

Tree Strategy



Policy Document

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Tree Strategy

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Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Importance of Trees

Trees are a vital part of our natural life support system cleaning the air we breathe, moderating climatic extremes and contributing to the health and well being of the community. They are amongst the most significant features in the landscape and provide a habitat for many other species. For hundreds of years trees have been cultivated not just for timber, food, shelter and medicine but simply for their intrinsic beauty. They are a part of our history and culture and have been worshipped, celebrated and revered in myth and folklore.

The tree, woods and forests of the Staffordshire Moorlands are part of a vital national asset providing multiple economic, social and environmental benefits which can be broadly divided into four key areas.

1.1.1 Quality of Life

Trees are important to the quality of life. They provide a sense of place and continuity, also research shows that trees are associated with our mental and physical health and provide a sense of well being. Trees in public spaces provide opportunities for outdoor activities whether this is by providing attractive parks and open spaces for walking, enjoying nature and sports, or by direct public involvement in planting and caring for trees. They also provide a focus for environmental education and raising awareness.

Trees produce the oxygen that we breathe and absorb the green house gas carbon dioxide and store it in their wood. They also improve the air quality by trapping particulates on their leaves and absorbing harmful gases. Woodlands and dense groups of trees can also be effective at reducing noise pollution. Trees also affect the local climate and can shelter properties from wind and sun; research shows that trees can reduce the energy needed to heat or cool properties. In the advent of climate change and the need to become more fuel efficient, trees will have a more important role to play in this area. Trees also reduce flash flooding by intercepting rainfall.

1.1.2 Amenity

Many people appreciate the intrinsic beauty of trees providing ornamentation and variation through the seasons. Trees also screen or soften unsightly views and give an area a sense of local distinctness. Mature trees play an important role in the character of many of the Conservation Areas in the district and complement the built environment. This has been shown by research that indicates that property values can be greater where houses are set within mature treescapes.

Trees are also important landscape elements in the open countryside of the Staffordshire Moorlands. Whilst the high moorland may rightly be largely devoid of trees, nevertheless occasional groups of trees sheltering buildings or occupying wooded cloughs and valleys form part of the landscape character of these areas. In lower lying areas trees and woodlands are more widespread and an intrinsic part of the landscape structure. In particular they are found along field boundaries, around settlements, in private or public gardens, parks and open spaces, along rivers and transport routes, and in woodlands associated with agricultural land and rural estates.

1.1.3 Biodiversity

Trees and woodlands are an integral part of the ecosystem providing habitats for many species including protected species some of which are completely dependent on them. Trees provide nesting and roosting opportunities for birds and bats. Fruit and seed produced by trees provides a sustainable food source for various animals and birds. Invertebrates, lichens, moss, fungi and also ground fauna such as bluebells and other woodland species are also dependent on trees. Older and veteran trees are particularly important for biodiversity providing unique and increasingly rare habitats for many specialised species. Dead wood is also important for biodiversity; it can provide a variety of important habitats either as dead branches and decay within a living tree, as a standing dead tree or on the ground.

1.1.4 Economic

Trees and woodlands can provide an economic benefit. This may be directly through the production and sale of wood products such as structural timber, furniture, paper, wood-based crafts, biomass fuel and firewood. There may also be an indirect or hidden financial value; some of the environmental benefits noted in Section 1.1.1 above may also bring about cost savings by way of energy reduction, flood reduction and pollution mitigation. In addition, tourism or recreational use of woodland sites may give opportunities for income generation.

1.2 **Policy Context**

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) produced *Trees in Towns II* (February 2008), a report based on a national survey of urban trees and their management. This set a number of targets that Local Government should achieve including the implementation of a comprehensive tree strategy.

This Tree Strategy for the Staffordshire Moorlands is based on the principals of biodiversity and sustainability as set out in the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro

(1992) as well as other national and regional policies relating to biodiversity and creating sustainable communities.

