



**FAREHAM** BOROUGH  
COUNCIL  
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Fareham Borough Council

# **TREE STRATEGY**

2012 - 2017

A strategy for the planning & management  
of the Borough's urban forest.

**March 2012**

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## **1 Introducing the Strategy**

### **Aim**

To protect, promote, sustain and enhance our trees and woodlands, collectively referred to as urban forest and to recognise their contribution towards the character and appearance of the Borough for the benefit of all those who live, work in and visit Fareham.

### **The Measures**

The strategy will cover the following areas:

- Why a Strategy
- The Importance of Trees
- Tree Problems
- The Management of Council Owned Trees
- New Tree Planting and Maintenance
- Trees and Development
- Private Trees
- Protection of the Urban Forest
- Promotion of the Urban Forest

## **2 Purpose of the Tree Strategy**

- To perpetuate the existing tree stock as long as is practicable or desirable in accordance with sound arboricultural practices.
- To create a diverse population of trees of mixed age and species.
- To encourage partnerships with local communities, businesses and voluntary organisations to ensure the aims of the strategy.
- Utilise Risk Assessment techniques to form part of tree inspections to measure potential health & safety issues and perform the necessary works to alleviate high risk situations.
- Promote the benefits of Fareham's Urban Forest to the community.
- To protect the Urban Forest.

- To enhance and protect the borough's biodiversity, landscape character and local distinctiveness.

### **3 The Benefits**

The strategy will deliver the following benefits for Fareham:

- Pro-active management of the Borough's tree stock, ensuring a diversity of age range and species of tree population.
- Preservation of Fareham's existing 'verdant character' and reputation as a prosperous, safe and attractive place to live and work.
- Increased sense of well-being and better health for Fareham's communities.
- Increased public awareness of the value of the Urban Forest.
- Free advisory service to the residents of the Borough.
- Increased number of trees protected, established and cared for within the Borough of Fareham.
- Contribution towards life-long learning in the community.
- Increased number of residents informed and involved in tree care and community woodland initiatives.
- Environmental improvements and the survival of urban wildlife associated with trees for future generations to enjoy.
- Contribute to national and regional targets regarding tree cover in the UK.

### **4 Contexts and Issues**

The Borough has a 'verdant character' synonymous with its tree cover, providing an attractive pleasant environment in which to live and work. Many of these trees are remnants of the historic landscape, characteristic of south Hampshire.

The remaining countryside in Fareham has a locally distinctive character, which is described in the Fareham Landscape Character Assessment, the Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment and in Hampshire's Historic Landscape Report.

Policy CS4 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Geological Conservation reflects the Council's wish to protect and enhance the landscape and historic character and quality of the countryside in the Borough.

The Council currently has an accepted policy of not removing trees unless they are dead, dying, diseased or dangerous, or in the interests of sound arboricultural or silvicultural management.

The Council is responsible for maintaining many thousands of trees on 250 hectares of public open space and housing areas; and 40 hectares of woodland. However, the vast majority of Fareham's Urban Forest is privately owned represented by trees in gardens and hedgerows.

The Council has completed a survey of all the amenity trees within our community parks, informal green spaces, cemeteries, housing sites and certain trees in woodlands. This involved inputting their location, species, approximate age and condition onto a computerised tree management system.

We are also producing woodland management plans in liaison with the Forestry Commission for the Council owned woodlands.

Fareham Borough Council has a responsibility to protect the tree cover of the Borough through the use of the Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) process and over 550 individual and group tree preservation orders are currently in place.

The Council will continue to make TPO's where appropriate and necessary to safeguard important trees and woodlands that contribute to the quality of the built and rural environment.

## **5 Policy Background**

### **Fareham's Local Development Framework - Core Strategy**

Fareham Borough Council's Core Strategy states *"Trees, woodlands and hedgerows contribute greatly to the local distinctiveness of the Borough providing ecological, amenity, recreational and economic value.*

*Green Infrastructure will be created and safeguarded through investing in appropriate management, enhancement and restoration, and the creation of new resources including parks, woodland and trees; and wildlife habitat."*

Policy CS4 of the Fareham Core Strategy provides protection for important trees, hedgerows and woodlands in the Borough and encourages new planting.

