

New London Trees | Connecting Canopies

Maggie Redfern: Urban forestry is about creating life for the trees, creating life for the pollinators. It's about creating a living landscape. In New London we have not that many trees. We actually have the lowest percentage of tree canopy cover of any city or town in the state of Connecticut. Upwards of 30% of our tree canopy has been lost. The historic postcards of New London are a wonderful vision for our future in a way that we could have streets that are lined with trees.

The roots of New London trees begin. I'll say in about 2018, this group of people that came together at City Hall to talk about protecting and preserving our existing tree canopy, that foundation, and building the community support around advocating for trees and planting trees. Maintaining those trees is what we're about and what we enjoy doing.

Paloma Doyle: I got involved with the organization as a student intern and have stuck with it throughout my time here at the college.

It was really amazing to like, get to be a student and also engage other students in the work. And I was able to teach my college peers how to do a tree inventory, how do I do trees, how to knock on doors and and ask people if they want trees and speak to them about the benefits of trees.

We have this inventory that we're able to use to identify the locations, but we rely a lot on the residents for helping us get the trees in the ground in these areas of New London that need it the most. I think it's really amazing how we're able to bring so many people into making that happen, but also to actually implementing it.

We were able to distribute a lot of trees to residents of New London to plant in their front yards, their backyard and even some school grounds.

Kathleen Barrett: Going with native trees is really important. They last longer. They do more for the environment. They look more beautiful. They're just gorgeous. It's good for the environment. It's good for people. And we've just found that doing these kinds of projects brings people together.

Maggie Redfern: My hopes for the future of urban forestry in New London would be to protect and preserve the trees that we already have growing in the city, so that they can become even bigger and create more shade and more canopy for our city.

Paloma Doyle: We all deserve access to green space and to beautiful trees that shade our streets. I think what I would really like for people to take away from the work that New London Trees does, is that our urban forest is for them, and to be part of this mission of making our city more beautiful and more open and more resilient.

Get outside and enjoy the space that we have here in New London because it's something really special.