



Democratic Services

Location: Phase II
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**To: COUNCILLOR EDDIE LAVERY
CABINET MEMBER FOR RESIDENTS' SERVICES**

c.c. All Members of the Residents' Services Select Committee

c.c. Sophie Coughlan – Place Directorate

c.c. Perry Scott – Corporate Director of Place

Date: 23 June 2023

Non-Key Decision request

Form D

Tree Strategy 2023

Dear Cabinet Member

Attached is a report requesting that a decision be made by you as an individual Cabinet Member. Democratic Services confirm that this is not a key decision, as such, the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 notice period does not apply.

You should take a decision **on or after Monday 3 July 2023** in order to meet Constitutional requirements about publication of decisions that are to be made. You may wish to discuss the report with the Corporate Director before it is made. Please indicate your decision on the duplicate memo supplied, and return it to me when you have made your decision. I will then arrange for the formal notice of decision to be published.

Liz Penny
Democratic Services Officer

Title of Report: Tree Strategy 2023

Decision made:

Reasons for your decision: (e.g. as stated in report)

Alternatives considered and rejected: (e.g. as stated in report)

Signed Date.....

Cabinet Member for Residents' Services

Tree Strategy 2023

Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Residents' Services
Officer Contact(s)	Sophie Coughlan, Green Spaces
Papers with report	Appendix 1 – Tree Strategy

HEADLINES

Summary	The purpose of this report is to adopt the new Tree Strategy
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: An efficient, well-run, digital-enabled council working with partners to deliver services to improve the lives of all our residents This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Green and Sustainable Borough
Financial Cost	None at this stage
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee
Relevant Ward(s)	N/A

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services agrees to adopt the new Tree Strategy as policy and delegate authority to the Head of Green Spaces, in Consultation with the Cabinet Member for Residents' Services, to complete a review every three years and update the policy as required.

Reasons for recommendation

Currently the Council's tree stock is mainly managed on a reactive basis with best Arboricultural practice in mind but no set guidelines as to the criteria for completing tree work.

The Tree strategy includes clear and unambiguous policy information and guidance on how officers will manage the Borough's trees to ensure that the Council meets its duty of care and legal and health and safety obligations. It also provides key information for residents and other stakeholders including contractors.

A set policy will ensure our tree stock is managed efficiently and all enquiries are dealt with in a standardised manner.

Alternative options considered / risk management

The alternative is that we continue as we are with no set policy, managing our parks and highways' trees on a reactive basis. This does not use officers' time in an effective way and leads to some trees being inspected frequently and others not at all. This in turn leaves us vulnerable to more insurance claims and a higher volume of emergency tree work, which is not an effective use of our time or budget.

Select Committee comments

The Residents' Services Select Committee discussed the Tree Strategy on 19 January 2023 and recommended the inclusion of an additional section in relation to tree maintenance. The Tree Strategy was subsequently amended accordingly to incorporate the suggested changes.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Council recognises the value of its tree resource and understands that there are social, economic and environmental benefits to residents and visitors; these are increased by having a well-managed, age and species diverse tree stock. The proposed Tree Strategy sets out the Council's management aims and objectives. The Tree Strategy 2023 is attached in Appendix 1.

Inspection cycles

The Council aims to undertake walk-over inspections of trees in parks and open spaces every five years, noting works required in line with Green Flag management plans (for both Green Flag and non-Green Flag locations).

Highways trees will be inspected via a road hierarchy-based cycle.

Inspections of trees on housing estates are undertaken on a three-year cyclical basis. This inspection cycle has been in place for a number of years and is working well, with less resident enquiries, insurance claims and tree failure occurring within these areas.

With a set inspection cycle followed by work raised with our contractors in localised batches it will be easier for our contractors to stick to the priority levels set within their contract:

Category	Response time	Notes
Priority 1	7 days	
Priority 2	1 month	
Priority 3	2 months	
Emergency works	45 minutes	Office hours
Emergency works	90 minutes	Out of hours

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications emanating from this report; however, the adoption of this strategy is likely to require access to Capital funding for the planting of new trees. In addition to this, planting new trees may require a future uplift in revenue budgets for trees maintenance. However, with proactive management of the tree stock, there is an expectation that this can be contained within existing resources.

