

Tree and Hedgerow Management Policy For Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council

General Principles

The Parish Council has adopted the following principles in relation to trees on Parish Council land –

- It will take a responsible approach to tree management and to any risks which they may pose to people and surrounding property
- It will be prudent in identifying any such risks
- It will take steps to reduce these risks
- Monitor Dorset Council, Tree Work Planning Applications for tree works on private property and comment on them when asked to do so.
- In maintaining our trees we will:
 - Remove dead, dying and dangerous trees
 - Remove dangerous and damaged limbs
 - Replace lost trees where possible
 - (All works to be carried out by an Authorized Tree Surgeon)
 - Ensure new trees planted, are healthy and free from disease, they must come from a reputable nursery, who can track the history of the tree for biosecurity measures.
- To survey our trees on a regular basis, but if trees require works under this section, members of the public should contact: Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council Tree Warden, Telephone: 01300 342193 or email: sydlingstnicholas@dorset-aptc.gov.uk
- The trees will be inspected and if works are required this will be programmed as necessary.

The Woodland Trust states that “trees and hedgerows are important features in the landscape; providing food and shelter for wildlife’.

The Parish Council accepts that as well as being central to the visual character of the Parish, trees and hedgerows create a diverse habitat and wildlife corridors for a variety of wildflowers, bugs, birds and mammals. They are also useful in flood prevention and absorbing noise and particulate pollution.

The rest of this policy provides further details of the approaches the Parish Council will use to preserve, enhance and manage trees and hedgerows on their land.

General Policy

This policy defines the Council’s approach to tree and hedgerow management on its land. It is intended to be a point of reference for the Public, Councillors and Officers to ensure a consistent and structured approach to the management of the Parish Council’s trees and hedgerows. This policy sets out a proactive and systematic method of management that will both conserve and enhance our tree population and hedgerows and the amenity value of our land. For sites of special character or that have trees and hedgerows of particular significance, this general policy will be supplemented with the site’s particular management needs.

Tree Protection

Due care will be taken by the Council to ensure that damage to trees by mowing and strimming is prevented. Longer grass margins around trees may be left. Protection will be provided for newly planted or young trees where appropriate, for example, timber posts surrounded by wire mesh.

Tree Inspections

The council has a duty to care for its trees and will use a qualified tree surgeon to inspect all trees every two years.

The Council will also consider requests to conduct tree work on the Council's land from local residents. If the request concerns a potentially dangerous tree, the tree will be inspected and recommended works will be scheduled as soon as possible. If the request is non-urgent, the Clerk will place the request on the next Parish Council Agenda. If agreed, an inspection will be undertaken. In all cases the local resident will be informed of any actions taken.

The Council recognises the importance of mature and ancient trees and will balance safety with a duty to protect the environment, ensuring only essential/minimal works are undertaken in order to preserve a tree.

Tree Felling

The Council will avoid felling trees unless it is necessary. This will usually be for health and safety purposes or to prevent the spread of serious tree diseases and pests. However, the Council reserve the right to fell trees to prevent overcrowding, to improve habitats or restore landscapes in line with site management or where a tree is inappropriate to its location and has a significantly detrimental impact on the amenity of the site.

Woody Debris

Where appropriate woody debris will be used to provide or extend wildlife habitats in the vicinity or offered to local residents for this purpose.

Maintenance

Tree work will be prioritised and carried out according to the following criteria:

Emergency; Dangerous trees requiring immediate attention

Desirable Work; Actions to improve tree health

Non-essential Work; Actions to thin or prune Parish Council owned trees

Tree maintenance will be carried out by contractors who are qualified tree surgeons. All tree works will comply with BS3988:2110 Recommendations for Tree Work and any subsequent Revisions.

Tree Pruning

This will be carried out for health and safety reasons, such as to remove lower branches growing over a road or public areas

Or where it benefits the health of a tree, for example pollarding to extend the lifespan of a tree and prevent splitting

The Council will not undertake tree pruning or maintenance –

- In response to natural occurrences that do not pose a health and safety risk, such as falling leaves, fruit, berries, seeds, bird droppings, pollen etc.
- Solely for reasons of increasing sun light/views to properties and gardens

- During the nesting season, unless work is for health and safety reasons usually from **1st March to 31st August**.
- If a tree contains roosting bats, unless work is for health and safety reasons
- Where trees have a negative impact on television reception
- On trees overhanging an adjacent property, unless work is for health and safety reasons. Landowners have a common law right to prune back tree branches to their boundary, providing that would not lead to tree death and providing the tree is not protected by a TPO or within a Conservation Area.
- To remove dead branches from trees located in relatively quiet locations due to their ecological value, unless work is for health and safety reasons

Conservation Area and Tree Preservation Orders

A Tree Preservation Order is a form of planning control. It prevents cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or destruction of trees without permission from the Dorset Council.

The same protections apply to trees in a Conservation Area and also require permission from the Dorset Council Planning Department.

Consent is required to work on trees in a Conservation Area or that are protected by a TPO. Planning applications to Dorset Council are usually dealt within 6 weeks.

Hedgerows

Hedgerows are an important feature in the village. They may have marked important historical boundaries and their loss is to be discouraged. Hedgerows provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife.

The Council will –

- aim to increase infill or new planting of native hedge species on sites they own within the parish.

The Council will not undertake hedge pruning or maintenance –

- During the nesting season, unless work is for health and safety reasons. The main nesting and breeding season is recognised as being between **1 March to 31 August**.

APPENDIX A – Parish Council Owned Land;

The Village Green

The Play Park

The Spiny

The Village Hall grounds

APPENDIX B;

Common Law – Advice on Cutting of Tree Branches Not Protected by a TPO or within a Conservation Area

Provided the tree is not protected by a TPO or situated in a Conservation Area, then Under Common Law a person may cut back any branch (or root) from a neighbour's tree that overhangs or encroaches on their property. In cutting back any overhanging branches (or encroaching roots) the following points need to be observed –

- You must not proceed across Parish Council Land with the intention to perform unauthorised tree works without written permission.
- Branches or roots must not be cut back beyond the boundary of privately owned land.
- Any branches, fruit or roots removed must be returned to the owner unless they otherwise agreed
- All work must be carried out carefully to avoid damaging property or carrying out work that would leave the tree unsafe or dangerous, or would lead to the death of the tree.

Contact details:

Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council; <https://www.parish-council.com>

Sydling St. Nicholas Parish Clerk: Mr D Green

email: sydlingstnicholas@dorset-aptc.gov.uk

Sydling St Nicholas Parish Council Tree Warden; Shell Durack

Telephone: 01300 342193: Email; shell.durack@gmail.com

If you are planning to carry out work to any tree(s) on Privately owned Land, within a Conservation Area you will need to give Dorset Council Planning Dept. 6 weeks notice of the proposed work. You can download the 'Tree works: trees in conservation areas/ subject to TPOs' application form via the Planning Portal. During the 6 weeks notice they will consider whether the tree is worthy of a tree preservation order.

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/countryside-management/tree-management/trees-in-conservation-areas>

Trees on other open spaces may be the responsibility of Dorset Council.

Trees situated within the public highway, adjacent to the road or on roadside verges, are generally the responsibility of Dorset Council. You can contact them on: Dorset **Tree and**

Environment Team for North & West Dorset

Telephone; 01258 484248

Email: treeteamwest@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

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Sydling St. Nicholas Parish Council