

Greening the Private Realm

planning and policy levers
available to local governments to
drive greening of private property

Good Data but with limited powers

Mayor of Unley Michael Hewitson AM
August 11th 2022 Webinar - Greening the
Private Realm ICLEI Oceania



The problem in 2022

How to Regain Unley's Trees?

- Target tree canopy is 31%
- On private land we have increased from 21.26% to 22.34%
- But we are removing two trees for every one we plant on Council Land.







	Average Private Property Coverage 2021
22.34%	
	Average Private Property Coverage 2018
21.26%	

Power, Solutions and will to act

- Council can inform educate and provide incentives ...
- Council can provide rate reductions as financial incentives
- Council cannot control the planning code or run a tree land offset fund without Ministerial approval

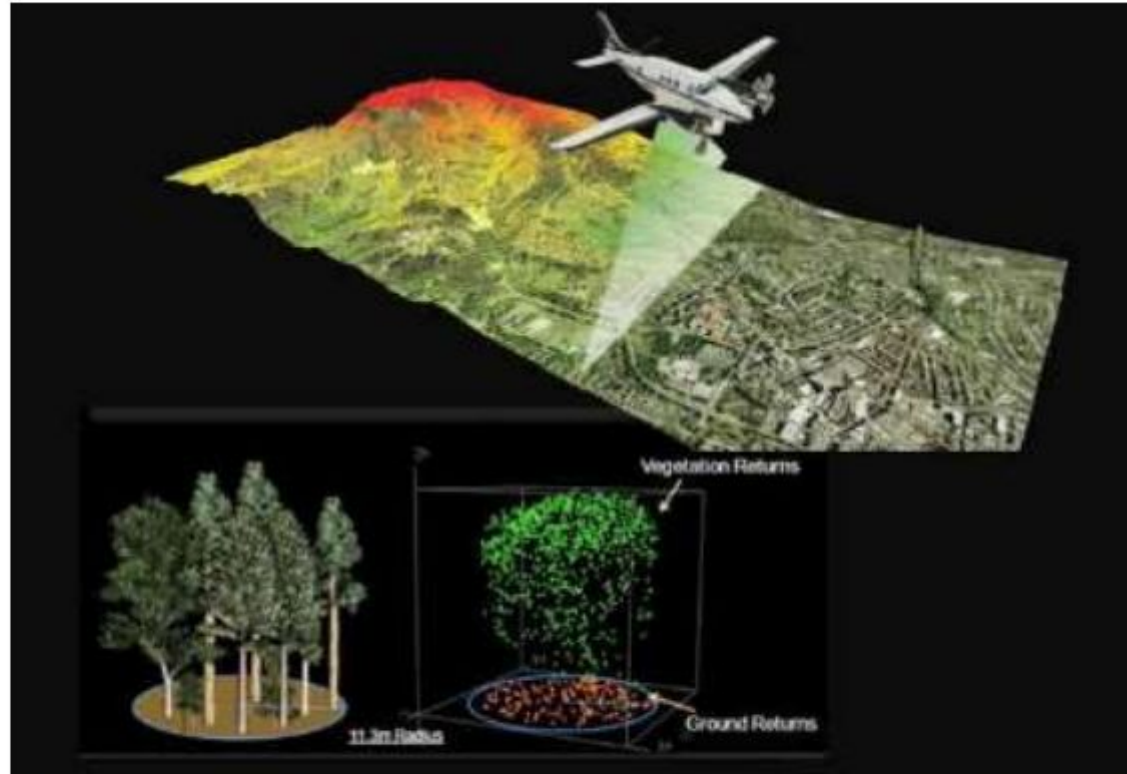


Planning and Policy Levers

1. The power of information
 2. To inform every citizen and resident of Unley of their tree canopy cover over time.
 3. To inform State Government with accurate data down to the 10cms the impact of new developments
 4. To inform Council of the opportunities to provide incentives to encourage planting on private property.
 1. To be able to apply financial incentives for owners to plant or keep trees.... e.g., rate rebates
 2. To be able to develop policies for new developments that encourage tree retention and planting.
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Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR)

