



The Vestry Rooms  
25 Fore Street  
St Erth TR27 6HT  
Tel: 01736 757575  
Email: [clerk@sterth-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@sterth-pc.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.sterth-pc.gov.uk](http://www.sterth-pc.gov.uk)

## Tree Management Policy

### Introduction

Trees help to add a variety to our landscape and provide valuable habitats for many species, while providing us with cleaner air. St Erth Parish Council aims to preserve its trees for future generations to enjoy.

### Purpose

This policy outlines St Erth Parish Council's approach to the management of trees on land both owned and maintained by the Council. It is intended to act as a point of reference for members of the public, councillors and council employees to ensure a clear, consistent and structured approach to the management of trees.

### Scope

This policy covers any trees on all land that is either owned or managed by the Council. It does not cover work to bushes and / or shrubs.

Any queries relating to trees on land belonging to or managed by the Council should be made to the Clerk at [clerk@sterth-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@sterth-pc.gov.uk) or by calling 01736 757575.

### Risk Assessment

The Council has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to manage its trees to reduce the risk of death or injury to those on parish council land. It is not possible to eliminate all risks from trees, however there are often indications that a tree may be in decline.

The Council employs a professional and independent consultant who is a member of the Arboricultural Association to undertake a Risk Assessment every 3 years, or more frequently where an individual tree has been found to require closer attention. The risk assessment is carried out using the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) method for significant tree defects which pose a hazard to users of the site.

QTRA quantifies the risk of significant harm from tree failure in a way that enables tree managers to balance safety with tree values and operate to predetermined limits of tolerable or acceptable risk. By quantifying the risk from tree failure as a probability, QTRA enables a tree owner or manager to manage the risk in accordance with widely applied and internationally recognised levels of risk tolerance. QTRA provides a decision-making framework which considers the balance between the benefits provided by trees, levels of risk they pose, and costs of risk management.

## **Tree Maintenance**

Tree maintenance schedules are drawn up in accordance with the Risk Assessment and quotes sought for any work required.

The Council will also give consideration to any complaints or requests for maintenance from the public regarding trees on Council owned or managed land, taking into account this tree management policy and advice from a qualified tree surgeon.

If a Council owned or managed tree is inspected and found to be in such a condition that it poses a high risk to people or property and is considered to be an emergency situation, instruction will be given to the Council's current tree contractor to make the tree safe as soon as practicably possible.

If a tree is identified as requiring action, but the risk to the public is not immediate, then the tree will be made safe depending on the degree of risk identified at the time of inspection.

## **Tree Works**

Tree works may include, but are not limited to, pruning, felling, removal of branches or roots.

### **Tree works will take place:**

- if there are dead, dying or dangerous trees and branches that are found to be a danger to public safety;
- when trees or branches are creating an unreasonable obstruction to a public highway, highways signage, public right of way or access to property;
- where a tree is causing an unacceptable trip hazard on the public highway, public right of way or access to a property;
- 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.

### **Tree works may take place outside of the maintenance schedule:**

- when a tree is deemed by the Council to be an inappropriate species for its situation;
- to ensure that a streetlight can perform to its design specification without being unduly blocked by the presence of trees;
- where a tree / branch is touching, or almost touching, a dwelling – we aim to give a minimum of 1.5m clearance in these situations;
- to maintain historic vistas or in the interest of preservation of heritage structures;
- when a tree gives rise to justifiable fears about risk of crime, or has provided access and / or cover for criminal activity;
- when a tree / branch restricts grounds maintenance operations;
- to a tree which needs formative pruning to shape or train it during the early years;
- where thinning of trees will benefit adjacent specimens or those of more favourable species;
- where a tree is a species which is known to ultimately outgrow its location and in doing so unreasonably restricts the use of the area;
- where a tree restricts repairs and maintenance of property;
- to protect or enhance biodiversity;
- to improve the aesthetics of the designed landscape.

### **Tree works will not take place:**

- just because a tree is considered to be ‘too big’ or ‘too tall’, or to cut back branches of a healthy tree overhanging private property;
- to remove or reduce any of the following, other than in extreme circumstances: leaves, sticky sap, blossom, tree pollen, bird droppings, falling fruit / berries / nuts;
- to remove or reduce incidence of perceived pests such as bees, wasps, or other wildlife;
- to prevent roots entering a drain or pipe that is already broken or damaged;
- where the tree has not been clearly demonstrated to be the principal cause of damage to structures;
- to improve natural light or the view from a property;
- to prevent interference with TV or satellite TV installation / reception or to prevent the shading of solar panels.

### **Carrying Out Tree Works Yourself**

A property owner has a legal right to deal with the nuisance associated with trees encroaching on their own property.

The following advice is given where there is a wish to exercise the right to Common Law with respect to encroaching trees:

- remove only those parts of the tree from the point where they cross the boundary of the property;
- there is no legal right to cut or remove any part of a tree that does not overhang the property;
- it is strongly advised that a professional tree surgeon is consulted for guidance on how best to prune back encroaching trees, unless the works are trivial meaning that works could be carried out with hand secateurs or similar;
- any work done to a tree is not detrimental to its health or stability;
- the Council must be informed of any plan to carry out work on Council owned or managed trees;
- before carrying out works to trees, it is strongly advised that checks are made as to whether the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order or if they are in a Conservation Area; if either of the above applies, consent is required by making an application / giving notice to the Planning Department at Cornwall Council;
- the Council reserves the right to recover costs in the event that a tree is damaged, and requires corrective action, as a result of works carried out on a Council owned or managed tree by a member of the public.

The Council has no authority to intervene in a dispute between neighbours where non-Council owned trees are causing a nuisance or damage to property.

### **Replanting**

For every tree that the Council has to fell, at least one other tree will be replanted somewhere in the Parish, at a location to be agreed.

If any newly planted tree dies within five years it will be replaced.

|            |                           |                |
|------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Adopted    | 4 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 | 051/07/23-24a) |
| Review due | July 2024 then 3 yearly   |                |