



FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Date: 7 February 2024

Introduction

This policy identifies the Parish Council's approach to the management of trees on land owned by the council.

It is intended to act as a point of reference for the public, councillors and council employees to ensure a clear, consistent and structured approach to the management of trees. The council will operate tree management based on a set of five principles:

1. Trees provide a wide variety of benefits to society
2. Trees are living organisms that naturally lose branches or fall
3. The overall risk to the public is extremely low
4. The owners of trees have a legal duty of care
5. Tree owners should take a balanced and proportionate approach to tree safety management

Inspection Schedule

The following inspections will be undertaken:

1. A formal three year inspection will be carried out by an Arboricultural Consultant appointed by the council.
2. Ad-hoc inspections will be carried out by the Parish Council's Tree Warden. This inspection will be a visual inspection from ground level only following a report by a member of the public or by request by the Clerk.

Reporting Requirements

1. All remedial work identified in the formal survey and subsequently authorised by the council will be undertaken.
2. Any problems identified by members of the council in the yearly or ad-hoc inspections will be reported to the next meeting of the council. If deemed appropriate, a formal survey by an Arboricultural Consultant will be arranged and/or quote(s) will be obtained for the remedial work to be undertaken, such quote(s) to be considered by the council at the following meeting.
3. If any problems are identified in the yearly or ad-hoc inspections, or which are reported to the Clerk by a member of the public, are considered by the Chairman or the Clerk to require urgent attention, the Clerk will obtain an quote for remedial work to be undertaken as soon as possible.

Tree Work

The council will allocate sufficient resources to ensure that it is able to manage the trees that it owns. The council will carry out work in the following circumstances:

- Where there is deemed to be significant risk to the public
- Where there is deemed to be significant risk to property
- To comply with the Highways Act 1980 Section 154
- Where work is required to prolong life or promote development of good tree structure
- Where a dead, dying, diseased or otherwise dangerous tree is identified

The council will not fell or prune trees on council owned land:

- Solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/or seasonal phenomena
- For reasons of light
- For reasons of loss of view
- For the reason that they are causing interference with television or satellite reception, unless complainants have taken other measures to improve reception without success and it can be proven that pruning will improve reception.

Consideration will always be given to the impact of any tree pruning or felling on local wildlife. Tree pruning or felling will only take place outside the bird nesting season of March to August, unless matters of public safety dictate otherwise.

Dead wood will be left standing or on the ground in habitat piles wherever possible.

In considering any action the council will take account of the amenity value of the trees concerned.

Tree pruning will only be undertaken where there is sound justification for the work.

Where pruning is undertaken it will be in accordance with good arboriculture practice to ensure minimum harm to the tree and every effort will be made to ensure the general shape and character of each tree is retained.

The council will give consideration to any complaints and requests regarding trees on council owned property taking into account its tree management policy and/or advice from an Arboricultural Consultant.

Trees that have a TPO (Tree Preservation Order) or are in a Conservation Area require the approval of Uttlesford District Council for any works to be undertaken. Trees in the Churchyard require permission from Chelmsford Diocese or the Archdeacon.

Carrying out tree works yourself and pruning guidance

In common law, a property owner can cut back overhanging branches to the boundary of his / her property. The council would usually have no objection to property owners carrying out tree work or engaging a contractor at their own expense, provided that:

- If access to Parish Council land or to a tree on that land is required Parish Council permission must be sought
- The tree is not situated in a Conservation area or protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- Any work done to a tree is not detrimental to its health or stability; for their own protection members of the public are advised to obtain advice from an Arboricultural Consultant
- Any arisings created by the tree pruning work are disposed of correctly and not left on the

council's land

- That any work is carried out to an acceptable standard
- The property owner notifies the council (before the work begins) of the proposed work and commencement date.

Adopted at the Council meeting held on: 7 February 2024

Minute Reference: 24/35

Next Review Due: February 2027