

UK TREE EQUITY SCORE 2026

Tree Canopy Cover Update Guide

Understanding the 2026 tree canopy data update

Updated tree canopy cover data and Tree Equity Scores are now available for some UK communities. Learn what changed, which areas were updated, and how to interpret differences between the 2023 and 2026 datasets.



How is tree canopy measured?

Tree canopy cover data is provided by Google Environmental Insights Explorer and derived from high-resolution aerial imagery using machine learning. The model classifies each pixel as either tree or non-tree. Tree canopy cover estimates are calculated as the percentage of land area covered by trees (excluding water).

UK tree cover imagery is not collected uniformly or at the same time. As a result, tree canopy estimates for the pixels within a given Lower Super Output Area (LSOA), Super Output Area (SOA), or Data Zone may be based on imagery captured on different dates. The model selects the highest-quality imagery available for each area, prioritising quality over recentness. As a result, the dataset may include imagery from different years.



Which areas were updated?

Tree Equity Scores were only recalculated in areas where newer imagery was available during the April 2025 tree canopy model run. Areas without newer imagery retained their previous tree canopy estimates and Tree Equity Scores.

Overall, 51% of UK LSOAs, SOAs, and Data Zones were updated using newer imagery. Coverage varied by country, ranging from 19% in Wales, 28% in Scotland, 48% in Northern Ireland, and 56% in England.

Tree canopy estimates are reported at the LSOA, SOA, and Data Zone level and measure overall canopy cover within an area. They do not track individual tree planting, tree loss, or canopy growth. As a result, changes in tree canopy cover represent net change across the entire area rather than changes to individual trees.

What is Tree Equity Score UK? Tree Equity Score UK is a map-based application that was created to help address disparities in urban tree distribution by identifying the areas in greatest need of people-focused investment in trees. Anyone can use UK Tree Equity Score to see whether the critical benefits of urban tree canopy cover are reaching those who need them most—communities in tree-poor neighbourhoods who are disproportionately affected by environmental hazards like extreme heat and pollution.

How is Tree Equity measured? Tree Equity Score combines information from a variety of sources to create a single measure from 0 to 100. The lower the score, the greater the need for investment.

Explore Tree Equity Score UK → <https://uk.treeequityscore.org/>



How can I tell whether my area was updated?

When using the Tree Equity Score UK tool, you may notice that tree canopy cover estimates and Tree Equity Scores have changed in areas you are familiar with. For a more systematic view, you can download the 2026 Tree Equity Score dataset for your country or for the UK from the data downloads located at <https://uk.treeequityscore.org/>

The dataset includes a field called **canopysrc** (canopy source):

- **Google 2025** — Tree canopy cover estimates are based on imagery processed in April 2025. Tree Equity Scores were recalculated using the updated tree canopy data (n = 17,610).
- **Google 2023** — Tree canopy cover estimates are based on imagery processed in May 2023. No newer Google imagery was available, so Tree Equity Scores remain unchanged (n = 16,975).
- **i-Tree Canopy 2023** — Google imagery was unavailable for this area. Tree canopy cover estimates and Tree Equity Scores continue to be based on i-Tree Canopy data (n = 290).



How do I interpret a change in tree canopy cover or Tree Equity Score?

If your tree canopy cover or Tree Equity Score changed, it is best interpreted as a refinement to the underlying tree canopy estimate rather than evidence of definitive change in tree canopy cover. The change value may reflect real net gains or losses in tree canopy cover, but the relatively short time period between updates means it may not be a strong indicator of tree canopy trends at this stage.

A change in tree canopy cover may reflect:

- real net changes in tree canopy cover within the area.
- improved imagery quality that allows tree canopy to be measured more accurately.
- differences in when imagery was collected.

As new imagery continues to become available, we will evaluate how tree canopy estimates change over successive updates to determine the cadence at which meaningful changes in tree canopy cover occur.



What does it mean if tree canopy cover or a Tree Equity Score did not change?

If your tree canopy cover or Tree Equity Score did not change, newer imagery was likely unavailable for your area and the previous values were retained. Unchanged values may also occur in areas with newer imagery if the updated tree canopy estimate remained the same.



Can I compare old and new values?

Yes. To compare values, download both the 2023 and 2026 datasets and compare tree canopy cover and Tree Equity Scores for any LSOAs, SOAs, and Data Zones tagged with a “**Google 2025**” tree canopy source (canopysrc). These flags indicate neighbourhoods where new canopy became available.

