

Tree Safety Management Policy

Loughton Town Council is committed to protecting, maintaining and enhancing the landscape and trees of Loughton, by working in partnership for the benefit of current and future generations, one of the key aims of the Community Tree Strategy for Loughton.

As a tree owner, we have a direct responsibility to ensure that our trees do not pose a danger to the public or property. To address this risk we have agreed this Tree Safety Management Policy.

The Policy will ensure that:

- an overall assessment of risk is completed to identify high, medium and low risk tree zones on all Town Council-owned land;
- a system of tree inspections is in operation in relation to the level of risk;
- a record of trees and inspections is retained;
- systems and processes are identified that control and mitigate risks as identified by the inspections;
- staff/contractors who carry out inspections are competent to do so and have received the appropriate level of training.
- all work identified through the inspection programme is undertaken by suitably qualified staff or contractors.
- The risk to life and property, as a result of tree deterioration, is kept to as low a level as is reasonably practicable through the operation of this policy.

Tree Maintenance

Any tree work will only be undertaken by the Town Council in accordance with the following priority list:

Priority 1 - Public Safety

Work which removes actual hazards to safeguard the public and property.

Priority 2 - Remedial/Preventative Works

Works to:

- a) remove potential hazards that may subsequently threaten public safety or property;
- b) prevent or minimise the effects of a tree on the structure of a property (e.g. preventative subsidence related work).

Priority 3 - Management of Veteran Trees

Where public safety is not compromised, work which:

- a) conserves trees with high ecological value and,
- b) preserves trees with significant local historical and/or aesthetic value.

Priority 4 - Young Tree Maintenance

The Town Council will undertake all work which:

- a) assists the establishment of young trees with significant life expectancy; and,
- b) enables new tree planting to reach its full potential.

Priority 5 - Nuisance Management

Remedial work where:

- i. trees are causing an actionable nuisance to a neighbouring property e.g. root/branch encroachment over property boundaries where damage has occurred or is likely to do so imminently.
- ii. a tree is thought to be causing a nuisance which does not threaten public safety or property, the Council will consider appropriate remedial works during the next programmed cyclic inspection of that tree.

The Town Council will **not** normally undertake one-off, reactive inspections to consider general nuisance issues such as: -

- Shade onto a garden or property;
- Deposits of seed/leaf litter;
- Tree is considered too large;
- Summer honeydew deposits;
- Droppings from roosting birds;
- TV reception interference.

However, where the neighbouring landowners are prepared to contribute to the cost of the works in this regard, consideration will be given to including such works into the planned schedule.

Adopted November 2014