The final strategy will need to be reflected in the Council's MTFF process which will take into consideration the various funding streams available including the Council's general fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the availability of funding streams such as grants and Section 106.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities

The Tree Strategy has been written with the purpose of providing a clear guide of how the Council aims to manage its tree stock increasing the transparency of the service. It is also anticipated that a well-managed tree stock will result in a reduction in insurance claims and emergency tree work.

Consultation carried out or required

None.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concur with the Financial Implications set out above, noting there are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Legal

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Whenever necessary, legal advice is given in relation to specific issues as they arise to ensure that the Council always meets its legal obligations.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Tree Strategy 2023



TREE STRATEGY 2023

INTRODUCTION

The London Borough of Hillingdon is the second largest borough in Greater London and is responsible for over 24,000 trees on our streets and in parks, open spaces and woodlands. As one of London's greenest boroughs, Hillingdon currently holds 67 Green Flag awards, an illustration of the council's focus on excellence within its green spaces.

The council recognises the value of its tree resource and understands that there are social, economic and environmental benefits to residents and visitors. See Appendix A for a summary of the key benefits of the borough's trees. The council works to safeguard and maximise the many social, economic and environmental benefits that trees provide.

In 2021 the council adopted its Strategic Climate Action Plan where the maintenance of existing and the planting of new trees is key to enhancing biodiversity across the borough, particularly in urban environments and in offsetting carbon emissions. The council recognises that the tree canopy coverage across London is continually under threat and initiatives are already underway to address this across the borough.

This strategy includes clear and unambiguous policy information and guidance on how officers will manage the borough's trees to ensure that the council meets its duty of care and legal and health and safety obligations. It also provides key information for residents and other stakeholders including contractors.

This strategy has been informed by the following to reflect the councils' legal and statutory obligations in relation to managing trees which are in its area of control:

- The Highways Act 1980
- The Owners and Occupiers Liability Act 1957 & 1984.
- Environment Bill 2020
- Statutes such as The New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- The Forestry Act (1967)
- Biodiversity Duty: public authority duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity (2014)
- BS 3998 (2010) *Recommendations for Tree Work*
- The Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Causing damage to a roosting / nesting site is a criminal offence which can lead to imprisonment.
- The Hedgerow Regulations (1997)
- BS 5837 (2012): *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*
- The National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) Guidance
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

This strategy links to other council, national, regional and local policies and guidance including but not limited to:

- LBH Domestic Vehicle Footway Crossover Policy
- The England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024
- The National Planning Policy Framework and The London Plan
- The borough's Local Plan
- Air Quality Action Plan
- LBH Strategic Climate Action Plan
- National Joint Utilities Group Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees – Issue 2
- The National Planning Policy Framework (Planning Practice Guidance)

This strategy has been developed in consultation with the council's Arboricultural team and other relevant council departments including Highways and Planning and Insurance.

RESPONSIBILITY

The council will ensure that its trees are managed in accordance with this strategy to ensure it meets its legal and statutory responsibilities.

All officers, agents, partners and contractors of the council will be required to comply with this strategy and any associated guidance issued.

IMPLEMENTATION

All decisions and actions relating to the management of the borough's tree stock should be underpinned by this strategy.

This strategy will inform any relevant operational and delivery plans within the council.

This tree strategy will be referenced during the process of all planning applications, enquiries, full planning appeals, dropped kerb applications, subsidence claims, TPO compensation claims and the TPO appeals process.

The council's Highways team will contribute to the implementation of this strategy through its Highways operations, identifying and reporting empty tree pits or paving issues where they are unable to ramp over raised roots.

