

# Policy for Trees on Public Land

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Hound Parish Council is committed to protecting, improving and developing the Council's tree stock in public places. This will be achieved in two main ways:

- through the adoption of a continuous programme of tree survey and maintenance; and
- through seeking a continuous improvement in the quality and quantity of trees on public land. A range of native species will be selected for new and replacement planting taking into account their suitability to each site.

The Council's priority in the management of the Parishes trees will be that of public safety. Where a tree constitutes a demonstrable hazard to people or property, then the appropriate works will be carried out as a matter of urgency to render the tree safe.

The Council is committed to maintaining the health and longevity of trees through appropriate management. Appropriate works will be undertaken on unhealthy trees where they are threatened by disease or instability.

Trees on public land will be encouraged to develop as well balanced individuals of a natural form characteristic of their particular species. Works on such trees will be carried out to the highest standards of Arboricultural practice and in accordance with all relevant health and safety legislation. The Council will expect all tree works to be carried out to at least BS 3998, 1989 standards, and will produce a detailed specification for all tree works and maintain a select list of suitable Arboricultural contractors.

The Council will be guided by Hampshire County Council's County Surveyor's Highway Maintenance Management Plan when dealing with trees on the highway.

The Council will not unless legally obliged to do so undertake works to otherwise healthy and well-formed trees for reasons of:

- Branches overhanging adjacent property
- Size
- Shedding of leaf, seed, twig or flower litter
- Shading of daylight
- Interference with transmitted signals
- Honeydew exudation
- Reduced security by virtue of concealment or
- Alleged root damage to property

Under Common Law, providing there is no protection on the tree (TPO, Conservation area) then landowners may prune unprotected trees or hedges overhanging their land as far as their boundary without the consent of the land owner, but you must not trespass on to your neighbour's land to do this. In addition you must offer to return the timber and any

fruit attached or which has fallen on to your land. However, you may become liable for criminal damage if these works cause the tree to die or become dangerous.

The Council can supply a list of suitable contractors for this type of work. It is the landowner's responsibility to ensure that a tree is not protected in any way before carrying out or authorising such works.

The Council will ensure that trees on public land are retained wherever possible and are given appropriate protection from the effects of development and construction activities including the installation of underground utilities.

The Council will ensure that all woodlands on public land are managed appropriately in accordance with accepted forestry practices and traditional methods of woodland management and with respect for their value as important landscape features, wildlife habitats and recreational amenities.

The Council will notify local residents in advance where major tree works are required. A clear explanation will be given as to why such works are necessary.

The Council will market all usable timber which arises from tree works where it is cost effective to do so.

The Council will endeavour to take all possible action if Council tree stock on public land are trimmed or cut down without permission.

**David Nevin  
Parish Clerk**