### **Partnership for Urban South Hampshire - Green Infrastructure Strategy**

The Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) adopted its Green Infrastructure Strategy in June 2010. The strategy recognises the role trees play in reducing energy use for heating and cooling buildings by shading them in summer and sheltering them in winter; and as carbon sinks. In relation to the new housing and employment proposed in the PUSH it promotes greenspace with trees for cooling and networks of street trees.

## **The Government's Natural Environment White Paper**

States: Trees, woodlands and forests have a very special place in English culture and have provided us with many of the essentials of life through history. Their health is essential for our wellbeing and prosperity. They shape our landscapes and street scenes. Our choices today will shape our future landscapes, prosperity and wellbeing. Our ambition is for a major increase in the area of woodland in England, better management of existing woodlands and a renewed commitment to conserving and restoring ancient woodlands. Forests and woodlands must play a full part in achieving a resilient and coherent ecological network across England.

We want to create more opportunities for planting productive and native woodlands; more trees in our towns, cities and villages; and a much larger proportion of existing woodlands brought into active management. We also want to increase the use of sustainably grown and harvested wood products. Together, this will enhance the wide range of benefits that woodlands provide, including renewable energy and timber, new wildlife habitats and green space for people to use and enjoy, helping us to mitigate and adapt to the future changing climate. It will also increase resilience to climate change, pests and diseases, and help to halt the loss of biodiversity.

## **England Forestry Strategy & Regional Forestry Framework**

The Government is seeking a significant increase in woodland cover across England and has published a National Forestry Strategy - A new Focus for England's Woodlands - to encourage tree planting for visual amenity, environmental, commercial and recreational benefits.

### **6 Why a Strategy?**

The Tree Strategy aims to provide the way forward for the management of Fareham's tree stock supported by the guidance and policies of our adopted Core Strategy.

As a result of the 'Trees in Towns' study the Department of the Environment recommended that Local Authorities produce a framework for taking a strategic overview of the status and condition of trees in their area through the formulation of tree strategies.

It is anticipated that the actions arising from the Tree Strategy will contribute to the broader initiatives being undertaken by the Council towards meeting local and national environmental and sustainability objectives.

### **7 What is Fareham's Urban Forest?**

The Urban Forest is a term used to encompass all the trees in an urban environment, whether they be garden, street or parks trees. It involves the planting and management of all trees within towns or cities. It is generally accepted that woodland within towns and cities also comes under the heading of Urban Forestry.

Fareham Borough Council has yet to develop a specific strategy for the management of its woodlands. However, the Tree Strategy recognises that some trees, which connect to or relate to adjacent woodland, have a particular significance in terms of landscape character and biodiversity.

It is important to recognise that the tree outside our front door or in our garden is not seen in isolation but as part of a more significant network, because just as the rain forest of the Amazon is under threat so is our Urban Forest, but without the publicity.

Fareham's Urban Forest contributes significantly to Fareham's reputation as being an attractive place to live, work in and visit. The Borough is proud of its verdant character and the tree cover helps to soften our urban environment and acts as a conditioner filtering particulate pollution, making our surroundings a healthier place.

Our Urban Forest is under threat from development, highway improvement schemes, pollution, underground services, cable laying and simply from the pressures of being in proximity to people's homes and work places.

