

EPPING TOWN COUNCIL

Tree Management Policy

Epping Town Council is committed to protecting, maintaining and enhancing the landscape and trees in Epping under our ownership, working in partnership with our neighbouring Councils where appropriate, for the benefit of current and future generations.

The health and wellbeing of our trees is a priority, which is managed alongside public safety. Epping Town Council are a large town council, but our staffing resources do not allow for tree works that are not essential or fundamental to our aims.

As the owner of trees, we have a responsibility to ensure that our trees do not pose a danger to the public or property.

Epping Town Council will:

- Keep a record of trees in our ownership, details of inspections and any risks. In 2023/24, we undertook external reports to support our operations.
- Conduct a regular assessment of trees in our ownership to identify any low, medium and high risks;
- Keep a record of any tree maintenance and demonstrate how we have responded to any risks;
- Staff/contractors conducting inspections are appropriately trained and/or qualified;
- All work identified through the inspection programme is undertaken by suitably qualified staff or contractors;
- The risk to life and property, as a result of tree deterioration, is kept to as low a level as is reasonably practicable through the operation of this policy;
- Ensure a suitable budget is available to maintain our trees in accordance with our priorities.

Tree Maintenance

Any tree work will only be undertaken by the Town Council in accordance with the following priority list:

Priority 1 - Public Safety

Work which removes actual hazards to safeguard the public and property.

Priority 2 - Remedial/Preventative Works

Works to:

1. a) remove potential hazards that may subsequently threaten public safety or property;
2. b) prevent or minimise the effects of a tree on the structure of a property (e.g. preventative subsidence related work).

Priority 3 - Management of Veteran Trees

Where public safety is not compromised, work which:

1. a) conserves trees with high ecological value and,
2. b) preserves trees with significant local historical and/or aesthetic value.

Priority 4 - Young Tree Maintenance

The Town Council will undertake all work which:

1. a) assists the establishment of young trees with significant life expectancy; and,
2. b) enables new tree planting to reach its full potential.

Priority 5 - Nuisance Management*

Remedial work where:

- i. trees are causing an actionable nuisance to a neighbouring property e.g. root/branch encroachment over property boundaries **where damage has occurred** or is likely to do so imminently.
- ii. a tree is thought to be causing a nuisance which does not threaten public safety or property, the Council will consider appropriate remedial works during the next programmed cyclic inspection of that tree.

The Town Council will not normally undertake one-off, reactive inspections to consider general nuisance issues such as: -

- Shade onto a garden or property;
- Deposits of seed/leaf litter;
- Tree is considered too large;
- Summer honeydew deposits;
- Droppings from roosting birds;
- TV reception interference**

References:

***(In accordance with guidance received from our principal authority; Epping Forest District Council):** 'Where requests are made to prune Council owned/managed trees that overhang a boundary each instance will be assessed on its merits. Generally, the Council will undertake work to lessen tree encroachment, where the extent of that encroachment is considered significant in relation to the size and position of the trees. Where a tree's branches touch or are very close to a building, this work will take priority. Where overhang of the boundary is relatively minor or at considerable height, works may not be undertaken.'

**** (In accordance with guidance received from our principal authorities; Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council):** 'Council will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the Council to enable or ease installation or improve reception of satellite/television receivers. This is to ensure sufficient resources are available to cater for the highest priority work such as trees posing a danger to people or property.'

There are now many other ways to manage TV reception/satellite issues.

Approved: March 2024. Next review: Feb 2026