International

- Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, 1992

National

- Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- Town and Country Planning (Trees) (England) Regulations 2012
- Planning Practice Guidance – Tree Preservation Orders and Trees in Conservation Areas 2014
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) (Chapter 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)
- A Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests (2007) (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
- Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement (2013)
- Trees in Towns II (2008) (Department for Communities and Local Government)
- Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution – The Urban Environment (2007)
- Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan (1994)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000

County/Regional

- Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (first published 1998, as updated)
- A Living Landscape – A Biodiversity Action Plan For The Peak District (2001)
- Planning for Landscape Change: Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan 1996 – 2011 (2000), in particular Appendix 2: A Strategic Statement on Preferred Areas for Woodland Initiatives

Local

- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Corporate Plan 2015-2019
- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (including the Core Strategy adopted 2014 and various supporting Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance, Area Action Plans and Masterplans)

This Tree Strategy also has linkages to other areas of national and regional policy:

- Climate Change – changes to current distribution of flora and fauna;
- Health – recreation, quality of life;
- Environment – environmental benefits of trees and woodlands;
- Protected species – Habitats Directive and biodiversity action plans;
- Regional Economic Strategy – regeneration, tourism;
- Cultural – tree and woodland related heritage issues;
- Energy – renewable energy;
- Regional Planning – area priorities, woodland creation;
- Social Inclusion – community involvement;
- Sustainable Development – inclusion of trees and woodlands;
- Tourism – historic landscapes;
- Transport – trees and woodlands along road, rail and canal corridors.

1.3 Links to Corporate Plan

In the context of the Staffordshire Moorlands this Tree Strategy, comprising its policies and supplementary good practice guides, will contribute to several key priorities for action under the four corporate aims as set out in the Council's five year Corporate Plan, in particular:

Aim 1 – To help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work

The development of a robust and sustainable tree risk management system will minimise the risk associated with the trees in the district. The proposals for this are outlined in detail in Good Practice Guide 4 – Tree Risk Management. This will help to make the Staffordshire Moorlands a safe place in which to live, work and visit.

Various environmental benefits of trees relating to issues such as air quality, noise pollution and climate amelioration are outlined in Section 1.1.1 of this strategy, and contribute to creating a healthier environment for residents and visitors.

The contribution of trees to our parks, playing fields open spaces and countryside helps to provide attractive opportunities for exercise and recreation, which supports community health through encouraging physical exercise. In addition, the presence of trees in our townscapes, villages and rural areas contributes to a sense of wellbeing in support of mental health objectives.

Aim 2 – To meet our financial challenges and provide value for money

The Tree Strategy will help to ensure that resources are prioritised and targeted effectively. This may arise from timely identification and implementation of tree safety works, and encouraging or carrying out new tree planting in areas where maximum benefits may be achieved.

The strategy will assist in workload and expenditure planning, and direct effective use of financial and other resources to ensure value for money.

The production of this Tree Strategy supports the key priority of ensuring services are easily available to residents, through providing access to information and advice. In particular, Good Practice Guide 2 - Tree Management Guidance sets out service standards and outlines clearly how decisions are made in relation to requests for tree work.

Aim 3 – To help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages

Managing trees to a high standard in parks and public open spaces enhances these areas and makes Staffordshire Moorlands an attractive place to be. This in turn helps to encourage investment and regeneration, creating jobs and helping to develop a thriving local economy.

Appropriate new tree planting and the sustainable management of existing trees within our market towns contributes to the amenity and distinctive character of towns within the Staffordshire Moorlands. Meanwhile the contribution of trees to the quality of the rural landscape enhances the reputation of the area as a tourism destination.

Policies in relation to trees on development sites, particularly as set out in Good Practice Guide 3 – Trees and Development, will assist in enhancing future development by requiring and encouraging the retention of existing trees where it is appropriate and allowing for effective landscaping to enhance the new development and mitigate any losses. This Tree Strategy is therefore an important means of supporting the Council's Town and Country Planning functions.

Aim 4 – To protect and improve the environment

The importance of trees and the environment is set out in Section 1 of this strategy, and it is clear that the good sustainable management of trees will make a contribution towards this overall aim. The central mission statement of this document is to manage trees in such a way that contributes to the quality of the local and global environment.