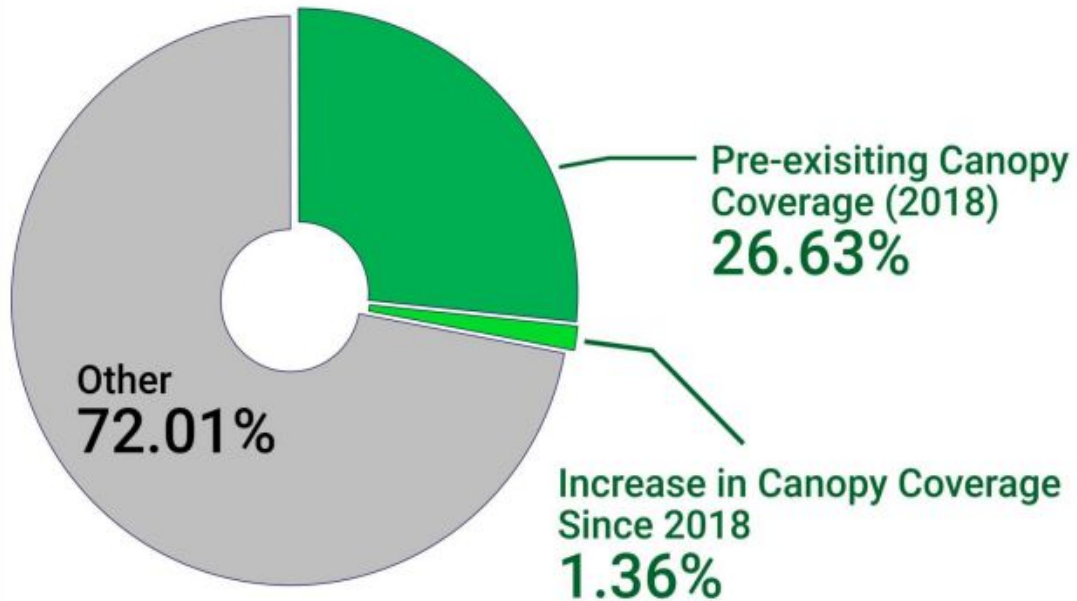
- 3D image of landscape from measuring laser pulses from a plane.
- 2021 data recaptured a full LiDAR derived tree canopy assessment using same methods and definitions as 2018 to provide an updated dataset.



Illustrative process and results of a canopy cover assessment using LiDAR (LGA, 2019)

Results Comparing 2021 with 2018 Fool's GOLD medal, real bronze medal

City of Unley Total Tree Canopy Coverage 2021
27.99%



Average Property Canopy Coverage 2021

22.82%



Average Property Canopy Coverage 2018

21.69%

Overall Property Canopy Coverage Increase
(2018 to 2021)



5.19%

BRONZE medal incentives work eg

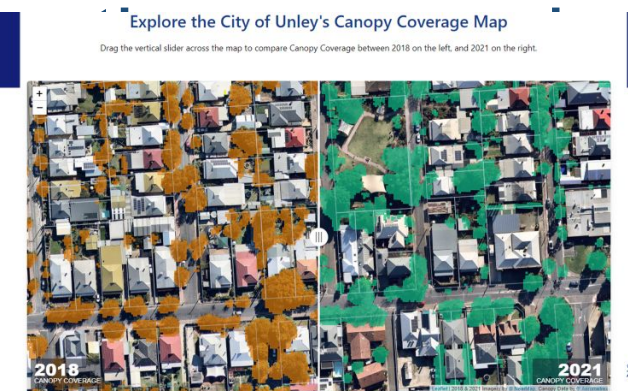


- We have increased canopy cover on private property
- We have offered free tree giveaways
- We have run an \$80 tree canopy voucher
 - Three draws in the suburbs with the lowest canopy
 - Two draws for middling and
 - One draw for the highest.
- **Stu writes,** Just a quick email to thank Unley Council for the great initiative with the tree voucher competition. We now have a 4m, endemic to this local area beautiful tree (40m). I have more space available for future tree voucher competitions...

Bronze medal Fly over Unley



- **The power of informing**
- The % of tree canopy cover is on quarterly rates notices
- This is part of our work to help keep Unley leafy for future generations through the Tree Strategy.
- AND.....On our website you can explore fly over Unley or type in your address



Explore the City of Unley's Canopy Coverage Map

Drag the vertical slider across the map to compare Canopy Coverage between 2018 on the left, and 2021 on the right.

