



## WENDOVER PARISH COUNCIL

Address: The Clock Tower, High Street, Wendover,  
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP22 6DU  
Telephone: 01296 623056 Fax: 0871 236 1550  
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# Tree Policy

## Introduction

This policy sets out Wendover Parish Council's approach to the management of trees on land owned by Wendover Parish Council only. Other Councils, organisations, companies and private individuals may need to be contacted if a tree(s) is located on their land.

This document has been created to provide guidance for the public, Councillors and Council employees to ensure a clear and consistent approach is adhered to regarding management of trees by Wendover Parish Council.

If a tree falls and causes injury or damage, the relevant landowner could be held negligent if they have failed to take sufficient care of the tree. Therefore, as a landowner, the Council has a duty of care to ensure that all trees on Parish Council-owned land are kept in an acceptable condition and do not put people or property at unreasonable risk.

The Council is responsible for over 175 trees on land within the park and open spaces it owns. These areas are identified as Ashbrook Open Space, Witchell Open Space, Hampden Meadow, Hampden Pond.

Trees situated within the public highway, adjacent to the road or on a roadside verge, are generally the responsibility of Buckinghamshire Council. Please refer to: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/>

## The Benefits of Trees

Trees have many benefits, for example they:

- Provide valuable habitat for wildlife
- Provide pleasant green settings in which we work and live
- Filter atmospheric pollution and release oxygen
- Stabilise Soil – particularly important on site adjacent to water bodies
- Provide shelter from the sun, wind and rain
- Provide a barrier to noise and screening poor views
- Soften the impact of development
- Commemorate or celebrate individuals, events and communities.

## Inspections

Wendover Parish Council uses two levels of inspection to identify the level of risk associated with trees dependant on the circumstances.

### 1) Non-Specialist Survey

Members of the grounds team report trees that are observed through their daily work activities. Low risk/low level maintenance tasks will be conducted by the grounds team. If a more detailed inspection is required, the contracted WPC Tree Surgeon will be instructed to inspect.



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### 2) Detailed Arboricultural Inspection

A comprehensive inspection by an Arboricultural Consultant will be conducted every three years. The inspection will assess:

- Age – from Immature through to Dying/Dead
- Risk Zone – lightly used area, regularly but not intensively used area, close to main public areas
- Category Indication – from trees requiring no work in the foreseeable future to trees that require urgent attention.

Other than low risk/low level work resulting from inspections works will be carried out by the contracted WPC Tree Surgeon or other specialist services contractors.

Notable inspections dates and outcomes will be shared with the Amenities Committee and minuted accordingly.

### Maintenance

The Council has adopted a proactive approach to tree maintenance. However, only essential/minimal works will be undertaken in order to manage a tree because the Council supports a policy of tree preservation.

Regular inspections will be carried out to identify issues at the earliest juncture, so that preventive action can be taken where possible. Areas close to roads, buildings and with high public usage will be prioritised

As a guide, tree works will be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- Where an inspection has identified the tree as potentially hazardous or an immediate danger
- If the works are vital to the tree's long-term survival. Dead, dying or diseased trees will only be fully removed when there is no other option.
- To abate an actionable nuisance where branches are touching buildings e.g. physical contact with walls, windows, gutters.
- When previous maintenance regimes have determined future works are of the same specification for that specimen e.g. pollarding, crown reduction

### Wildlife Impact and Replacement Planting

The impact on local wildlife of all tree works, specifically felling and pruning, will always be thoroughly considered, with the impact minimised where possible.

If tree works are required in the bird nesting season (March- August) trees will be examined for evidence of nesting. Where a bird's nest is found, tree works will be delayed until the end of the nesting season, unless there is a serious safety concern.

No tree works will be undertaken on trees where there is potential to impact upon protected species such as bats and badgers until consultation has been undertaken with appropriate external consultants.



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Where appropriate, dead and fallen wood will be left on site unless there are sound conservation or safety reasons for its removal.

To help maintain the continuity of tree cover on WPC land, the Council will undertake the planting of new trees where suitable opportunities arise. If a tree inspection results in a tree removal, the Council will ensure a new tree is planted as a replacement. Replacement trees will be substantial in size; however the replanting location cannot be guaranteed.

The Council will select trees that are appropriate for their location and the anticipated maintenance need throughout the life of the tree.

### **Protected Trees**

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) prevents cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or destruction of trees (including cutting roots) without permission.

It is an offence to cut down, lop, top, uproot or wilfully damage or destroy a tree in a Conservation Area without giving prior written notice to Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC).

WPC will seek additional approval from the Tree Officer and Planning Department at AVDC for trees on which there is a TPO or from the Conservation Officer, if located in the Conservation area.

### **Requests for Tree Work**

Whilst the Council will consider the impact of trees in each case on individual merit, the Council will not fell or prune trees on Parish Council-owned land if it is for any of the following non-arboricultural reasons:

- Solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/or seasonal phenomena e.g. falling leaves, fruit, seeds/berries, bird droppings, pollen
- Solely for reasons of increasing sunlight/views to properties and gardens.
- Solely for the reason that the tree(s) is causing interference with television or satellite reception. In most cases the problem can be resolved by relocating the aerial or satellite dish. Residents are advised to contact their satellite or TV provider for specialist advice.

Tree roots in gardens are a natural occurrence and root presence is unlikely to be affected by tree pruning or removal. Tree felling and branch pruning in response to root invasion in gardens would not normally be appropriate as such works are likely to worsen the problem.

The encroachment of roots into adjoining land is not considered to amount to actionable nuisance. Adjacent landowners have a common law right to prune back tree roots to their boundary, providing that this would not lead to tree death and providing that the tree in question is not protected by a TPO or situated within a Conservation Area.

Landowners are reminded that if access to Council-owned land is required to carry out pruning you will require written permission from the Parish Council before carrying out such works.

The Parish Council will consider formal applications for tree works on its land, but these must be in writing, either by letter or email to:



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### Document History

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