## **8 The Importance of Trees**

Trees are essential to life and their value cannot be overstated. Trees:

- contribute as part of the landscape character, setting local distinctiveness, or particularly in their own right in an urban setting adding to people's quality of life and sense of well being
- provide summer shade and winter shelter enabling the saving of energy
- provide links with the countryside
- support and increase Biodiversity
- contribute directly to the adaptation of our towns and cities to the effects of climate change
- improve urban living by encouraging wildlife and making important landmarks
- enable greener towns which are more attractive to new business
- intercept rainfall, filter air and absorb pollutants
- provide carbon dioxide absorption and oxygen production
- reduce noise levels
- screen unsightly development
- reduce everyday stress
- positively affect property values

There is increasing public awareness of these benefits and the need for trees. People are beginning to place a higher priority on the environment in which they live. In urban areas this invariably means that there should be accessible recreational open space, woodlands and pleasant tree lined streets.

## **9 Managing Conflicting Interests**

Today in Fareham we are fortunate to have a significant amount of mature tree cover across many parts of the Borough providing character and the environmental benefits, which have previously been referred to. A conflict of interest exists though, because those very same trees that make Fareham a pleasant town to live and work in, are for many residents a source of frustration.

The dilemma often occurs when the tree makes an important contribution to the local environment and landscape character but also causes inconvenience to those living nearby. Urban trees by their nature are located close to people's dwellings and common sources of complaint include blocking of light, overhanging branches, leaf fall, obstruction and physical damage.

Insurance companies and mortgage agencies continue to highlight trees as the first contributing factor towards subsidence claims. Reports are received from various sources stating the need for the removal or large scale pruning of the nearest Council owned tree.

However, the vast majority of trees near buildings cause no structural damage at all. Certain soil conditions have to be prevalent for tree roots to be implicated in subsidence claims and such soil conditions, known as shrinkable (clay) soils, do exist in Fareham.

Current national planning policy guidance is seeking to increase density of development in urban areas which puts pressure on existing trees and the ability to plant new trees.

Careful pruning can alleviate some of these problems but sometimes these problems can be attributed to inappropriate species selection with regards to their location or pruning methods in the past. Consequently, it is to be accepted that responsible management of Fareham's trees will involve situations that are impossible to resolve in favour of all parties.

## **10 The Strategy**

The vision of this strategy is exemplified by the belief that the trees in our gardens, parks, highways and outside our front doors should not be viewed individually but as our very own Urban Forest.

This strategy is aimed at providing a way forward that allows Fareham to manage our tree stock effectively and provide tree cover for future generations, whilst recognising the difficulties experienced by residents today.

The Tree Strategy is a plan for the overall management of all trees within the Borough of Fareham, both those situated on public and private land, where the Council has control over the trees. It is also intended to give guidance on the management practices of all other parties involved with the management of Fareham's tree cover.

This strategy has been formulated and aligned with the concept of providing Best Value to the Fareham community.

It is anticipated that the actions recommended by this strategy will help to resolve the problems we are experiencing now and ensure a healthy tree stock for future generations.

## **11 The Management of Council Owned Trees**

This section of the strategy details the Council's approach to the management of the trees for which it is directly responsible.

Fareham's tree cover falls under the following categories:

*Trees in Parks and Public Open Spaces – Fareham has a diverse range of formal and informal parkland and green spaces all with significant numbers of trees which contribute to the make-up of our urban forest.*

*Housing Areas – These are the trees to be found in and around our housing estates and sheltered housing complexes. They comprise specimens planted during the development phase of the housing areas with many mature trees retained for their aesthetic value.*

*Woodlands – Fareham Borough Council is responsible for managing a wide variety of woodland including many areas of ancient woodland. Fareham has site specific management plans for managing Council owned woodlands.*

*Cemeteries and Council owned land – Trees in our cemeteries and closed churchyards, which comprise specimen planting, avenues and ancient pollards. Trees in the town centre, public car parks and other land owned and maintained by the Authority.*

*Street Trees – These are the trees planted in highway grass verges and pavements along the roads of our Borough and are the responsibility of Hampshire County Council as the Highway Authority.*

## **12 Tree Management**

In the past trees were 'lopped' and 'topped' with insufficient regard for their future health, safety and appearance. Topping is the removal of the main branches of a mature tree by a half or more of their length. It is now known that during such practices the cut surfaces allow decay to enter the tree, which then threatens the stability of the new growth, stimulated by the initial cut.

