

TREE SURVEYS

HOW OFTEN DO WE SURVEY THE TREES?

As it stands, we have two criteria for surveying trees.

<p>LOW USE ZONE 5-year survey cycle. Woodlands/open spaces.</p> 	<p>HIGH USE ZONE 2-year survey cycle. Highway trees/communal areas.</p> 
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However, the new policy will use the following criteria once it is approved, see below.

Zone	Visual Assessment Frequency	Criteria
1 - High use	2 years	Tree adjacent to a building or public space where there is a near constant occupancy (24/7). Examples include: a domestic property, care home, a busy road (B road or above), or a busy public thoroughfare (e.g. highstreet).
2 - Medium use	4 years	Tree adjacent to a building or public space that is in use for a large proportion of the day (14 hours and above). Examples include: commercial premises (only open during normal working hours); a minor road or thoroughfare or; a park/public space that is closed over-night.
3 - Low use	6 years	Tree adjacent to an infrequently used local footpath, public open space or individual garden.
4 - Very low use	10 years	Tree within wooded area where access is rare, limited or restricted. Note: Trees on the edge of a wooded area may fall into a different zone depending on the proximity of the wooded area to buildings and public spaces.

CATEGORY - DEAD/DYING/DISEASED/DANGEROUS

- Dying trees are no longer exempt from application. You must now submit a notice to prune or remove dying trees.
- You can remove deadwood from a living tree.
- You must now give five days' notice in writing, if you intend to do work to a dead or dangerous tree, except where the works must be done without delay to ensure public safety. In this case you must tell the authority as soon as possible after the works become necessary. A five-day notice has now become mandatory.
- Dangerous trees are exempt from full application only where they are at imminent risk of causing serious harm. Very few trees are likely to come within this category.
- Consents to carry out works now carry a standard two-year time limit. If works have not been carried out within two years of consent being granted, then a fresh application must be made. This is the same rule that already applies to trees in Conservation Areas.

Trees that are deemed 'imminently dangerous' can have problematic sections removed, or if they are likely to fall, be taken to ground level, but the council must be notified.

TREE FELLING

Tree removal is regrettable, but necessary under a number of circumstances.

The decision to remove a tree is not taken lightly. Trees are usually felled because it is best option to reduce the risk of harm to an acceptable level (e.g. dead, dying or diseased trees).

There are other circumstances where trees may be felled, and these are mostly at the discretion of the arboricultural team, such as where:

1. A tree has been proven to be causing subsidence.
2. The removal of a tree would benefit surrounding trees.
3. It is the requirement of a management plan to enhance the development of neighbouring trees.
4. If a removal and replacement programme is planned for YHG owned trees, residents within the location will be consulted. New trees will be replanted that are suitable to the location.

TREE PRUNING

Substantial pruning of a tree can often weaken its structure and should therefore be avoided for reasons other than reducing risk of harm to people or property. Pruning for any other reasons would be exceptional and at the discretion of the arboricultural team.

WHY WE DON'T CUT HEALTHY TREES DOWN

Tree Touching a Building

If a tree that is owned by the group is touching a property (dwelling, house, garage etc) the group will act to remove the nuisance by the most appropriate means.

Trees Blocking Natural Light

YHG will not prune or fell a tree owned or managed by the group to improve natural light to a property unless it is required by a court order to do so.

Leaves Fall from Trees

YHG will not prune or fell a tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce leaf fall or remove fallen leaves from private property. The loss of leaves from trees in the autumn is part of the natural cycle and cannot be avoided by pruning. The falling of leaves onto a neighbouring property is not regarded in law as a statutory nuisance.

Sap from Trees

YHG will not prune or fell a tree owned or managed by the group to prevent or reduce honeydew or other sticky residue falling onto private property. Honeydew is caused by greenfly (aphids) feeding on the sap from the leaves and excreting their sugary, sticky waste. Pruning the tree may only offer temporary relief and any re-growth is often more likely to be colonised by greenfly thereby potentially increasing the problem.

Blossom from Trees

YHG will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce blossom fall from trees or remove fallen blossom from private land. Blossom is a natural occurrence, which cannot be avoided by pruning and is not regarded in law as a statutory nuisance.

Bird Droppings from Trees

YHG will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce bird droppings from the tree or remove bird droppings from private land or property. Bird droppings may be a seasonal nuisance, but the problem is not considered to be a sufficient reason to prune or remove a tree. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and other related wildlife law).

Fruit, Berries & Nuts from Trees

YHG will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce the occurrence of fruit, berries or nuts falling onto footways or private land. Fruit trees such as apple, cherry and pear are welcomed in many locations with the added benefit of providing free food.

Wildlife and Insects in Trees

YHG will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce incidence of Bees, Wasps and other insects or wild animals. Bees are protected species and advice should be taken before considering their removal.

Satellite, Television and Other Communications Reception Blocked by Trees

Your Housing Group will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to enable or ease installation or improve reception of satellite or television receivers. It maybe that your satellite or TV provider will be able to suggest an alternative solution to the problem, for example relocating the aerial/dish or means to boost the signal.

Benefits of Trees

Trees are a valuable functional component of the urban landscape – they also make a significant contribution to:

- People's health and quality of life
- Trees clean the air
- Provide natural flood defences
- Mask noise
- Promote a general sense of wellbeing

Public Health and Social Benefits

Clean air: Trees produce oxygen, intercept airborne particulates, and reduce smog, enhancing a community's respiratory health. The urban canopy directly contributes to meeting a city's regulatory clean air requirements. Access to trees, green spaces, and parks promotes greater physical activity, and reduces stress, while improving the quality of life in our cities and towns.

Environmental Benefits

Climate change: Trees sequester carbon (CO₂), reducing the overall concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Energy Conservation

1. A tree is a natural air conditioner. The evaporation from a single tree can produce the cooling effect of ten room-size, residential air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.
2. Tree windbreaks can reduce residential heating costs 10-15%; while shading and evaporative cooling from trees can cut residential air-conditioning costs 20-50%.

Wildlife Habitat

1. Trees provide important habitats for numerous bird, insect and animal species.

Economic Benefits

Communities with healthy tree-cover attract new residents, industry, and commercial activity.

1. Homes landscaped with trees sell more quickly and are worth 5% to 15% more than homes without trees.
2. Where the entire street is tree-lined, homes may be worth 25% more.

Fun Facts

1. Trees provide inviting and cool areas for recreation and relaxation such as playgrounds and parks.
2. Trees create a tapestry of colour and interesting form that changes throughout the year.
3. The colour green is calming and relieves eye strain.
4. Trees screen unattractive views and soften the harsh outline of masonry, metal, asphalt, steel and glass.
5. People walk and jog more on shaded streets, which encourages interaction with neighbours and improves the sense of community.
6. Trees absorb and block sound, reducing noise pollution by as much as 40 percent.