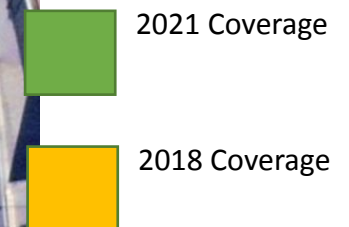


We Apply the Results to our Rates and Property Data

- Use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to overlay each LIDAR dataset to the property data
- Perform analysis to:
 - Determine Area of each property
 - Area of 2018 Canopy Coverage
 - Area of 2021 Canopy Coverage
 - Change across each rateable property



2018 Canopy Coverage: 230sqm (42.4%)
2021 Canopy Coverage: 48sqm (8.93%)
Property Area: 543sqm
Canopy Change: **Loss**
% Change : **78.92%** Decrease



Change Detection

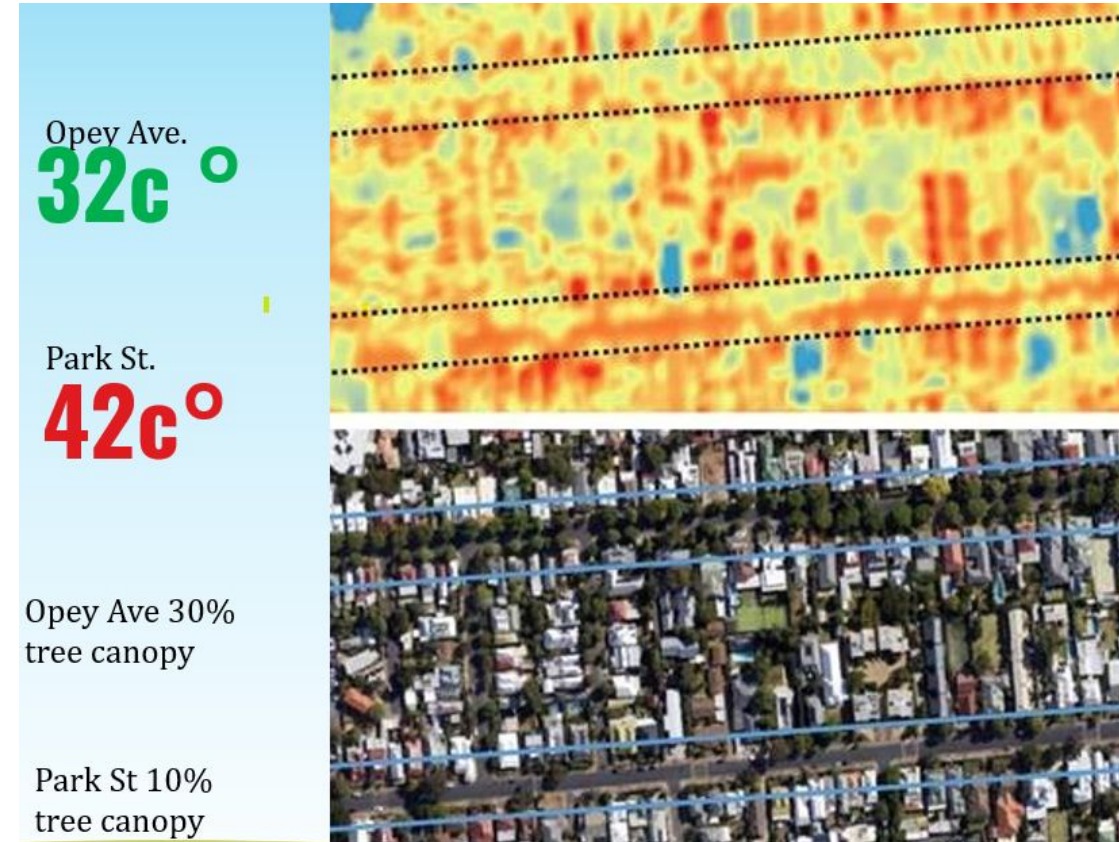


Summary July 2022

- Excellent dataset to 10cm resolution.
- Overall increase, particularly on Council owned land.
- Increase is mostly from established trees growing bigger.
- Losing more trees than new trees being planted.
- Present. Total city is 1,429 Ha
- Total tree canopy is 28% 400 Ha
- Annual loss on Private land 4 Ha
- Annually 200 new developments remove 2 Ha.

If we do not come up with new incentives

- With an annual deficit of 4 Ha our children in their 50's will cook with tree cover below 13% across the city.
- Western Sydney Suburbs with 9% cover are 10°C hotter than suburbs with 30% cover.
- We have a heat map of two streets in Unley, one 42° and the next 32°C



Proposed New Development offsets

- If a new development increases the built footprint
- And has less than 15% tree canopy cover
- Owners pay higher rates (10-15%) until >15% is achieved
- The money goes into a tree land fund
- This needs approval of the State Minister of Planning.