The loss of photosynthetic tissues and healthy sapwood also has an adverse impact on the tree system in terms of disrupting energy production and storage.

Arboriculture is a relatively new discipline and the latest research has illustrated the importance of what is termed target pruning - minimising wound area, aeration of wood tissues and encouraging good wound response in the tree.

Therefore, the Council will not carry out topping of trees and will utilise the best practice pruning techniques highlighted within the British Standard 3998 Tree Work - Recommendations. The terminology and description of these pruning techniques are described below:

**Crown Lifting:** This involves pruning to achieve a desired vertical clearance above ground level or other surface by removing small diameter secondary branches.

**Crown Reduction:** This is the removal of a specified percentage of branches from the crown all around the tree, by retaining the main framework of the crown and therefore a high proportion of the foliage bearing branches.

**Crown Thinning:** This is rarely a once only operation and should be undertaken to meet a specific tree management objective. It involves the removal of a specified percentage of branches throughout the crown and should retain an even density of foliage throughout a well spaced and balance branch structure.

**Formative Pruning:** The main aim is to produce a tree which in maturity will be free from any major physical weakness. The term can also be applied to more specialised practices such as pollarding, utility pruning and restorative pruning.

It may be necessary to organise works beyond this scope either to remove a health and safety concern or to undertake work to maintain a tree previously 'topped' in the past. Tree Officers will utilise Risk Assessment procedures to determine the extent of work required.

### **13 Tree Inspections (Risk Assessments)**

Tree inspections following the principles of risk assessment form the basis of pro-active maintenance regimes for Council owned trees. In 2007 the Council undertook a detailed survey of all its amenity trees. The trees were surveyed and their details catalogued and recorded onto a tree management system called Ezy Treev and the Council's Geographic Information System (GIS).

#### **Policy TP1**

- The Council will utilise tree officers' knowledge and risk assessment procedures that take account of the health of the tree and its effects on the local environment to provide the basis for management of Council Trees.

- The Council will resist the removal of any tree unless it is:
  - i) dead, dying, or diseased
  - ii) identified for removal following a risk assessment procedure or planning consent.
  - iii) a tree causing an obstruction to a public highway, public right of way, where the obstruction cannot be removed by pruning the tree or other reasonable measures.
  - iv) a tree causing a legal nuisance to an adjoining property, where pruning would not address the problem. *Felling would only be acceptable when justified by the facts of the case and where pruning would not remedy the problem.*
  - v) circumstances where pruning has been undertaken to remedy a severe problem and proved to be unsuccessful.
  - vi) thinning out young and developing trees following principles of best arboricultural practice.
  
- The Council will resist unnecessary pruning of the Borough's tree stock, whilst ensuring resources are allocated to remedy health & safety concerns.
  
- Pruning works undertaken by the Council will follow best arboricultural practice and where possible be scheduled, so as not to be detrimental to the tree species involved.
  
- Inspections will cover the protected species under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and any evidence of bats will be investigated. Where evidence of birds nesting is found no work will be carried out until the nesting season is over.
  
- The Council will respond to enquires from the public within ten working days and emergency calls as soon as is practicable given the circumstances of the case.
  
- Maintain a programme of proactive tree inspections to ensure the risks to people and property from Council owned trees are as low as reasonably practicable.
  
- All identified works necessary to alleviate health & safety concerns will be undertaken following risk assessment inspections.

## **14 Trees in Parks and Public Open Spaces**

Trees are fundamental to the structure of parks and open spaces. The trees in parks and open spaces are not only important to regular visitors, they are very important contributors to the overall environment and landscape character of the area. They are an extremely important resource that requires active management for the trees to prosper and provide the benefits for our current and future residents.