Policies in this Tree Strategy are aimed at protecting and increasing the tree population, and achieving and encouraging high standards of tree management. One of the key priorities in the Corporate Plan is the provision of quality parks and open spaces, in which the management of trees has an essential role to play, contributing for instance towards the attainment of a Green Flag award for Ladderedge Country Park in Leek.

Other areas under this corporate aim include achieving effective recycling and waste management, and promoting environmentally sustainable policies and practices. Policies in this Tree Strategy directly support these priorities, such as encouraging the recycling of arisings from arboricultural works to contribute to minimising the amount of waste going to land fill, and also requiring retention of logs, brash and woodchip on site where appropriate as dead wood habitat.

1.4 The Scope of the Strategy

The aim of this strategy is to direct the long term management of trees and woodlands in the Staffordshire Moorlands for which the Council has duties and responsibilities. They include:

- Trees and woodlands on land which the Council owns and/or manages, being mainly within the three towns and some villages.
- Trees and woodlands protected by the Town and Country Planning Acts and related legislation. In particular trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) made by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (or its predecessor constituent authorities), or situated within designated Conservation Areas, where these are within the Council's planning area for which we are the local planning authority, outside the Peak District National Park.
- Trees on development sites, which are taken into account in assessing and determining planning applications. Existing trees may be retained and protected by conditions of planning permission and new trees planted and maintained as a requirement of development landscaping schemes.
- Dangerous trees. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 gives the Council powers in relation to trees in private ownership which are in imminently dangerous condition.

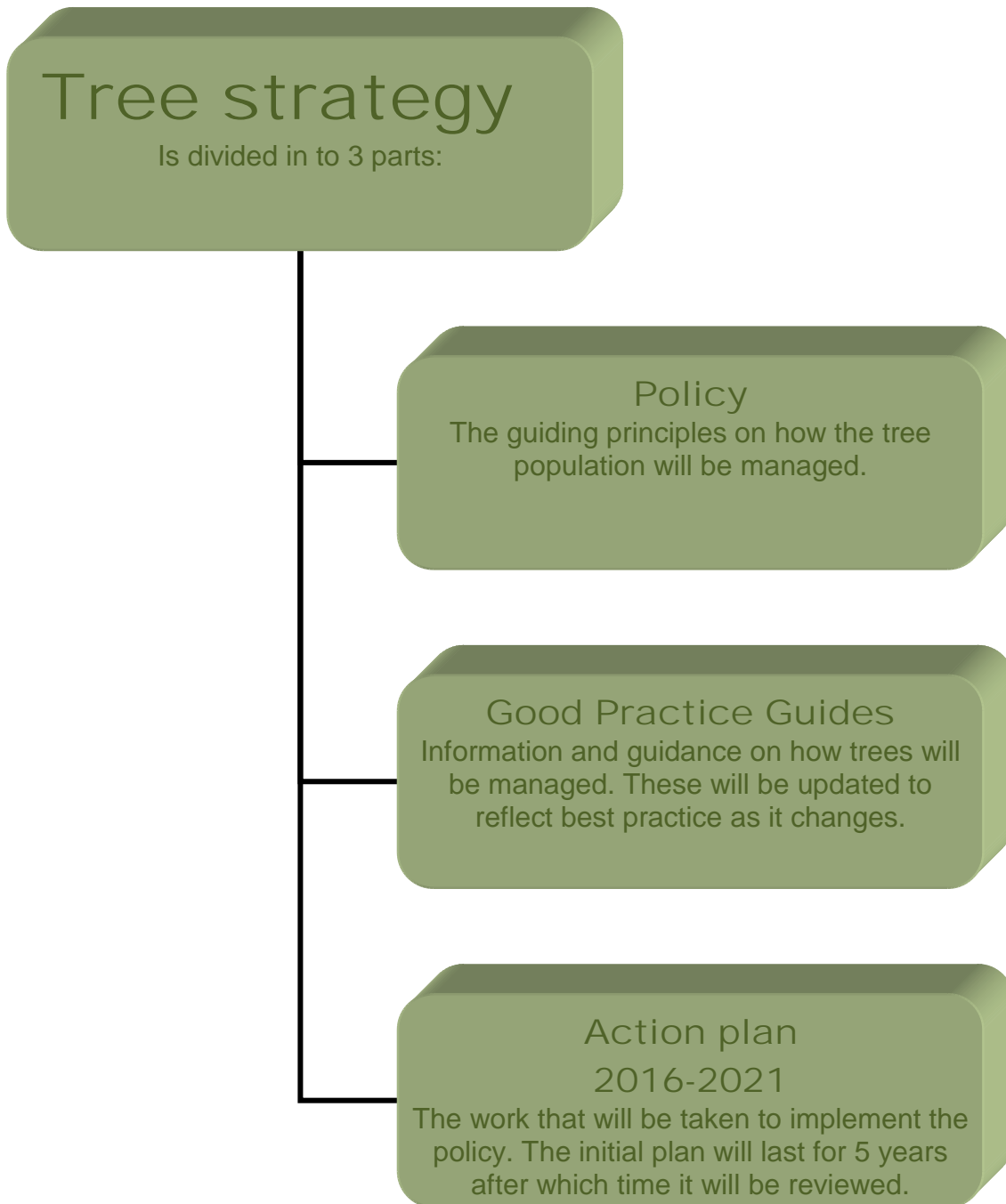
Trees in private ownership make up the majority of trees within the district. The Council can influence the management of some of these trees through its statutory tree protection and planning powers, although many are outside the scope of the Council's responsibility. However the Council also has a role, along