New Developments Offset fund progress

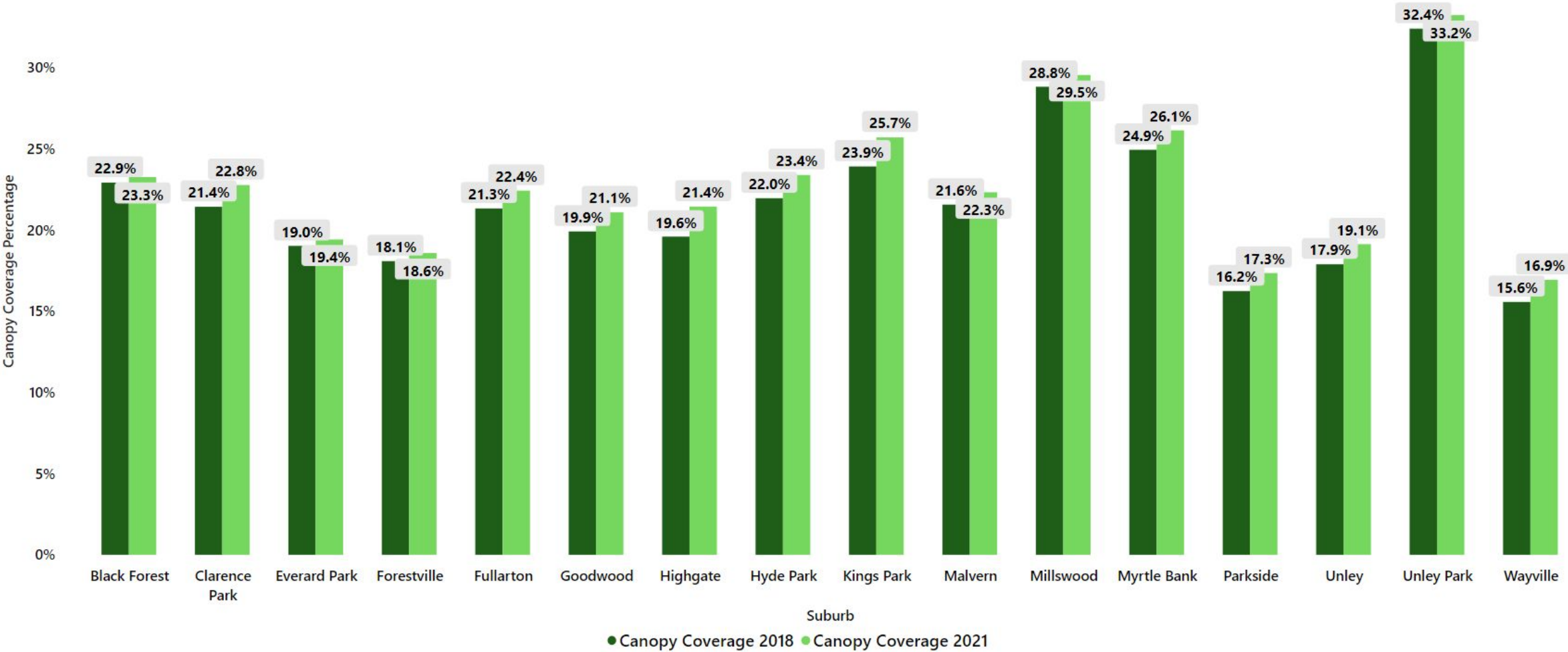
- State Government controls planning rules
- We require the Minister for Planning to approve an Unley Council tree land offset Fund
- New Labor Minister asked Council for a letter of support from the opposition. The shadow cabinet now supports.
- Council seeks Minister's support for Unley to consult our local community...
- We seek a 10-year trial, and the data is to be shared

Other Incentives

- Council elections take place in October 2022
- 2 Ha per annum is the remaining gap if the new development offset fund is approved.
- Council voted against consulting with our community on rate incentives for existing property owners to have a rebate if they had a certain % canopy cover.
 - One proposal was for a 2% rate rebate if your property exceeded the average % cover for the rate in your suburb.

Results – Private Land Per Suburb

Average Private Land Canopy Coverage for Properties Per Suburb



Conclusions

- Unley Council has developed the capacity to develop new incentive ideas including the power to act because of the outstanding IT work of our staff.
- Some ideas can be politically undermined by describing incentives as financial penalties for not having tree canopy cover on your own property.
- The offset fund for new developments has no retrospective implications because under the new code every new development can grow the trees that are required to be planted to achieve the 15% canopy cover.
- Without new developments having a mandated 15% tree canopy or paying into an offset fund Unley tree canopy must fall.

The end

Michael

Mayor Michael Hewitson AM

Unley