The Trees team will work collaboratively with Highways on any maintenance works or relevant projects where there is an overlap including dropped kerb works and roads

resurfacing to ensure that any necessary tree inspections are undertaken in advance of works and that any resulting tree works are fully co-ordinated.

When undertaking Highway works near to trees, all operatives must adhere to the guidelines as set out in the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 or subsequent legislation.

The Tenancy Management team will work closely with the Trees team when necessary to ensure effective tree management within the council's housing estates.

The Grounds Maintenance team and other teams such as Street Cleansing will report any tree concerns observed during their day-to-day activities around the borough.

Any deviation from this strategy must be approved in advance by the Corporate Director of Place.

POLICY STATEMENTS

The borough's trees will be maintained in accordance with the *British Standards for Tree Work BS 3998 (2010)* and other relevant legislation, statutory requirements and national, regional and local policies and guidance as set out in this document.

The maintenance of the borough's trees will be undertaken by suitably trained/experienced council officers and through the use of approved arboricultural term contractors.

The council will manage its trees to ensure it meets its legal responsibilities, including duty of care, and health and safety.

Historic vistas across the borough will be maintained through appropriate tree management and consideration.

The council and its contractors will leave tidy sites after any tree works have been undertaken.

The council will use its own policies and national/local guidance where appropriate to protect trees from unnecessary felling or disfigurement.

The council will only fell trees for sound arboriculture and will consult where required in accordance with Environment Bill (2021) once this has been updated to include consultation guidance (currently expected in 2023).

The council will seek to increase tree cover across the borough, by annually planting more trees than are felled.

The council will take account of the predicted impacts of climate change to ensure a continuation of large-scale canopy cover with a diverse species and age range throughout the borough.

The council will seek to identify new locations where tree planting would be particularly beneficial to the environment.

The council will promote the provision of space for planting trees on development and privately owned sites, selecting a range of species in line with the above policy statements.

The council will inspect its trees on a cyclical basis to meet its duty of care and to ensure the highway remains unobstructed.

Inspection cycles for trees will be published on the council's website.

The council will manage and process tree-related subsidence claims in accordance with the *London Tree Officers Risk Mitigation Strategy* along with the *Joint Mitigation Protocol* where appropriate.

The council will enforce and prosecute where appropriate any tree related contraventions, applying the maximum penalty possible.

On construction sites, all work must be in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) *Trees in relation to Construction* and the *National House Building Council's Practice Note 3 Building Near Trees*.

In the processing of planning applications, the council will aim to retain trees of high amenity/environmental value.

When the council intends to make a new tree preservation order (TPO) on a site, it will endeavour to include all the trees that are worthy of protection within the specific land parcel.

TREE MANAGEMENT

The borough's tree management regime will be driven by the need to maximise the benefits provided by trees and to maintain the council's tree population.

The council's approach to the maintenance of its tree stock has three key elements:

- zoning: appreciating tree stock locations in relation to people or property
- tree inspection: assessing obvious tree defects
- managing risk at an acceptable level: identifying, prioritising and undertaking safety work according to level of risk.

Zoning

The areas where trees grow within the borough can be characterised according to the level of pedestrian, vehicle or other use – and 'zoned' in terms of its level of usage.

Zoning will be undertaken where necessary to reflect the higher risk tree locations where prioritised tree management may be required. This includes the hierarchy of roads used by the council's Highways team to prioritise inspection and maintenance.

Tree inspection

Tree surveys and inspections will accord to the principles of the NTSG guidance. Inspection schedules will be risk-based and supplemented by additional inspections as required.

The council's inspections are categorised as full inspections, walk-over inspections or ad hoc inspections. Each of these categories of inspection looks for and considers the following:

- Pollarding cycle (if a Lime or Plane)
- If previously reduced in the past (all others) and any potential resulting defects or weaknesses
- Location and proximity to property, street furniture etc.
- Footpath disturbance caused by the tree or its roots
- Deadwood
- Cavities
- Fungal bodies

Full inspections - record whether or not any work is required under the above headings.