with other agencies, in raising the awareness of the importance of trees and influencing their management by acting as an example of best practice and providing information.

There are some areas or circumstances in which the management, retention, removal or planting of trees is outside the Council's control and therefore beyond the scope of this Tree Strategy. The main cases are:

- Within the Peak District National Park boundary, the Peak District National Park Authority is the local planning authority and therefore deals with planning applications and the statutory protection of trees by TPOs and in Conservation Areas within the National Park.
- Staffordshire County Council has powers to make TPOs and may very occasionally do so, in which case such Orders are administered by the County Council and not by the District Council.
- Highway trees – being those in the pavements and verges of public highways – are normally the responsibility of the highway authority, which for the Staffordshire Moorlands area is Staffordshire County Council. The highway authority also has powers under highways legislation to deal with privately owned trees which may be obstructing the highway (carriageway or pavement), affecting drivers' vision at junctions and access points, obscuring signs and street lighting, or posing a significant risk to users of the highway by virtue of being in dangerous condition.
- The District Council no longer owns/maintains council housing, with all stock having been previously transferred to a housing association (initially Moorlands Housing, which has now become part of the larger regional association, Your Housing Group). Therefore, unless specifically protected by TPO or situated within a Conservation Area, trees within the gardens or shared amenity space associated with such housing are not under Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's control but are the responsibility of Your Housing Group.
- The Forestry Commission exercises control over the felling of larger volumes of timber through the use of felling licences and replanting conditions. There may be some overlap with TPOs, in which case consultation between the Forestry Commission and the local planning authority is required. However, felling licences do not apply to trees in gardens, churchyards, orchards and public open spaces.

1.4 The Structure of the Strategy





The Policies

2. The Policies

2.1 Mission Statement and Key Aims

Tree Strategy Mission Statement:

To manage trees in Staffordshire Moorlands to create a sustainable, robust tree population that contributes to the quality of the local and global environment.

The following are the key principles of the policy that will guide the Council's management of trees using our statutory powers and encouraging and providing advice to others.

Aim 1: To protect the trees that we have, through sustainable management of the tree population.

Unnecessary tree felling and drastic pruning will be resisted and only undertaken when it is justified – particularly for reasons of safety, tree health or in accordance with legal obligations, and for development which has been agreed through the planning process. Action will also be taken to minimise damage to trees.

