



**Trees for Cities**

**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Trees have a role to play in cleaning London's air**

Urban trees play an important role in cleaning the air and making our communities healthier places to live.

Trees for Cities, an independent charity, specialises in planting trees and greening cities worldwide to help address local air pollution and other urban issues such as flooding. The charity's work is especially relevant given the Mayor's plans to publish a report revealing the true impact of London's polluted areas.

The charity adopts a strategic approach to planting trees to maximise their impact for schools, streets, parks and open spaces, and targets hotspots that face acute environmental stresses such as air pollution.

"Urban trees provide multiple benefits to local communities and environments. They can play an important contributory role in addressing local air pollution and other worsening urban issues such as flooding and the urban heat island effect. Trees should be part of a multi-faceted approach to tackling air pollution, helping to underpin the required essential reforms to transport policies within the capital." **said David Elliott, Chief Executive from Trees for Cities.**

The report also highlights that 433 of London's 1,777 primary schools are in areas where pollution breached the EU Limits for NO<sub>2</sub>. **Copenhagen Primary School** in Islington, being among the 20 schools in the highest levels in London, has demonstrated forward-thinking by taking the initiative to improve their local environment for their pupils with an Edible Playground and rooftop garden, created by Trees for Cities.

"The recent report on pollution levels near our school is something we are taking very seriously, alongside lobbying to reduce the causes of these pollutants and also investigating solutions to reducing air pollutant levels around the school. We have already worked with Trees for Cities to build two edible playgrounds, which are a wonderful learning environment for inner city children, as well as a powerful tool to strengthen and enrich the learning experiences beyond the classroom. We would like to motivate our children to tackle local and global issues in a coherent way", **Said Harsha Patel, Head Teacher of Copenhagen Primary School**

The school is now looking to expand this to the planting of trees and plants around the school perimeter, tracking the effect of pollution levels in the school. If successful, similar schemes could be used city wide. If any business or organisations would like to help, please get in touch with the School or Trees for Cities.

**Notes to Editors - Media Contacts:**

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**Trees for Cities** is the only charity working on an international scale specialising in planting urban trees and providing volunteering opportunities to bring local people together. We are a game-changing, ambitious organisation that sets the standard for urban forestry worldwide. Our groundbreaking Edible Playground programmes inspire children to grow and eat good food, and create a lifelong connection with nature.

Since we started in 1993, we've engaged over 70,000 people to plant over 600,000 trees cities worldwide. We plant trees in parks, streets, schools and housing estates.

([www.treesforcities.org](http://www.treesforcities.org))

**Edible Playgrounds** transform areas in school grounds into vibrant outdoor spaces that excite and teach children about growing and eating healthy food. By instilling healthy eating habits at an early age, they help tackle obesity, food poverty and lack of access to nature head on, and provide a platform for fun and engaging lessons that support the school curriculum.

Edible Playgrounds is a programme led by Trees for Cities who have been working in schools to plant fruit and nut trees for over 10 years.

An Edible Playground typically includes raised beds, a greenhouse, a tool shed and tools for children, wormery, compost area, fruit trees, fruit and vegetable plants and an irrigation system. The school is also supported for 12 months post build with capacity building, including management planning and teacher training.

[www.edibleplaygrounds.org](http://www.edibleplaygrounds.org)