Walk-over inspections – are usually undertaken in larger areas such as parks and open spaces where the same issues are looked for as with full inspections but only when works are required are these noted and reported, i.e. where no works are required this is not reported to allow for a larger quantity of trees to be inspected/larger area to be covered during an inspection, where the risk category allows.

Ad hoc inspections – follow the full inspection process and works required or not required are recorded.

Inspections are generally visual checks but where further examination is required to identify some conditions indicated by a visual inspection the council uses a Resitograph tool to assess potential interior decay.

If following a report from a resident, an ad hoc inspection is necessary on the highway in a public domain, it is not necessary for the resident to be present for the inspection unless access to a back garden is required.

Inspection cycles

The council aims to undertake walk-over inspections of trees in parks and open spaces every five years, noting works required in line with Green Flag management plans (for both Green Flag and non-Green Flag locations).

Highways trees are inspected via a road hierarchy-based cycle, an example of a proposed highways inspection cycle can be found at Appendix B.

Inspections of trees on housing estates are undertaken on at least a three-year cyclical basis. An example of a housing inspection cycle can be found at Appendix C.

Inspections of trees on corporate sites are undertaken on at least a three-year cyclical basis.

The council will make finalised inspection cycles available for viewing on its website.

Ad hoc inspections will also be carried out at any location in response to assessed and prioritised reports of concern, hazard or damage. These inspections may be prompted by extreme weather and reports from residents, colleagues, contractors or Members. Ad hoc inspections contribute significantly to public safety and help with identifying when action is needed and when a more formal assessment is required.

Trees in tenants' gardens will not be routinely inspected as they are the responsibility of the tenant as stated in all tenancies. However, ad hoc inspections will be carried out if required and authorised by the Tenancy Management team. Tree works will only be undertaken on trees in tenants' gardens in exceptional circumstances after agreement between Tenancy Management and the Arboricultural Manager.

Trees may also be identified for inspection by Highways officers as part of their day-to-day operations. Where identified, the following defects will be passed to the Trees team to consider remedial works in line with this strategy:

- Root growth causing surface irregularity
- Trees or hedges overgrowing the footway or carriageway such that a hazard is presented
- Basal growth causing obstruction
- Unstable trees or branches
- Overgrown hedges, grass or vegetation causing inadequate visibility, particularly at junctions or pedestrian crossings
- Trees and vegetation obscuring signs or streetlights constituting a hazard to users

Some issues relating to overgrown trees or hedges on private land may be referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour team to follow up.

Maintenance of newly planted trees

Tree planting will generally take place from the first week in November to the first week in April inclusive (subject to weather conditions).

At the time of planting crown pruning shall be carried out to remove any weak, crossing or dead branches. All trees will be planted with a suitable irrigation system and twin staked for support.

In the first two years following planting, maintenance will be undertaken to include sufficient irrigation, weed control and stake maintenance, to include a minimum of 12 visits each summer.

Any tree which after the initial two years has failed to satisfactorily establish will be replaced and the maintenance period reset.

All trees which have established will be integrated into the relevant tree inspection cycle (Highways, Housing or Parks).

Managing risk

Risk is the probability of harm and severity of consequences from a particular hazard.

Although all trees are potentially hazardous, the level of risk is relative to the number of people and the presence of valuable property that could be harmed or damaged in the event of root, branch or trunk failure.

The borough's trees will be assessed as part of a risk-based inspection survey and the council will follow the National Tree Safety Group Guidance (NTSG) "Common sense risk management of trees" flowchart for risk management for its trees as set out at Appendix D.

Risk acceptability and prioritising treatment and inspection frequency

When inspecting trees for public safety, the inspection primarily looks for external features indicating mechanical (structural) defects that pose a significant risk to public safety, concentrating on risks that are either immediate or reasonably foreseeable in the near future. the inspection will not normally identify trees that fall outside these categories for action.