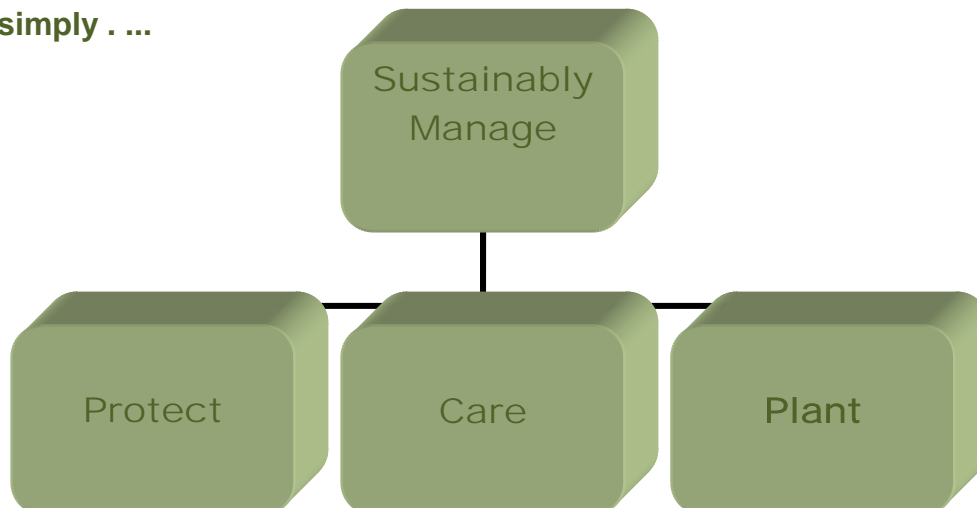
Aim 2: To practice and promote good tree care.

Where it is necessary to undertake tree work the Council will ensure where it is within its powers that the work is undertaken in accordance with current best practice. Tree maintenance will be carried out to promote tree health and to manage risk, but also to enhance the environment, landscape and quality of life.

Aim 3: To promote and encourage appropriate tree planting to ensure a healthy balanced tree population.

The Council will seek opportunities and use its powers where appropriate to encourage tree planting in appropriate areas. Where trees are felled on Council owned land replacement planting will take place.

Put simply



2.2 Tree Protection Policies

2.2.1 The Tree Preservation Order system will be used to ensure that trees of high amenity which are under threat are protected.

Many important, privately owned trees and woodlands are already protected by virtue of being within a Conservation Area or by TPOs, although there are other trees of high amenity that are not afforded this protection. Where trees are owned and managed by responsible owners it is often not necessary to formally protect them, although trees of very high amenity or those which come under threat should be protected. Trees under threat may come to the attention of the Council through various avenues such as applications for development, Conservation Area notifications or requests from the public. In each case before making an Order the Council will use a system for assessing requests that considers the justification for making an order based on government guidance.

All new TPOs are initially provisionally effective for up to six months, in accordance with the legislation and regulations, and once made the tree owner or other interested parties have a right to object to the Order. Objections will be initially considered by the Arboricultural Officer, and where they cannot be resolved through agreement at this level they will be subsequently referred to the Council's Planning Applications Committee to be taken into account in deciding whether to confirm the Order as permanent, with or without modification.

2.2.2 Applications to felling or pruning protected trees will only be granted consent where there is adequate justification. Applicants have the right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against refusal of consent.

Applications to undertake work to trees protected by TPO will be considered in relation to the policies outlined in this document and Good Practice Guides (GPG) 1 and 2. Consent will normally be granted under officers' delegated powers for tree work proposals which are in accordance with such policies and guidance. However, where the requested felling or pruning is not considered acceptable the Arboricultural Officer will, where appropriate, advise the applicant on the type of tree work that would be likely to receive consent and invite them to submit a revised application. If an application is still not considered acceptable and is subsequently refused, the applicant will be advised of their right of appeal against the Council's decision to the Planning Inspectorate.

Notifications to undertake works to non-TPO trees in Conservation Areas will also be considered in relation to the policies outlined in this strategy and GPG 1 and 2. Again, consent will normally be granted under officers' delegated powers for tree work proposals which are considered acceptable. However, where notified

work is not considered appropriate the Arboricultural Officer will advise the applicant on the type of tree work that would be acceptable, and invite them to withdraw the notification and submit a revision. If agreement cannot be reached consideration will be given to the making of a new TPO, in accordance with the Council's procedure for assessing the suitability of a tree for inclusion in a TPO.

