

Broadhempston Parish Council

Tree Management Policy

Introduction

This policy identifies the parish council's approach to the management of trees on land it owns. It is intended to act as a point of reference for the public, councillors and the clerk to ensure a clear, consistent, and structured approach to the management of trees.

As a landowner, Broadhempston Parish Council has a duty of care to ensure that all of the trees on its land are kept in an acceptable condition and do not put persons and property at unreasonable risk.

Policy

Inspections of trees will be carried out by a qualified arboriculturist on all land owned by the parish council. The frequency will be as per the industry standard and be a minimum of:

- Trees in high-risk areas - ie the small playing field, the community orchard, in the allotment field or near roads – every three years. Initially this will apply to the small playing field only with other areas being added as trees in those areas mature.
- Trees in medium risk areas – ie near to footpaths where pedestrian footfall is low – every five years.
- Trees in low-risk areas – ie near non-pedestrian areas – every seven years.

Save for the purposes of dealing with proven cases of harm to property, which would otherwise place undue financial pressure on the council, or where it would be good arboriculture practice to ensure the long-term amenity of trees which are of significant amenity value, only dead, dying, diseased or dangerous trees will be removed or made safe, whichever is deemed necessary.

A programme of tree work will be maintained, based on the inspections and with an emphasis on planned rather than reactive tree maintenance. Where necessary, work will be considered in response to reports and complaints in conjunction with recommendations from an appointed arboriculturist.

The parish council will allocate sufficient financial resources to ensure that it is able to manage the trees that it owns.

Consideration will always be given to the impact of any tree pruning or felling on local wildlife. Tree work will be scheduled to take place in periods where the impact on local wildlife is minimised. Opportunities in the vicinity, or elsewhere within the parish, to provide wildlife habitats and reuse/ recycle the waste wood produced will be pursued whenever practicable.

The council will ensure all tree works are carried out to the most up to date and relevant British Standards for Tree Work. 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 trees and every effort will be made to ensure the general shape and character of each tree is retained.

The council will not:

- Fell or prune trees on council owned land solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/ or seasonal phenomena.
- Fell or prune trees for reasons of light.
- Fell or prune trees solely because 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.
- Fell or prune trees to improve the view from a property.
- Remove overhanging branches that aren't touching property.

The council will consider works to:

- Ensure that there are clear site lines at junctions and access points, and for traffic signals and street signs.
- Minimise trip hazards.
- Remove the nuisance of a tree touching a property.
- Reduce interference with telephone wires (pruning only) when requested by a utility company.

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

The council will give consideration to any complaints or requests regarding trees on council-owned property, taking into account its tree management policy and/ or advice from a qualified arboriculture expert.

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