Immediate risk to public safety

Immediate risk of serious harm is a risk of such immediacy and consequence that urgent action is required. in most cases, immediate risks are likely to be clearly observable in the course of informal or formal inspection and must be dealt with immediately, whether by means of tree work, e.g. felling, or through site management. for example, where a large tree is found with an obviously lifting root plate or actively separating heavy branch within falling distance of a busy road, this may involve stopping or diverting traffic or felling, crown weight reduction or branch removal. most immediate risks have a reasonable likelihood of being identified by non-specialists and specialists.

Non-immediate risks posed by trees to public safety

Risk of serious harm in the near future is non-immediate and can be reasonably managed at an acceptable level by a planned, cost-effective response. action will be needed when inspections identify trees posing risks in the near future. Once identified, the response may involve prioritised treatment of the tree or site to manage the risk within the near future at an acceptable level, or further specialist assessment to clarify the extent of risk and treatment.

Risks not requiring a response in the near future

Where trees are identified as not posing a risk in the near future, there is no specific requirement for additional management. In these circumstances the existing inspection cycle should be sufficient to manage the risk.

Categories of defects

The NTSG states that “A defect in the context of the growing environment of a tree is a structural, health or environmental condition that could predispose a tree to failure”.

Defects pose risks only where there is a likelihood of harm.

Obvious defects – these are likely to be so apparent that most people, whether specialist or not, would recognise them. Obvious defects take many forms such as broken branches and some diseases but not all present significant hazards.

Hazards - these situations or conditions have the potential to cause harm. With regard to trees, this means that any part of the tree – its trunk, branches or crown – that might fail structurally, collapse and fall onto a person or property, causing injury or damage, is a hazard. As all trees have this potential, they and their components are hazards.

Remedial works

Following the council’s inspection regime and ad hoc reports of defects, approved maintenance and remedial works will be categorised in line with risk priorities and works will then be prioritised for action as set out in the table below.

Categories and turnaround targets

Category	Response time	Notes
Priority 1	7 days	
Priority 2	1 month	
Priority 3	2 months	
Emergency works	45 minutes	Office hours
Emergency works	90 minutes	Out of hours

High volumes of emergency work may impact on other response times.

The above categorisation and response times will be reflected in any tree maintenance contracts and relevant KPIs linking to these targets will be included in performance reporting mechanisms for contractors.

Felling and Pruning

The council will only fell trees for sound arboriculture, such as where trees are:

- Dead, dying or dangerous
- Proven by technical evidence to be causing significant structural damage
- Considered by the Trees and Woodlands Service to be inappropriate for the location

Or:

- When removal is required as part of a council agreed management programme or where removal is essential as part of an improvement project where removal has been agreed by the council.

Where possible, the council will aim to retain mature trees by reducing rather than felling as a mitigating measure.

The council will prune trees:

- To eliminate any unreasonable obstruction of the public highway, footways and other areas of public access
- To ensure that established essential fixtures and services situated within the public highway are fit for purpose
- Where they cause an unreasonable obstruction of access to private property
- Where legitimate instructions have been received by a utility provider
- For arboricultural reasons such as formative pruning, for pollard cycles and to extend the trees' safe and useful life.

Judicious light pruning may also be undertaken by the council on the following grounds:

- Lifting of lateral branches where trees are obstructing vehicular and pedestrian access.
- Overhanging neighbours' land where it touches roof or building of property.
- To facilitate CCTV cameras
- To allow streetlights to shine effectively and to keep clear of traffic lights and road signs.