2.2.3 When unauthorised works are undertaken to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order an investigation will be carried out and enforcement action will be taken where there is sufficient evidence and justification to do so.

The Council will investigate all alleged unauthorised works to trees and gather information and evidence in relation to these infringements. An assessment of each case will be made with the advice of the Council's Legal Services. Appropriate action will be taken where there is justification and sufficient evidence to do so, and may comprise prosecution and/or the serving of tree replacement notices depending on the particular circumstances.

2.2.4 Particular efforts will be made to identify, protect and retain veteran trees within the district because of the cultural, historical and biodiversity value.

Veteran and ancient trees are particularly important for biodiversity as they often provide a habitat for a wide range of dependent species such as fungi, lichens, invertebrates, birds and bats. Some of these species groups, including their places of shelter or breeding, may be legally protected in their own right. These trees are also often of cultural and historical significance because of their connections with local history and the past. The Council will make particular efforts to ensure that these trees are retained and appropriately managed and work with agencies such as Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust to promote the importance of these valuable trees.

2.2.5 The Council will promote the value and importance of trees, particularly through the use of parks as an educational and recreational resource

The aim of the Good Practice Guides (GPG) which accompany this policy is to provide information and advice on the management and care of trees. These documents not only will act as a basis for the management of trees for which the Council is responsible, but will be made publicly available.

The majority of Council owned trees are within the parks and open spaces which the Council manages. These areas provide opportunities for both recreation and environmental education.

2.2.6 The Council will not normally grant planning permission for development proposals which directly or indirectly threaten trees or woodlands of significant amenity, nor for development proposals which have inadequate or inappropriate landscape mitigation measures, unless there is overriding justification to do so.

The Council has a duty, where appropriate, to impose planning conditions to ensure adequate provision is made for the protection or planting of trees, and to make TPOs as necessary. When assessing planning applications there are many factors which have to be considered, and decisions are guided by local and national policy, current legislation and government advice. More information on the particular policies that apply with respect to trees on development sites and how these should be considered is given in Good Practice Guide 3 – Trees and Development.

2.3 Tree Care Policies

2.3.1 Trees will not be felled or pruned unless there is adequate justification

The Council needs to undertake works to trees as required in order to reduce risk and liability, and also to allow the reasonable enjoyment of public and private property or to promote tree health. Felling will only be considered where pruning does not offer a reasonable solution. Where risk is an issue a risk assessment of the tree will be undertaken. Tree work may be required for the benefit of a group of trees; for example, it may be necessary to remove diseased trees or to thin out a group of closely planted trees to benefit the strongest individuals. More detailed guidance on making decisions in relation to tree work is given in Good Practice Guide 2 - Tree Management.

2.3.2 Requests for tree work to Council trees will be considered in accordance with Good Practice Guide 2 - Tree Management.

The aim of this guidance note is to provide a transparent process by which requests for tree work will be considered. It deals with the most common types of requests received, whilst more unusual requests will be considered on their

merits in line with the general policies and guidance set out in this strategy. All requests for tree work will be assessed by the Council's Arboricultural Officer.

2.3.3 Tree work undertaken by the Council will be in accordance with the guidance in Good Practice Guide 1 – Tree Work.

Work to Council trees will be undertaken to a high professional standard by the Council's approved contractors or trained Council staff. The standard of work required is set out in the specification to the Council's current arboricultural contract document which is in accordance with various national standards, in particular British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work- Recommendations, and with the best practice advice in Good Practice Guide 1 – Tree Work which forms part of this Tree Strategy.

2.3.4 A risk management system will be developed, including the regular inspection and maintenance of Council owned trees.

Work is in progress to survey and record trees on Council owned land. The first phase of the survey has commenced with trees in Brough Park. Following this, areas of Council-owned land with trees will be assessed and further surveying prioritised based on potential risk, such as those with mature trees and having frequent public use or being close to major roads and/ or property.

