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TREE POLICY

Introduction

Trees make a significant contribution to the character and biodiversity of the local landscape. They provide valuable habitats for wildlife and important environmental benefits, including improved air quality. Nuthurst Parish Council is committed to preserving and maintaining its trees for the benefit of current and future generations.

This policy sets out the Council's approach to the management of trees located on land owned or maintained by Nuthurst Parish Council. Trees situated on land owned by other local authorities, organisations, or private individuals remain the responsibility of those respective parties.

Nuthurst Parish Council is responsible for trees located at:

- Around the perimeter of Mannings Heath Recreation Ground
- The grassed area between Church Road and Lime Kiln Road
- The north side of the A281 Brighton Road, Monks Gate
- St Andrew's Church, Nuthurst (north-east corner)
- The area adjacent to the T-junction of Nuthurst Road and Copsale Road
- The grassed area adjacent to the Downs Link car park off Copsale Road

The Council has a duty of care to ensure that trees are maintained in a safe condition. Failure to take reasonable care may result in liability where a tree causes injury or damage.

Trees located within or adjacent to the public highway, including roadside verges, are generally the responsibility of the relevant higher authority. Any concerns regarding such trees should be reported via the appropriate reporting system.

This policy applies to trees and hedgerows, with particular focus on trees exceeding 8 cm in diameter measured at 1.5 metres above ground level.

Inspection Schedule

The following inspection regime will be implemented:

1. Triennial Inspection

A detailed inspection will be carried out every three years by a qualified Arboricultural Consultant or Tree Surgeon appointed by the Council.

2. Quarterly Inspection

A visual inspection from ground level will be carried out quarterly by the Council's appointed person responsible for tree management.

Reporting Requirements

- The triennial inspection will be commissioned in April of the relevant year. The resulting report will be presented at the next available Council meeting.
- Any recommended remedial works will be prioritised and carried out in accordance with the report, subject to Council approval.

- Issues identified during quarterly inspections will be reported to the next Council meeting. Where necessary, quotations for remedial works will be obtained and considered at a subsequent meeting.
- Where issues require urgent attention, the Clerk will obtain a quotation as soon as practicable. Approval for such works may be granted by the Chair and the Councillor responsible for trees.

Maintenance

The Council operates a presumption in favour of tree retention and will undertake only essential or minimal works necessary to ensure public safety and tree health.

Tree works will be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- Where a tree has been identified as hazardous or poses an immediate risk
- Where works are necessary to support the long-term health and structural integrity of the tree
- To address an actionable nuisance, such as branches in direct contact with buildings (e.g. walls, windows, or gutters)
- Where established management practices require repeat works (e.g. pollarding or crown reduction)
- Where a tree obstructs a designated footpath, bridleway, or highway

The ecological impact of all works will be carefully considered, and disturbance to wildlife will be minimised wherever possible.

Where appropriate, deadwood and fallen timber will be retained on site for biodiversity purposes unless removal is justified on safety or environmental grounds.

All works will:

- Be carried out by a suitably qualified Tree Surgeon appointed by the Council
- Comply with BS 3998:2010 – Recommendations for Tree Work (and any subsequent revisions)
- Be undertaken only with prior Council approval and in accordance with professional advice

Works Not Undertaken by the Council

Nuthurst Parish Council is not obliged to carry out the following works to trees on its land:

- Pruning branches overhanging private property
- Reducing tree height or “topping” to improve light levels
- Removing trees or branches to improve views or television reception
- Clearing leaves, sap (honeydew), or other minor natural debris
- Removing roots from drains or repairing structural damage unless the tree is clearly demonstrated to be the primary cause
- Undertaking works to prevent potential root damage
- Pruning branches that are near to, but not in direct contact with, structures
- Removing branches or trees to deter wildlife such as birds or squirrels

Document Control

Version	Adopted By	Adoption Date	Review Date	Notes
1.0	Full Council	20 May 2026	May 2027	New
1.1	Full Council	May 2026	May 2027	Tree Policy

This policy shall be reviewed annually or earlier in response to changes in legislation, guidance, or Council procedures.