

BISHOPSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL

POLICY FOR COUNCIL OWNED TREES

1. Bishopstoke Parish Council is responsible for the management of all trees located on land it owns and for those it has planted on highway verges. These include at the top of Underwood Road (two Yew), where Alan Drayton Way joins the west end of Fair Oak Road (two Hornbeams), either side of Sedgwick Road/Stoke Park Road junction (two Scots Pine), either side of Whalesmead Road/Whalesmead Close junction (two Hornbeams) and either side of the Weavills Road /Orchard Avenue junction (two Chanticleers).
2. The Council has a statutory duty of care under the Health and Safety Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Acts 1954 and 1984 to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that its trees are safe and do not pose a danger to the public.
3. The Council is committed to protecting its tree stock in public places. This will be achieved by a continuous programme of tree survey and maintenance and selecting a range of tree species for new and replacement planting taking into account their suitability for each site. The Council will strive to replace two trees for each one removed.
4. The Council's priority in the management of its trees will be that of public safety whilst maintaining the health and longevity of the trees. Where a tree constitutes a demonstrable hazard to people or property the appropriate work will be undertaken to minimise or remove the hazard.
5. Trees on public land will be encouraged through minimal intervention to develop in a natural form characteristic of their species. Work on trees will be carried out to the highest standards of arboricultural practice and contractors will be required to comply with all relevant health and safety legislation.
6. The Council will not unless legally obliged to do so undertake works to otherwise healthy and well-formed trees for reasons of –

Overhanging branches

Size and height

Shedding of leaf, seed, fir, cone, twig, flower, litter, fruit debris and general vegetation detritus

Loss of light or shading of gardens, rooms or solar panels and the like

Interference with transmitted signals

Reduced security by virtue of concealment or reduced visibility

Bird droppings and vermin

Interference with BT and electricity company services

Vandalism eg thrown apples

Hayfever/allergies

Dampness, algae or moss

To create or reinstate private views

7. Under Common Law, provided the tree is not subject to a preservation order, or within the conservation area, landowners may prune unprotected trees or hedges overhanging their land as far as their boundary without the consent of the tree or hedge owner. If the resultant works cause instability or lead to a decline or death of a tree, liability will attach to the person arranging or carrying out the work. They may not trespass on neighbouring land to carry out the work and must offer to return the cut material (arising). However, the Council will not accept arisings from work on its trees and these should be disposed of responsibly; dumping on Council land is fly-tipping and constitutes an offence.
8. The Council will ensure that trees on its land are retained where-ever possible and given appropriate protection from the effects of development and construction activities including the installation of underground facilities.
9. Were possible, the Council will notify local residents in advance where major tree works will take place adjacent to residential properties.

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