The aim is to develop a computerised record of Council owned trees and a prioritised regime of re-inspection based on the level of risk. Resources will need to be identified to develop this system to cover all Council owned trees. Tree Risk Management Guidance – GPG 4 sets out how the Council approaches the management of risk associated with the tree population and how this will be developed in the future.

2.3.5 Owners of trees that pose an identified and significant risk to neighbouring properties or to Council land will be asked to undertake remedial works. If no action is taken the Council will use its powers where justified to ensure that remedial work is undertaken, and associated costs will be recharged to the tree owner.

To ensure that the public is not put at risk the Council will use its powers where justified under the Local Authority (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to require owners of imminently dangerous trees to take action to remove the hazard. If it is not possible to identify the owner of the trees, we will carry out the necessary work and the cost will be registered as a land charge against the property concerned. In the event of the land being sold the outstanding costs would be

identified by local searches and should normally be recovered at this stage if not before. The assessment of risk will be based on the principles of risk assessment as outline in Good Practice Guide 4 – Tree Risk Management.

2.3.6 The Council will promote the care of trees through the provision of information and advice particularly for the owners of protected trees.

General advice and information will be made available to the owners of trees in order to encourage and promote beneficial tree care, in particular through the use of Good Practice Guide 1 - Tree Work, and Good Practice Guide 2 – Tree Management. Where requested, the Arboricultural Officer will discuss tree management issues with owners of protected trees and provide appropriate advice in relation to submitting applications and notifications to undertake such work.

2.3.7 Where it is required by conditions of planning permission that trees on development sites are to be retained, they should be protected in accordance with the guidance in British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations, and Good Practice Guide 3 - Trees and Development.

Unless suitable care is taken and adequate protection measures implemented, retained trees on development sites can readily be damaged during construction. Roots are particularly susceptible, being hidden from view but easily affected by construction works. Root severance during excavation, or soil compaction by raising ground levels, storing materials or driving vehicles materials over the root zone, can all cause serious damage leading to progressive decline or death of trees and also affect their stability and safety. The aerial parts of a tree, comprising stem, branches and foliage, are more visibly obvious but can also be harmed. This damage can be avoided by careful site planning, and through the use of appropriate measures such as temporary tree protection barriers to fence off areas surrounding retained trees and prohibiting any construction works within these protected areas. Such provisions will often be required by the imposition of suitable conditions when planning permission is granted. Detailed guidance on this is given in British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations, and is also set out in Good Practice Guide 3 – Trees and Development.

2.3.8 All tree work to Council trees will be undertaken in consultation with the Arboricultural Officer.

This is to ensure that all works are completed to a high professional standard and in accordance with the policies and guidance provided by this document.

2.3.9 Wherever possible the arisings of tree work will be recycled.

The Council will work closely with our appointed contractors to ensure that timber, logs and wood chip produced by tree works are recycled. Composting and other uses for cut wood such as biomass fuel and firewood can avoid any need to tip arisings to landfill. However, in some cases it is more beneficial to leave tree work arisings on site to provide a valuable dead wood habitat in support of biodiversity objectives, and therefore where it is appropriate on Council-owned land contractors will be instructed to leave arisings on site for conservation purposes.

Consideration will be given to health and safety issues, in addition to aesthetics, informal play opportunities and biodiversity benefits when specifying whether stumps, standing stems and cut wood should be removed from site, relocated within a site or left in-situ, in accordance with guidance in Good Practice Guide 1 – Tree Work.

2.3.10 Where proposed work to the Council's trees deviates from the policies in this document or the guidance outlined in Good Practice Guide 1 - Tree Work, or Good Practice Guide 2 – Tree Management, the Council will undertake appropriate consultation.

The Council maintains thousands of trees, hundreds of which may be subject to some tree work each year, and it is therefore not practical to consult on all works undertaken. Pruning works carried out in accordance with the policies and Good Practice Guides forming this strategy are unlikely to cause significant public concern. However, felling of trees can be more contentious. It is necessary on occasion to fell trees without prior consultation, perhaps because the work must be undertaken promptly due to safety issues and no other reasonable option is available. Nevertheless, where the felling involves the loss of prominent mature trees and timescales allow, efforts will be made to inform the public of the proposed works and the reasons why it is necessary.