Pruning is a frequent request from residents and councillors when trees appear to be too large or are blocking light from homes/gardens. As trees are such a valuable resource to the environment the council does not support the pruning or removal of healthy trees for purely aesthetic reasons. The pruning of trees can also encourage faster and/or more dense growth and increases the risk of disease by creating cuts to the branches and encouraging new young growth. Therefore, the following reasons **will not** constitute grounds for the pruning or removal of trees by the council:

- The creation or extension of a dropped kerb/crossover (as set out in the council's dropped kerb policy)
- Where the tree is perceived to be too large
- Excessive leaf, blossom or seed fall
- Problems associated with fruit
- Interference with satellite dish/TV reception/solar panels, private CCTV operations or overhead telephone lines (if there is excessive pressure on telephone lines phone companies have a statutory right to prune to alleviate the pressure).
- Obstruction of view/blocking daylight
- Mess caused by insects or birds
- Problems associated with pollen
- Healthy mature trees will not be removed to create space to plant new trees
- The perceived risk that it will cause subsidence in the future
- Causing disruption to pavements, kerbs, garden paths and walls. In these cases engineering solutions will be sought in liaison with our Highways and Insurance teams before pruning or removal are considered.
- Someone is willing to pay for the removal and replacement of a tree.

Where appropriate, residents will be informed that it is their common law right to prune overhanging branches and roots back to a shared boundary line.

Where an identified problem cannot be remedied by pruning or a suitable engineering solution, the council will remove trees which pose an unacceptable risk of injury or damage or those which cause an unacceptable obstruction of the public highway and footpaths. Where trees are proven (beyond reasonable doubt) to be the cause of significant structural damage, removal will be considered. The council will consider the removal (or thinning) of trees where it will benefit adjacent specimens, for example in overpopulated formal avenues.

Where the removal of trees is likely to have a significant impact upon the landscape and therefore generate public interest, the council's arboriculturists will give advance notice to the Ward Councillors and the relevant Cabinet Member. New consultation requirements will be confirmed by the Environment Bill guidance expected in 2023.

Root ingress

The council is unable to prevent root ingress to adjacent gardens and will not therefore undertake root removal where this has occurred. The council will not accept responsibility for tree roots that have gained access to drains or services as a consequence of those services being unfit for purpose.

Subsidence

The council will manage and process subsidence claims for trees in accordance with the *London Tree Officers Risk Limitation Strategy*, as well as the Joint Mitigation Protocol where appropriate.

The council advises residents that if they believe a council owned tree has caused subsidence related issues to their property, they should notify their building insurers and obtain relevant monitoring evidence before formally presenting a claim.

Planting and biodiversity

The Forestry Commission's research agency Forest Research states: *Urban trees are being increasingly recognised for the many benefits they provide, such as removing carbon dioxide and pollutants from the air, providing habitats for wildlife, and making our urban areas more attractive, enjoyable and healthy places to live and spend time in.*

The council will reflect its planting targets and canopy cover percentage increase within its Strategic Climate Action Plan and the operating plans that flow from this.

The borough's tree stock will be increased through an annual programme of tree planting, particularly in urban areas to complement objectives to improve air quality and promote urban wildlife.

The council will plant the right tree in the right place for the right purpose and where possible and it will aim to plant within the location of any tree that has been removed. Where existing site constraints mean that this is not possible, a tree will be planted in the

nearest suitable location. The council aims to plant more trees than it removes annually and has committed to ensuring that each tree lost is replaced by the planting of at least one additional tree.

Council initiated planting will prioritise larger growing shade providing trees, scaling down to smaller ornamental trees where larger trees are not suitable as outlined in *Right Tree Right Place - London Trees and Woodland Framework*. The council will establish a diversity of species to mitigate against pests and disease and to address the effects of climate change that can threaten entire species.

The council will work in partnership with Trees for Cities, Trees for Streets and other council approved charities and schemes to increase the supply and installation of trees across the borough.

The council will encourage species and genetic diversity amongst its tree population, to avoid risk of disease having widespread and damaging effects and to provide variety to those living in or visiting the borough.

The council will encourage biodiversity amongst its tree stock and within the planting environment, appreciating the benefits of trees at various stages of their life cycle providing different habitats and other benefits to wildlife.

The council will promote the provision of space for planting trees on council and private development sites through its planning processes, considering the suitability of design and species proposed. Every effort will be made to retain existing trees from development areas but where this is not possible, new tree will be planted in a suitable location in place of any removed tree.