The nature of tree populations of different parks and open spaces is as variable as the sites themselves. At one end of the spectrum there are older sites, with a declining mature population of trees including a number of interesting specimens. Some sites often contain important veteran trees potentially supporting rare and varied wildlife and holding historic value.

Conversely there are newer parks and green spaces with a developing tree population. For this reason the management of trees within parks and open spaces has to be planned on a site by site basis, seeking a balanced tree population and a character for each site.

The majority of trees in our parks and open spaces have now been surveyed and entered onto the Council's tree management system Ezy Treev. All health & safety works identified at the time were undertaken and the condition of the trees recorded.

## **Policy TP2**

- The Council will continue with the ongoing inspection of trees within Parks & Open Spaces and undertake any Health & Safety works deemed necessary.
- The Council will seek to create a varied and sustainable tree population in Council Parks.
- The Council will undertake annual planting programmes of new and replacement trees in line with the strategy aims.
- Replacement trees will be of a variety that ensures diversity and sustainability. Where appropriate the Council will retain deadwood habitat in trees to benefit local wildlife.
- The Council will endeavour to work with local community groups and other organisations to ensure their involvement in future management plans for our trees.
- The Council will follow the same guidelines and principles identified within the 'Management of Council Trees' section of this document with regard to the management of those trees within our Parks & Public Open Spaces, Cemeteries & Churchyards, Car Parks; and other Council owned land.

## **15 Housing Trees**

Many of the Council's housing areas and sheltered housing schemes have been landscaped with extensive planting of both trees and shrubs. These are in garden areas and on public open space within the estates using a wide range of species.

Some of the development was within previously countryside areas and the planning process ensured that many mature hedgerow and specimen trees were retained adjacent to and within the proposed housing. Also many trees were planted close to houses, either without consideration of the future growth potential or with the intention of them being removed in thinning operations at a relatively early stage.

Current management deals with the issues arising out of complaints from residents forwarded by Housing Officers. These complaints generally stem from the large number of trees planted within a restricted area, adjacent to properties.

### **Policy TP3**

- The Council will complete a survey of all the housing trees within the Borough.
- The Council will utilise its risk assessment procedures to form the basis of any tree inspections.
- The Council will endeavour to fulfil its obligation to ensure the safety of people and property.
- The Council will endeavour to consult residents on the regular pro-active tree management where appropriate.
- The Council will remove trees identified as being inappropriate for their location.
- Replacement trees will be re-planted using suitable species for the site and conditions.
- The Council will follow the same guidelines and principles identified within the 'Management of Council Trees' section of this document with regard to the management of those trees within our Housing areas.

## **16 Woodland Trees**

Fareham Borough Council is responsible for managing a wide variety of woodland including many areas of ancient woodland. The Council has developed management plans for the important woodlands in its ownership, which are delivered by our Countryside Service.

## **17 Mortgage / Insurance Claims**

In the past Council owned trees have been implicated in insurance claims or mortgage enquires relating to possible or actual subsidence of third party property. On occasion third party insurance companies may contact the Council if they believe a Council owned tree has caused damage and either request that it is felled or simply begin a claim against the Council.

A number of factors are involved when determining the cause of subsidence to a building, the location of trees being just one factor. Monitoring of the subsidence, by qualified experts in various fields, is required over a number of months to ascertain the true reason for the movement in a structure.

## **Policy TP4**

- Upon receipt of insurance enquiries from third parties Council Officers will do their best to clarify the technical issues relating to building subsidence.
- Officers will continue to react quickly to insurance enquiries and request the relevant reports and monitoring information necessary to accurately determine the involvement of Council owned trees.
- The Council's insurers, Tree Officers and where applicable appointed structural engineers will work closely to resolve any issues in an expedient manner.
- Officers will continue to develop the procedure for the timely resolution to insurance enquires involving Council owned trees.
- The Council will continue to ensure officers receive adequate and up to date training necessary to evaluate tree insurance enquires effectively.