Where the removal of prominent mature trees on Council land is being considered for reasons other than safety the consultation procedure as outlined in Good Practice Guide 2 – Tree Management will normally be followed.

For trees which are to be felled or pruned as part of the planning process i.e. trees protected by TPOs, or those situated in Conservation Areas, or in association with development proposals and planning permissions, there are already statutory consultation processes in place.

2.4 Tree Planting Policies

2.4.1 For every tree felled on Staffordshire Moorlands District Council land at least one will be planted.

Where it is practical a new tree will be planted for every one felled. In some cases it may not be appropriate to replant in the same position or even on the same site as the tree felled, and where this is the case opportunities for planting elsewhere will be sought. Where trees in a woodland are removed and there is suitable natural regeneration, rather than planting new trees the regeneration will be managed as appropriate to replace any felled trees. Therefore regeneration will contribute to tree replacement targets.

2.4.2 Species for planting will be carefully selected and appropriate to their location, giving particular consideration to the landscape character guidance, population resilience and the enhancement of biodiversity.

Trees planted in natural and rural areas will be native species appropriate to the area and site conditions. Where appropriate, we will have regard to relevant landscape character guidance, notably Staffordshire County Council's Planning for Landscape Change, and make use of species reflected in or suggested by such guidance. As far as reasonably possible, native trees will be sourced from stock of local provenance. On more formal or ornamental sites such as urban parks, open spaces and cemeteries, however, there will often be suitable opportunity to plant non-native trees, greatly increasing the available range of species in order to add variety and interest.

Tree planting in formal urban parks or on countryside sites will be guided by the individual site management plans where they exist, and may therefore reflect the historical landscape development, biodiversity or horticultural diversity objectives.

We will have regard to research relating to developing tree planting strategies that take into account the potential impact of climate change, and the characteristics of the existing and future tree population to improve resilience against changing environmental conditions and the potential impacts of tree pests and diseases

2.4.3 Trees will be planted and established in accordance with current best practice.

It is important that when trees are planted this is undertaken with care to ensure that they stand the best chance of survival. Different planting techniques will be required dependent on the type and size of tree being planted. Tree planting will follow best practice guidance, in particular the appropriate British Standards.

Aftercare is critical to ensuring successful establishment of new trees, in order to avoid wasting resources in planting trees which fail to achieve their potential due to the lack of subsequent maintenance. Newly planted trees may require watering, weed control, protection against animal browsing, provision and checking of supports, and in some cases protection against vandalism damage.

2.4.4 The Council will promote the benefits of trees and encourage the planting of trees on private land.

The majority of trees in the district are on land in private ownership and it is important that if the urban and rural tree population is to be sustained that appropriate tree planting is undertaken on this land. The Council can play a role in encouraging tree planting on private land by the provision of advice and directing individuals towards the various grants which may be available for tree planting as well as other initiatives.

2.4.5 The Council will use its powers to require appropriate replacement tree planting when protected trees are felled or when trees are removed to allow development

The Council can require that replacement trees are planted when trees protected by TPO are felled, although replacement planting in Conservation Areas can only be required in certain circumstances. However, wherever it is appropriate, having regard in particular to the space available and the reasons for the initial felling, we will use our powers to specify replanting.

The Council will also exercise its powers to secure new tree planting through conditions of planning permission whenever appropriate. This is particularly important where felling of existing trees is required in order to accommodate the new development, in order to secure appropriate mitigation. Tree planting, together with other landscape treatment, may be considered necessary in order to provide an appropriate setting for or screening of new development. Furthermore, planning policies and guidance are increasingly aimed at achieving an overall enhancement of visual amenity and biodiversity where new

development takes place. Consequently, the submission, approval, implementation and subsequent maintenance of a landscaping scheme is a commonly applied condition when planning permission is granted, and this will often involve the planting of new trees.