The council's Highways and Capital Works teams will work closely with the Arboricultural team to ensure that opportunities are explored to include additional tree planting as part of their planned works programmes.

Where possible and appropriate, after tree maintenance works are completed, habitat piles and standing deadwood may be left to support the natural habitat.

PROTECTION

The council will enforce and prosecute where appropriate tree related contraventions and where appropriate apply the maximum penalty possible.

The council will seek compensation from any external organisation or individual responsible for significant damage to, or removal of, any council owned tree(s) to the value calculated by the Capital Asset Value of Trees (CAVAT).

On construction sites all work must be in accordance with BS 5837 2012 "Trees in relation to Construction" and that foundation details follow the recommendations of the National House Building Council's Practice Note 3 "Building Near Trees"

In the processing of planning applications the council will aim to retain trees of high amenity/environmental value, taking consideration of both their individual merit and their interaction as part of a group or broader landscape feature.

When the council intends to make a new tree preservation order (TPO) on a site it will endeavour to make a TPO incorporating all the trees that are worthy of protection within the specific land parcel.

Inappropriate tree work operations

Third parties are not permitted to access council land in order to carry out works to trees that are within its control.

Utility Services and Crossovers

The council will not remove or reposition trees to facilitate the implementation of non-essential underground or over-ground services and signs or the construction of drop kerbs or crossovers. Where new essential services are proposed the council's arboriculturists will provide advice during the design stage in order to minimise the impact upon trees.

Affixing to trees

The council does not encourage the affixing of items to trees. However, the council recognises that trees can be chosen as memorial sites following loss of life due to a crime or accident close to the tree's location. The council will seek to find an appropriate balance between catering for the needs of a victim's family and friends, but also the wider community by allowing the temporary laying/affixing of floral or other tributes on the understanding they are removed within a fixed period. Items should be placed away from locations that are hazardous to access or considered to have an adverse effect on road safety, otherwise they will be removed immediately.

The council does not allow for anniversary tributes to be affixed to trees at the site of a fatality.

Items such as decorative lights may only be attached to the borough's trees where a suitable methodology has been submitted to and approved by the council's arboriculturists.

Any unauthorised attachments such as decorative lights and signs will be removed; the council will seek remedial action and compensation where irreversible tree damage or destruction has been caused.

Development and private trees

The council will serve Tree Preservation Orders in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Practice Guidance (Tree Preservation Orders and trees in Conservation Areas). Where tree loss occurs through development replacement trees will be sought either to be planted within the site or within the public realm through the Section 106 agreement and CIL process.

Tree work notifications and applications

The council will only validate Section 211 Notifications and Tree Work Applications that conform to the requirements outlined within Government guidance as provided by the Planning Portal and add that the council then has six weeks to make a decision on a section 211 notice and eight weeks for a TPO application.

When a TPO application is for felling the council will consult local neighbours.

Section 211 notices are sent to the local Conservation Area Advisory Panel (CAAP) when there is one.

All TPO applications are available to view via the Planning search on the council website.

Trees and private property

Where necessary the council will use their powers under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 in relation to imminently dangerous private trees, where under Section 23, the council has discretionary powers.

The council is unable to assist in civil disputes regarding privately owned trees. The council is only able to become involved with a high hedges dispute via the Anti-Social Behaviour and Environment Team upon receipt of a complaint that conforms to the requirements outlined within the *High Hedges: complaining to the council* guidance issued by the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister.

The council can also protect private trees via conditions in a planning application.

Pests and Diseases

The council will take a responsible management approach towards established pests and diseases and will be proactive in planning for any new threats that are posed to the borough's tree population. The council will follow statutory plant health notices when served by the Forestry Commission along with any guidance provided.

Natural occurrences

The council's street cleansing team will clear debris deposited as part of a tree's natural cycle (e.g. leaves, seeds, fruit etc.) on public footpaths and highways but not on private land.

Severe weather

When windspeeds reach or are expected to reach 50mph parks with lockable gates are locked to reduce the risk of damage caused by falling branches or trees.

