



# Binfield Parish Council

## Tree Management Policy

---

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the approach Binfield Parish Council takes on trees for which they are responsible.

### 2.0 BUDGET

Each year a budget (based on average of previous years spends) will be allocated to tree work – both inspection and the work itself. All spend will be agreed by the Amenity Committee unless work is identified which is urgent (e.g., following storm damage) when the Clerk will authorise work in line with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations (2018). If required, further funds can be drawn from open spaces reserves but this will require approval by Council following a recommendation from the Amenity Committee.

### 3.0 ANNUAL AUDIT AND CARRYING OUT OF TREE WORK

The Parish Council will engage a specialist to carry out a tree audit every year. The Parish trees will be split into two areas which will be audited every other year. Every Parish tree will be surveyed in a two-year period. The tree specialist appointed must be skilled in both specialist trees (such as those in the Arboretum at Silver Jubilee) as well as more common trees and be independent from those contractors who may undertake the work. All work recommended by the tree specialist will be reviewed and actioned accordingly. Where a tree(s) is close to residential properties, the inspector would be asked to look for possible risk to property and that this may require access from a resident's property which would, as far as possible be arranged in advance. Work will be categorised as A, B and C which are defined as:

3.1 Category A – Those trees in such a condition that part(s) of the tree requires urgent attention. It may be that these trees should be cordoned off until the works have been completed. Category A work will always be actioned promptly and if necessary, under delegated authority to the Clerk (Financial Regulations 2017)

3.2 Category B – Those trees requiring attention to prevent part(s) of the tree from causing damage or injury. Category B work will be actioned in a programme of works agreed by the Tree Specialist, the Council (Amenity Committee) and the contractor appointed following a review by the Amenity Committee and a recommendation to Council.

3.3 Category C – Those trees requiring routine works. These works are not required to be completed urgently but it is recommended that they are carried out to prevent future inconvenience or costs. C work will be carried out subject to available budget in any given year. C work may be carried over to a future year.

### 4.0 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

The Parish Council will ensure that any tree preservation order is recorded, and all parish owned Trees with TPO's are identifiable. Before any work is carried out on a tree with a TPO the necessary permissions will be obtained.

### 5.0 RESIDENT REQUESTS TO CARRY OUT TREE WORK NOT SPECIFIED IN THE TREE AUDIT

At times, the Parish will receive requests from residents who live adjacent to land owned by the Parish Council to carry out tree work. If the work has not been recommended by the Tree Audit, then it is unlikely to be work that is essential for either the health of the tree or the health and safety of the public. However, it may be that the tree is causing a legal nuisance such as obstructing footpaths or damaging buildings. An assessment for legal nuisance will be carried out and the Parish Council will

Reviewed: February 2024

Adopted: 13 February 2024

Next Review Date: February 2025



# Binfield Parish Council

## Tree Management Policy

---

seek expert advice, e.g., from the Tree Auditor or the Parks & Countryside Dept at Bracknell Forest Council. If such nuisance is determined, then the Parish Council will take appropriate corrective action. Legal nuisance does not cover overhanging branches (which can be removed by the party); right to light or bird mess from nearby trees.

### 6.0 **INSURANCE CLAIMS REGARDING PARISH TREES**

From time to time the parish council receives correspondence linking parish trees to insurance claims, usually for subsidence. All correspondence will be forwarded to the current insurance provider. Any evidence that is provided by claimants should be reviewed by a suitably qualified person, for example a BFC Tree Officer (if the tree is protected by TPO or conservation area) or an independent arboricultural specialist. Expenditure related to one off tree assessments should be fully approved by the Amenities Committee and may, if necessary be funded from Reserves with the agreement of Council.

### 7.0 **REPLANTING/PLANTING OF NEW TREES**

When reviewing quarterly plans for areas the topic of new tree planting will always be considered. Where trees are removed due to a recommendation from the annual tree audit, a recommendation will be sought for suitable replacement trees (species, location) and where possible this recommendation will be accommodated. Note that the UK Government's biodiversity net gain toolkit will increasingly inform these decisions.

### 8.0 **VETERAN TREES (INCLUDING ANCIENT TREES)**

Several trees on land owned by the Parish are classified as "veteran trees"<sup>1</sup>. A veteran tree can be defined as: 'a tree that is of interest biologically, culturally or aesthetically because of its age, size or condition'. Some trees are instantly recognisable as veterans, but many are less obvious. Ancient trees are a subset of veteran trees that are exceptionally valuable for their biodiversity, cultural and heritage value. They are irreplaceable habitats<sup>2</sup>. There are only a couple of ancient trees in the parish. Where a tree is identified as a veteran tree the following principles should apply: -

- 8.1 Ensure that all necessary consents are obtained for work to be carried out, e.g., TPO consent
- 8.2 Avoid or mitigate any potentially adverse practices (e.g., involving soil compaction or chemical applications) at least within protected areas around individual trees or groups. Where possible establish root protection areas from the tree stem to a distance equal to 15 times its diameter or 5 metres beyond the canopy, whichever is the greater.
- 8.3 Frequency of mowing will be reduced or removed altogether dependent upon the location of the tree.
- 8.4 If a veteran tree is in good health and conditions have not changed significantly usual maintenance practices should be maintained
- 8.5 If the tree is in poor health, or soil conditions have significantly deteriorated then there should be an assessment made of whether it is possible to ameliorate the conditions, e.g., mulching or aeration of the soil

---

<sup>1</sup> Veteran and ancient trees are shown on the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Index - <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> More information on ancient woodland, ancient trees, veteran trees and the related government policies can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keepers-of-time-ancient-and-native-woodland-and-trees-policy-in-england>



# Binfield Parish Council

## Tree Management Policy

---

- 8.6 If tree work is recommended because of the biennial tree survey the least harmful form of work should be chosen
- 8.7 Only contractors with experience in the management of veteran trees will be sought to quote for tree work.
- 8.8 Veteran trees will have a visual inspection after each high wind event by the parish office team and, if required, an expert assessment will be sought.
- 9.0 **CONSERVATION AREAS**  
Where a parish owned/managed tree is in an area designated as a Conservation Area by Bracknell Forest Council then the Parish must also seek the agreement of the Tree Officers at Bracknell Forest Council before work can take place. This is in addition to any protection on trees with TPOs.
- 10.0 **BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
The borough will consult Binfield Parish Council before carrying out any proposed works on veteran trees within the Parish.
- 11.0 **HEDGEROWS**  
Hedgerows are not covered by this tree management policy but managed separately under the open spaces contract.
- 12.0 **KEEPING THIS POLICY UP TO DATE**  
The Parish Council will keep its tree management policy up to date in line with any changes in regulations and will seek guidance when required from relevant bodies and specialists where appropriate.