## **18 New Tree Planting and Maintenance**

New tree planting is the most important element of this strategy if the tree cover of Fareham is to be maintained for future generations. Trees take decades to mature, so the loss of older trees will have a significant impact upon Fareham.

To ensure Fareham retains its existing levels of tree coverage re-planting needs to continuously take place throughout the Borough. It is recognised that newly planted trees require specific maintenance during their initial establishment period.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to establish new trees, particularly in urban areas due to the range of underground services, competition for space, limited soil volumes, poor soils, pollution, insurance claims, safety audits, vandalism, and the impacts of climate change.

These constraints may vary and are less prevalent in many of our parks and open spaces. However, the commitment required to establish a newly planted tree so as to achieve independence in the landscape should not be underestimated and remains a challenge for local authorities.

Where trees have been removed from Council land it is important they are replaced the following planting season in order to sustain our tree heritage. New planting will take account of its future impact upon the local and wider environment.

Young tree maintenance is not only crucial to the survival of a newly planted tree. It ensures future problems are remedied before they become high cost maintenance issues or health and safety concerns.

## **Policy TP5**

- Undertake high quality new planting to replace trees identified for removal as part of programmed works.
- Assess the success of past planting schemes and ensure best practice is followed in the future.
- The tree stock in Fareham will be increased utilising native species where appropriate and where practicable plant material will be sourced from local indigenous stock.
- Pro-active young tree maintenance will be continued to assist with the establishment and development of new trees.
- Each year more trees will be planted than are felled by the Council.
- Tree planting methods will be integrated across the Council to ensure all new planting follows the same best practice principles.
- Ensure that all new tree planting is specified in a suitable location with appropriate tree pit design, ground preparation, staking, irrigation / drainage (if necessary) and protection details to ensure healthy establishment.
- Encourage the public to suggest areas where they would like to see more trees planted through increased community consultation and engagement with residents in all parts of the Borough.
- Increase the number of trees in public open spaces and Fareham's parks.
- Encourage sponsors to support planting schemes on Council land.
- Continue to offer a commemorative tree planting service.

## **19 Trees and Development**

One of the most common threats to trees is the proposed development of land upon which trees are growing. Fareham has a high demand for new development and has areas of high economic growth all increasing the pressure on the existing tree cover.

It is common for plans to be submitted showing trees retained, which are totally unsuitable for the proposed development allowing no room for the future growth of retained trees. Schemes are frequently amended to ensure that significant trees are retained often through a process of working with the applicant to reach mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts that arise.

Developers are often quick to assume that all trees on a site will have to be retained and consequently often view trees as a problem rather than an asset. It is common for planning applications to fail to provide sufficient information to enable proper consideration of trees on a proposed development site. This usually means that considerable officer time is spent making detailed assessments of trees and other factors, at the Council's expense.

It is common for tree protection constraints on development sites to be underestimated. In order to ensure a tree will be successfully retained it is vital that the trees root system is properly protected from direct and indirect damage, such as ground compaction.

A protected zone should be created around those trees to be retained, large enough to ensure that no disturbance occurs within the crown spread of the tree – as a minimum, in accordance with BS 5837 - Trees in Relation to Construction.

Consideration is also required for the protection of trees when applications are submitted for the extension of existing properties.

The Development Management Section are responsible for enforcing and monitoring the statutory protection of trees on private land and relies upon the professional and technical support of the Tree Officers and Landscape Architects.

### **Policy TP6**

- Utilise and enforce planning powers to retain and protect trees on development sites and where extensions are permitted to existing properties.
- Monitor and enforce planning powers where necessary.
- Provide pre-application guidance for builders, developers and their agents.
- Require tree planting wherever appropriate, as a condition of planning consents for development sites.
- Develop procedures to further improve close liaison between the development management and conservation sections with regard to the protection of trees in new development areas.
- Continue the ongoing review of the Council's existing Tree Preservation Orders giving priority to older orders and those with 'Area' categories.
- Ensure opportunities for advance planting are investigated prior to the start of new developments.
- The Council will continue to make TPO's where necessary to safeguard important trees and woodlands that contribute to the quality of the environment.

