
- To promote TREENET as a leading advocate for sustainable urban forest excellence
- To engage members, stakeholders and community in advancing urban forest outcomes

### Priorities

- Maintain regular and relevant outreach to and feedback from, our membership
- Identify our target audiences and develop a Communication Action Plan

### Key initiatives

- Development of national media profile
- Develop a suite of TREENET social media messages
- Address Adelaide centric perceptions
- Strengthen our community group and state government engagement
- Be ready and willing to respond to hot media topics – like storm events; be ready to advocate/ spokes group for positives of trees
- Contribute to other industry publications (PIA, IPWEA, AILA, Arb Aus etc.)





## Appendices

### TREENET – Key highlights from the last 24 years

On February 17<sup>th</sup> 1997 the inaugural meeting of the “Urban Tree Cooperative Research Group” was held at the Waite Arboretum in Adelaide. Its stated aims were “to improve the streetscapes of South Australia through a coordinated assessment of existing and potential client needs, species selection, production methods, establishment practices and information sharing”. Two weeks later on 28<sup>th</sup> February, the membership had grown from 4 to 7, the name had changed to TREENET (**T**ree and **R**oadway **E**xperimental and **E**ducational **N**etwork), and the reference to SA was dropped as it was realised that TREENET would have national relevance.

Our vision was to positively influence the way Australians value and manage urban trees through research and education. We embraced inclusiveness through a broad involvement of the professions and their practitioners influencing urban forest management, confident that only by an integrated pursuit of common objectives could we succeed in our aims.

#### 1997 – 2002

The administrative tasks and research and education facilitation roles, were commanded by a small group of stalwart volunteers, led by David Lawry and Jennifer Gardner.

TREENET’s original remit was to:

- Share information through the use of an interactive, internet web application. (Noted however, that TREENET does not provide advice or act as a consultancy in any way).
- Hold annual symposia
- Undertake street tree related research
- Promote the establishment of trial sites by facilitating collaborations between municipalities and the nursery industries. However, TREENET itself does NOT establish any trial sites nor advise on their establishment.

A Management Committee was formed and avid supporter and retired chartered accountant, Brian Measday, accepted the responsibility of Treasurer – providing highly regarded stewardship for financial management, for 15 years.

TREENET became an incorporated entity on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2002, governance underpinned by the first Constitution.

David Lawry was appointed as TREENET’s inaugural, part-time Director.

#### 2003 - 2007

Accepted onto the Register of Environmental Organisations on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2004, TREENET was officially endorsed as a not-for-profit, charitable organisation.





The Avenues of Honour Project was launched at the 5th TREENET Street Tree Symposium, 4th September 2004. A Gallipoli Rosemary hedge was planted. The first TREENET royalties from commercial sales of Gallipoli Rosemary were received in 2007.

## 2008 - 2012

11<sup>th</sup> February 2010 TREENET formally lends its support for the development and promotion of the TREENET Inlet.

At a Special General Meeting convened on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2012, and in response to legal advice, an amended Constitution was adopted. The wording of an additional clause (3.2.3) was deemed to better reflect the value and importance of TREENET's charitable status, capacity and probity for attracting Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) donations through the Avenues of Honour Project.

## 2013 - 2020

1<sup>st</sup> January 2013, Glenn Williams is appointed the new Director, TREENET; David Lawry assumes the role of Director, Avenues of Honour Project.

That same year, a new, interactive wiki-style website for Avenues of Honour is launched, to increase community outreach and public access to data.

In 2015 TREENET launched its TREENET and Avenues of Honour Facebook pages.

In 2017, TREENET'S new (and current) website structure was launched.

In 2017, the new Avenues of Honour (and current) website was launched.

July 2017 TREENET initiated a national trials proposal to stimulate the sharing of ideas amongst council practitioners and other stakeholders, with a focus on engineered spaces for trees in paved urban areas. In July 2018 a 'self-populating' Case Studies portal was created on the website, to showcase existing and planned installations. An additional phase to scope models for designated TREENET trials for structured research is considered.

November 2018 Glenn Williams and David Lawry travel to the Vosges region in France, to present at the first International Symposium "Tree Avenues – from war to peace". Important contacts were established during site visits along the Western Front region.

During September 2020, directed by the COVID-19 pandemic circumstances, a successful month-long and completely virtual, online "21<sup>st</sup> National Street Tree Symposium – Urban Forest Festival" was held, in lieu of the traditional 2-day physically attended, annual Symposium. This has inspired a concept of conducting a hybrid event in September 2021.





## Summary of Report Card survey of Advisory Board and Members 2019-2020

### How are we performing?

Topic	Performance	Importance
Education – Symposium and online resources	★★★★★	★★★★
Projects – Avenues of Honour	★★★★★	★★★★
Research – Street tree species trials resources	★★★	★★★★★
Research – Water Sensitive Urban Design resources	★★★★	★★★★
Research – Engineered spaces for growing trees in paved areas	★★★★	★★★★★

### What could we do better?

Topic	
Education/Awareness	<b>targeting broader</b> community <b>audience</b> , supporting community advocates for urban trees, get more active in social media
	Significantly more lobbying and education about the topical issues
	Expanding the Symposia audience – roadshow/going to the broader audience, outside Adelaide
	Regularly package existing Symposium resources into hot topic/info outreach
Research	Tackle important areas better
Best practice	Stronger lobbying <b>target audiences</b> re best practice
Marketing	Become associated with more than a once a year event
	Apply lessons from others in this field - Arbor Day Foundation etc.





## Target Audience

### State & Local Government Urban Planners (2)

### State & Local Government Engineers (equal 3)

State & Local Government Landscape Architects

### Local Government Mayors & Elected Members (equal 3)

State Government Members of Parliament

Nursery & Garden Industry

Consulting Arborists

Practicing Arborists

Civil Consultants & Contractors

Industry Associations

Research Scientists

Community Urban Forest Advocacy Groups

Education & Training Institutions

Which of these do you think is most important to our role in improving the urban forest

### Who is missing? And important?

Residents/community/ schools  
Urban ecologists, Health agencies  
All cultures  
Other Associations -  
local government, utility groups  
Media

How could TREENET better reach important target audiences?

Inviting and sharing more successes and case studies across topical issues  
Responding to media issues  
Contributing to other industry publications (PIA, IPWEA, AILA, etc.)  
Consultations through other professional institutions  
Regional outreach – workshops  
Packaging Symposium topics for promo (like the Bushfire response)  
Social media – simple TREENET messages

