



Bursledon Parish Council

TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted by Full Council October 2025

Next Review Date October 2028

POLICY STATEMENT

Trees, hedges, grass areas, and ditches are an important part of rural and urban landscapes. They provide vital habitats and food for wildlife, windbreaks in open areas, reduce pollution by cleaning the air, prevent flooding, help control extremes of temperature next to buildings, and assist with deadening traffic noise.

The Council is committed to a long-term strategy of planting, protecting, retaining, improving, and developing its stock of trees, hedges, shrubs within Bursledon. It will seek to continuously improve the quality and quantity of trees and vegetation within the Parish. Where replacement or new planting is required, it will encourage the planting of appropriate native species.

TREE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

A principle of English Common and Statute Law is that land and tree owners have a duty of care to visitors, residents, passers-by, and even trespassers on their land. The Council has a statutory duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Occupiers Liability Acts 1954 and 1984 to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable its trees are safe and not a danger to the public.

The Council will ensure that trees on Public Land are retained wherever possible and are given appropriate protection from the effects of commercial and residential development and construction activities, including installation of underground utilities, paths, and cycle ways.

The Council will avoid felling trees unless deemed necessary. Tree felling will usually be for health and safety reasons, or to prevent the spread of serious tree diseases and pests. The Council reserve the right to fell trees to enhance or maintain a habitat, to prevent overcrowding, to restore landscapes in line with a particular site management plan, or to remove a tree that is inappropriate to its location and has a significantly detrimental impact on the appearance or amenity of a site.

The main principles adopted by the Council for Tree Management are:

Wherever appropriate Trees will be retained.

Trees will be surveyed on a cyclical basis by a qualified Arborist.

Trees will be assessed on their likely risk to people or property.

Significant trees will be identified and recorded.

Where possible work will be undertaken outside of the main nature reproduction period – 1st March to 31st August.

Where possible residents of adjacent residential properties will be notified in advance when major tree works will take place.

The Council will not, unless legally obliged to do so, consider undertaking remedial works to otherwise healthy and well-formed trees.

TREE INSPECTIONS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS (Tree Surveys)

The Council has a planned inspection programme which ensures trees are inspected as often as is necessary. Inspections are undertaken by a Qualified Arborist who is a suitably experienced and competent person to undertake Tree Surveys based on a Risk Assessment Approach

CONTRACTORS FOR REMEDIAL WORK

The Council employs a different Qualified Arborist to undertake the necessary remedial works where it is not practical for the Council Ground staff to undertake the work.

The Council will ensure tree works are undertaken within professional industry guidelines.

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS (TPO) & CONSERVATION AREA

The Council will apply to the Local Planning Authority when remedial work is required on a Tree which it owns that has a TPO or is in the Conservation area.

TREE OWNERSHIP

Trees and vegetation within the Parish may be owned and managed and by the Parish Council, other Councils or may be privately owned. The Parish can only carry out work on trees and vegetation it owns.

OVER HANGING BRANCHES FROM COUNCIL TREES

Neighbours have a legal right to trim overhanging branches, up to their property boundaries but in doing so must not cause harm to the tree such as making it unbalanced.

Neighbours are required to contact the Council before attempting to undertake any such work and must seek permission through a planning application if the tree has a preservation order on it.

CUTTING OF TREES FROM PARISH LAND OR PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

The Council will enter discussion with Neighbours who wish to undertake work on their own trees which requires access from Parish land or Public Rights of Way. Neighbours should seek permission to do so before undertaking any work.