- The Council will prepare and review guidance to assist developers in safeguarding trees and the landscape on development sites.

## **20 Private Trees**

The Council has for many years provided free advice and guidance to residents of the Borough concerning all matters relating to trees. The provision of tree advice is invaluable in terms of promoting best practice for the care and management of trees; and increasing awareness of their value and importance in our communities. It also provides the Council with a greater degree of awareness in terms of the potential threats to trees in its area.

The greatest proportion of our urban forest is privately owned. The quality of private tree care is variable and ranges from owners who are indifferent, those who are motivated but poorly advised, to owners who take great pride in their trees and are anxious to seek the best advice; and engage qualified and competent contractors to carry out tree work.

Through technical knowledge tree officers have conveyed the benefits of a safe, healthy and productive urban forest as a resource to the community.

### **Policy TP7**

- Continue to offer free advice to residents of Fareham concerning all tree related issues.
- Promote 'Best Practice' and the utilisation of tree works that comply with British Standards.
- Protect significant trees not under Council ownership through the making of Tree Preservation Orders.
- Provide advice to the public on avoiding unnecessary damage to trees.
- The Council will not accept requests to undertake significant works to protected trees without a detailed report from a suitably qualified arboriculturist and if required further supporting evidence.
- Council Officers will continue to provide assistance where possible with regard to high hedge disputes.

## **21 Protection of Trees**

Under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 the Council has powers to make and enforce Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and designate Conservation Areas under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which gives protection to trees of a certain size.

There are over 550 separate TPO's currently in place within Fareham and 13 Conservation Areas.

The majority of trees that provide amenity value within Fareham are in private ownership. The pressures for development within the Borough necessitate the proactive use of TPO's as a tool to sustain the verdant character enjoyed by all.

TPO's place a responsibility on the owners of such trees to request permission from the Council prior to undertaking any pruning or felling works. The Council has a duty to respond to such requests within 8 weeks.

Owners of trees within a Conservation Area have to request permission from the Council before undertaking any tree works. The Council has a duty to respond within 6 weeks either granting permission for the works or by placing a TPO upon the tree or trees affected.

The Council will ensure the process of placing TPO's upon trees within the Borough is undertaken in a consistent manner with clear explanations provided to those directly affected by the decision.

### **Legal Protection – Wildlife & Countryside Act**

Features such as holes and splits in trees are often used as roosting or breeding sites for bats. Bats are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it illegal to intentionally or recklessly 'kill, injure or take', or 'damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place' which supports any bat species.

Nesting birds are also protected under the Act, making it illegal to intentionally 'kill, injure or take any wild bird' or 'take, damage or destroy the nest' of any wild bird intentionally while that nest is in use or being built.

### **Policy TP8**

- Where necessary protect private trees of high amenity value with Tree Preservation Orders.
- Enforce TPO's and Conservation controls.
- Utilise planning conditions and technical supervision to ensure a high standard of arboricultural work to protected trees.
- Enforce the planting of replacement trees for felled trees.
- Continue the review of older TPO's and where necessary revoke out of date orders and serve new ones.
- Evaluate current literature sent out to owners of protected trees to ensure clarification of the TPO procedure.
- Ensure all Council employees whose work may involve them directly or indirectly with trees are provided with suitable training courses to raise their awareness of tree issues.

## **22 Promotion of the Urban Forest**

The challenge will be to constantly channel our communities increasing awareness into long-term urban forestry commitment at local level. As Fareham continues to urbanise, this need increases, as does our obligation to enhance the quality of life in Fareham through healthy urban trees, which deliver multiple benefits.

Currently, Fareham has a number of active volunteer groups who support our Countryside Service and the Fareham in Bloom campaign, but no Tree Wardens.

Tree Wardens are volunteers with an enthusiasm for the protection of their environment and who could work in partnership with Fareham Borough Council, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and The Tree Council.

