

# Northleach with Eastington Town Council



## Tree Management Policy

### 1. Purpose

Northleach with Eastington Town Council (“the Council”) values the contribution trees make to the parish and is committed to their long-term stewardship and management.

This policy sets out how the Council will manage trees on the land it owns or occupies. The aim is to maximise the benefits that trees bring while balancing this with public safety and prioritising work according to the available resources.

### 2. Scope

The policy applies to all trees on land owned or occupied by the Council, including its parks and open spaces, cemeteries, and amenity woodland.

It does not cover trees on private land or land owned by other authorities. (For further guidance see section 10).

### 3. Objectives

The Council will:

- Manage tree-related risk in accordance with relevant guidance.
- Conserve and safeguard the trees on its land where reasonably practicable, and plant new trees where feasible.
- Support the aims of the Council’s Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan.
- Respond proportionately and consistently to requests raised by residents.

### 4. Responsibilities

The Council holds the overall responsibility for management of its trees.

Routine maintenance and requests from residents for works to Council-owned trees will be considered by the relevant committee in accordance with this policy.

Responsibility for addressing urgent tree safety issues is delegated to the Town Clerk, who is authorised to commission appropriate works from suitably qualified contractors.

Members of the public are encouraged to report any concerns regarding the condition or safety of Council trees as soon as they become aware of it.

## 5. Tree Risk Management Framework

The Council's approach to tree management will align with the recognised principles of the National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) in [Common Sense Risk Management of Trees](#).

A tiered, risk-based inspection regime of inspection will be employed, including informal observations, formal inspections by suitably qualified and competent persons, and specialist arboricultural assessments where required.

Inspection frequency will depend on zoning and occupancy, with trees in medium occupancy areas near schools, public footpaths, and public open spaces allocated a maximum interval between inspections of three years (36 months).

Each inspection will identify:

- health and structural condition,
- signs of disease or decay,
- urgent safety hazards, and
- any recommended work and the timescale.

In addition to scheduled inspections, trees will be assessed following extreme weather events, including storms, heavy snow, or flooding. These inspections will focus on identifying any new defects or hazards caused by the event.

Although trees are inspected at appropriate intervals, they cannot be monitored at all times and a degree of natural risk will always remain.

## 6. Responding to Tree-Related Risk

Where a tree defect is identified, the Council will assess the level of risk by considering factors including, but not limited to:

- (a) The nature and severity of the defect
- (b) The likelihood of failure
- (c) The potential consequences of failure
- (d) The level of occupancy or use of the site

Works will be prioritised according to the assessed level of risk. Where there is an immediate risk to public safety, emergency works may be undertaken without prior notice. In other cases, works may be programmed as part of planned maintenance, and low risk issues may be monitored where appropriate.

All tree works undertaken will comply with [BS3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations](#) and will be carried out by competent and insured contractors.

Where trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders or are within a Conservation Area, the Council will obtain all necessary consents before proceeding with the work.

The Council will maintain appropriate records of inspections, risk assessments, and any remedial works undertaken.

## **7. Tree Benefits and Biodiversity**

Trees provide a multitude of benefits within our environment including:

- (a) positive impacts on health and wellbeing;
- (b) helping to keep built-up areas cooler;
- (c) reducing pollution in urban areas;
- (d) absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen,
- (e) supporting biodiversity, and
- (f) enhancing the character and appearance of the local area.

The Council recognises the importance of safeguarding these benefits wherever possible.

The Council will seek to retain mature and veteran trees wherever it is reasonably practicable, and will promote the planting and establishment of native and locally appropriate species.

Where trees are removed due to disease, storm damage, or safety concerns, the Council will seek to plant suitable replacements whenever possible.

Tree works will be planned to minimise ecological impacts. Works will normally be avoided during the bird nesting season unless they are required for safety reasons or legal compliance.

## **8. Public Enquiries and Requests**

The Council regularly receives requests to undertake works to trees in its ownership. Requests for tree works will be assessed against safety considerations, legal constraints, environmental value, and available resources.

Tree works will normally take place:

- (a) if dead, dying or dangerous trees or branches are found to be a danger to public safety;
- (b) when trees or branches are creating an unreasonable obstruction for example to a public right of way or access to property;

Trees are natural elements in the environment that undergo natural processes, shedding twigs and branches, and producing leaf litter and other debris. They are hosts to insects and birds. Tree owners are not generally considered responsible in law for the natural products of trees and their hosted communities.

The Council will not normally undertake works solely to address issues such as:

- (c) leaf fall or berries,
- (d) bird droppings,
- (e) sticky sap or honeydew.
- (f) obstruction of views,
- (g) interference with television or broadband reception
- (h) because the trees are perceived as being too large, or
- (i) prevention of shading, unless the trees fall under the 'High Hedges' legislation.

All requests will be considered on their individual merits, and any decision shall not be regarded as setting a precedent.

#### **9. Damage to Property**

Where subsidence or property damage is alleged to have been caused by a tree owned or maintained by the Council, the matter will be referred to and handled by the Council's insurers.

Tree works will only take place where a tree is proven beyond reasonable doubt to be the cause of serious structural damage to buildings, as identified by an independent competent professional assessor.

#### **10. Trees Not Owned by the Council**

The Council has no authority to intervene in matters concerning privately owned trees or in neighbour disputes. Where a tree is alleged to be causing a nuisance, property owners are encouraged to seek an amicable resolution with the tree owner. If this is not possible, independent advice may be obtained from Citizens Advice.

#### **11. Adoption and Review**

This policy was adopted at the meeting on 18 May 2026.

It will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation changes or significant new responsibilities arise.