The council's tree maintenance contractors are informed of any weather warnings that could result in additional tree works including emergency works.

Parks are unlocked once severe weather has subsided and a basic visual inspection of the trees has been undertaken.

Reports of emergency and non-emergency works required as a result of severe weather are reported and actioned in line with normal procedures.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The council and contractors working on its behalf will work in accordance with this policy and current industry best practice. Where work is not carried out to the required standard the council will seek remedial action and compensation where irreversible tree damage or destruction has been caused.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

An analysis of tree removals and tree planting undertaken will be carried out annually to reconcile the numbers and types of species felled and the numbers and types planted across the land types.

Key performance indicators for tree maintenance are included within the maintenance contract and these are reviewed regularly as part of the contract management process.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.

6/10/22

APPENDIX A

THE VALUE OF OUR TREES

Social value

Trees provide:

- A sense of place and community
- Seasonal interest, flowers, fruit, autumn colour, dormancy
- Welcoming areas within our town centres, encouraging people to live, visit and stay for prolonged periods, using local shops and restaurants
- An educational resource
- A cultural and historic link to many areas
- A tool for reducing crime levels
- An aesthetically pleasing addition to streets, parks and other green spaces, attracting prospective property purchasers and increasing property values

Environmental value

- Trees reduce the 'Urban Heat Island Effect' by absorbing radiation which would otherwise be stored and emitted by urban infrastructure increasing local temperatures
- Trees absorb and store greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, helping to combat Climate Change

- Trees offer shade as protection from the sun, within our parks and open spaces they provide cool places for people to enjoy during periods of high temperature
- Trees intercept rainwater helping to prevent localised flooding
- Trees are an essential element of biodiversity: supporting wildlife throughout all areas of the borough
- Trees help to reduce noise pollution within our busy environment

Health value

- Trees help to improve air quality as they remove pollutants helping to minimise associated health risks to our population
- Trees have a positive effect upon our mental health and sense of wellbeing
- Trees provide inviting areas for us to exercise
- Trees provide shade therefore reducing the risk of skin cancer
- Trees reduce the urban heat island effect, helping to cool local areas and therefore preventing heat associated injury/ailment
- A green environment makes for a better working environment; workers who have views of trees feel happier which can lead to better performance
- Trees help to regulate local temperature extremes therefore reducing the costs of heating and cooling buildings
- The presence of trees makes for a healthier population, therefore reducing the burden upon the health services

APPENDIX B

PROPOSED HIGHWAYS INSPECTION CYCLE FOR TREES

Hierarchy code (as used by Highways team)	Description	Tree inspection frequency (every X years)	Category
2	Strategic Route	2	High
3a	Main Distributor	2	High
3b	Secondary Distributor	4	Medium
4a	Link Road	4	Medium
4b	Local Access Road	6	Low
9	No Carriageway	6	Low

10	Housing Network		These trees fall under the housing cycle.
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APPENDIX C

HOUSING INSPECTION CYCLE FOR TREES - SAMPLE

Ward*	Housing inspection due quarter	Housing inspection due year
Cavendish	Q1	Year 1
Eastcote and East Ruislip	Q1	
Ickenham	Q1	
West Ruislip	Q1	
Charville	Q1	
Manor	Q2	
Northwood	Q2	
Northwood Hills	Q3	
South Ruislip	Q3	
Harefield	Q4	
Barnhill	Q1	Year 2
Hillingdon East	Q1	

Brunel	Q2	
Uxbridge North	Q3	
Yeading	Q4	
Botwell	Q1	Year 3
Heathrow Villages	Q1	
Pinkwell	Q2	
Townfield	Q2	
Uxbridge South	Q3	
Yiewsley	Q3	
West Drayton	Q4	

*2022 Ward changes will be incorporated into future inspection cycles.

October 2022
Updated 20/12/22 - SH

APPENDIX D

Figure 1. Risk Management Process