The scheme represents an opportunity for the Council and the community to work together to protect and enhance the local environment.

Tree Wardens can act as a contact between the local community and the Council. Tree Wardens can provide information and advice to their respective communities. Tree Wardens are people appointed by their community group, residents association, parish council or community council to gather information and to encourage practical projects relating to trees in the community.

### **Policy TP9**

- Continue to support and encourage development of community participation.
- Consider the development of a Tree Warden Scheme in Fareham.
- Continue the 'Adopt a Tree' scheme including tree planting for school children and involve the children in tree planting.

## **23 The Way Forward**

The Council is committed to the protection of trees within the Borough of Fareham and recognises the benefits received by the community as a whole through living and working in a 'well treed environment'.

The nature of our Urban Forest inevitably means that situations will arise where people and trees come into conflict. The Council will ensure that where at all practicable trees are retained for future generations. However, this strategy does provide flexibility in situations when, justified by the facts of the case, trees have to be removed.

### **Policy TP10**

- Develop an action plan to prioritise and further the aims of the strategy.
- Promote the benefit of trees and work with volunteers and other partners to meet the objectives of the strategy.

- Develop ways of linking with the community to aid the establishment of newly planted trees.
- Monitor, review and assess the progress of the strategy every five years through the instigation of agreed indicators.

## 24 Action Plan

Actions		Lead	Timescale
1	<u>Trees in Parks &amp; Public Open Spaces</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an assessment of the principal parks for replanting opportunities.</li> <li>• Implement a replanting programme for principal parks sites.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer + Parks Officers	March 2013 March 2014
2	<u>Housing Trees</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a schedule of rented properties with significant trees in the curtilage.</li> <li>• Undertake a survey and risk assessment of the trees identified and add to tree management database.</li> <li>• Implement a programme of tree works in accordance with the actions identified.</li> <li>• Complete an assessment of amenity housing areas for replanting opportunities.</li> <li>• Implement a replanting programme for amenity housing areas identified.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer + Housing Officer  Principal Tree Officer Principal Tree Officer Principal Tree Officer	March 2013 March 2014 March 2014 March 2013 March 2014
3	<u>New Tree Planting &amp; Maintenance - Council Land</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete annual assessment of the number of trees that have been removed or felled.</li> <li>• Complete annual assessment of new tree survival rates from previous years planting.</li> <li>• Implement schedule of replacement tree planting, where appropriate, prior to undertaking any new tree planting initiatives.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer Principal Tree Officer Principal Tree Officer	Annual target Annual target Annual target
4	<u>Protection of Trees</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce an annual report on the progression of the review of the Council's older tree preservation orders.</li> <li>• Continue to review the number of trees felled or removed with consent or under exemption.</li> <li>• Issue tree replacement notices where appropriate.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer  Principal Tree Officer Principal Tree Officer	Annual  Ongoing

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
5	<u>Planning Policy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Allocation Plans - Provide arboricultural advice and guidance to Policy Officers.</li> <li>• Strategic Development Area and Area Action Plans - Provide arboricultural advice and guidance to Policy Officers.</li> <li>• Strategic Sites and Master Planning - Provide arboricultural advice and guidance to Policy Officers and Planning Consultants.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer + Principal Planner - Strategy Principal Tree Officer + Principal Planner - SDA Principal Tree Officer + Principal Planner - Strategic Sites & Design	LDF Timescales  LDF Timescales  LDF Timescales
6	<u>Promotion of the Urban Forest</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce topical articles relating to trees for publication in Fareham Today.</li> <li>• Undertake a feasibility study into the development of a Tree Warden Scheme in Fareham.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer Principal Tree Officer	Annual 2015
7	<u>Monitor and Review the progress of the Strategy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare an annual update on the progress of the action plan to the Strategic Planning and Environment Policy Development Review Panel.</li> </ul>	Principal Tree Officer	Annual