

BUCKDEN AND DIDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL TREE STRATEGY 2020

reviewed and revised 2022

1. Strategy Aims

1.1 The Parish Council accepts its duty of care to maintain its trees in a safe condition and that will remain as its priority. It also recognises the contribution trees can make to our local community aesthetically and practically, while also providing habitats for birds and insects. For these reasons, the Parish Council will continue to manage its tree assets sustainably, in accordance with best practice and with the aim of improving biodiversity. It will adopt the following approach.

- Maintenance: To manage the current stock of trees in accordance with current best practice and within the resource allocated
- Protection: To view trees as valuable community assets and to protect them where appropriate
- Enhancement: To enhance the tree cover across the Parish through influencing future developments and by planting the right trees for the right places

2. Managing the Current Stock of Trees

2.1 The legal position is that the owner of the land on which a tree stands, together with any party who has control over the tree's management, owes a duty of care at common law to all people who might be injured by the tree. The duty of care is to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that cause a reasonably foreseeable risk of injury to persons or property.

2.2 The challenges of maintaining our trees come from a changing climate, pests and diseases, an ageing tree stock, damage to roots and pressure from increasing population. It has to be accepted that trees are living organisms and therefore naturally lose branches or fall. Statistics show that the risk to human safety posed by trees is extremely low: Office for National Statistics recorded an average of 6.4 fatalities per year between January 1999 and January 2009, due to falling branches and trees, giving a risk value of 1:10 million for individuals. This points towards taking a proportionate approach to tree safety. Public safety is not however, the only concern when deciding how to manage trees. Other broader concerns such as ecological, landscape and aesthetic value should also be taken into account.

2.3 On the basis of guidance available and its duty of care, the Parish Council will manage its current stock of by:

- Managing the risk of significant injury or property damage to levels that are as low as reasonably practicable
- Operating a system of proactive and reactive tree inspections
- Maintaining a record of trees and inspections
- Ensuring individuals who carry out inspections are competent to do so
- Ensuring work identified through the inspection programme is undertaken by suitably qualified staff or contractors

2.4 To assist in the management of its trees the Parish Council will endeavour to ensure a volunteer Tree Warden is in place, who will be required to complete the LANTRA Awards Basic Tree Survey and Inspection course every 5 years or more frequently if required. In addition, they will be expected to be aware of an issues notified by the Tree Council and to seek advice from Huntingdonshire District Council Tree Warden Co-ordinator when appropriate.

2.5 The first task in managing the trees is to identify the current stock. There are many trees within the Parish boundary that are not the responsibility of the Parish Council. These include those within the School grounds, in Buckden Towers, on Village Hall Trust land, in Buckden Marina, on private land and in private gardens. There are also trees that are managed by other public bodies such as Huntingdon District Council or Highways England. This strategy excludes all those trees outside of the direct responsibility of the Parish Council. Albeit that the Council will pass on any issues raised concerning other trees to the appropriate person or body.

2.6 For the triennial tree survey in 2021, the stock of trees was renumbered creating an updated baseline. Of the 105 trees surveyed 2 were felled following the adoption of the recommendations from the report, giving a current total of 103. The Parish's 103 trees are listed in the Tree Log at Annex A by tree number, species and location.

2.7 To aid the determination of the level of inspection required, each tree has been allotted a footfall zone and a failure impact category.

Zone	Description
1	Area of heavy vehicle and/or pedestrian use
2	Area of medium vehicle and/or pedestrian use
3	Area of low vehicle and/or pedestrian use

Category	Description
1	Impact of branch loss/tree fall potentially severe
2	Impact of branch loss/tree fall potentially moderate
3	Impact of branch loss/tree fall potentially low

2.8 There is no required interval for tree inspections, although it seems to be common practice to conduct a full check every 3 years. This is therefore the approach the Parish Council will adopt. An ARB contractor, approved by the Arboricultural Association, will be employed to conduct a full tree health and safety survey of the Parish's stock of trees every 3 years.

2.9 The Parish Council has decided that additional checks on its trees should be conducted annually, in line with its duty of care. A combination of the zone in which the tree is found and its impact category will be used to determine who should undertake these checks.

Category/Zone	1	2	3
1	Annual qualified inspection	Annual qualified inspection	Annual Tree Warden walk around
2	Annual qualified inspection	Annual Tree Warden walk around	Annual Tree Warden walk around
3	Annual Tree Warden walk around	Annual Tree Warden walk around	Annual Tree Warden walk around

2.10 It is recognised that there may be occasions when additional checks are required at short notice, in particular if there has been a violent storm ie heavy snow or winds above 8 on the Beaufort Scale, which may result in work required outside of the 3 year maintenance cycle. Incidents that occur, for any reason or at any time, will be recorded in the Incident Register.

2.11 The recommendations from all inspections should be discussed by the Parish Council's appropriate Advisory Group and its report along with a schedule of any required works shared with the Council. The Advisory Group can commission work without full Council approval provided it is within the budget allocated and less than £500. All tree works will have to be carried out to an approved industry standard, in accordance with BS 3998: 2010 'Tree Work Recommendations' and adhere to the requirements of the [Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981](#) in relation to the protection of wildlife. If the work is a matter of an 'imminent threat to life', immediate action is to be taken by the Parish Clerk and the Chair of the Council including the issuing and positioning of warning notices.

2.12 If the work involves the felling of a tree with a trunk diameter greater than 75 mm, as measured 1.5 m above the ground, or the cutting back of a tree by over 30% of its canopy then residents are to be notified. This will be achieved by placing the information on the Parish Council's website, one month prior to the work with contact details, so residents can challenge the decision. The final decision will reside with the Chair of the Parish Council.

2.13 The tree inspections will focus on health and safety issues but also take in to account amenity and environmental factors. The key areas will be:

- Health of tree
- Likely lifespan of tree
- Probability of failure of structure
- Obstruction to line of sight for vehicles
- 2.25m height clearance over a footpath and 2.75m over a cycle path
- Obstruction of street lights
- Undue contact with buildings
- Interference with utility overhead wires
- Need for measures to address trip hazards

3. Protecting the Trees

3.1 There are steps the Council can take to protect its tree stock from deterioration and felling. These include regular health checks, reducing compaction around the roots, applying for Tree Protection Orders (TPO) and where possible seeking to protect trees from felling or unnecessary pruning. It should be noted that there is no obligation on the Council to agree the felling or top/root pruning of its trees in the following situations:

- To allow for the creation of a drop kerb
- To allow building works to proceed
- On receipt of a nuisance complaint beyond that a tree is dangerous trees and/or causing actual damage to property

The latter therefore protects trees against claims of loss of light, disturbance to TV reception, obstruction of view or minor seasonal issues such as leaf fall, bird droppings or honeydew. The Council takes the view that trees be retained for the benefit of wider society, even where they cause minor inconvenience to immediate residents. The Council can consider agreeing to pruning works to be carried out at the householder's expense. Such work however, would only be sanctioned if the householder confirmed in writing the scope and nature of the work to be undertaken and agreed that they would not be exceeded. This agreement would also need to be acknowledged in writing by the appointed contractor. The Council will only consider sanctioning such work if the appointed contractor is an experienced arboriculturalist and the application for work is accompanied by copies of their insurance certificate and qualifications.

3.2 The Parish has a number of trees issued with TPOs and a Conservation area; the details of which are shown in Annex B (orange highlight denotes query lodged with Huntingdonshire District Council). None of these trees form part of the Council's tree stock. The Council however accepts that all trees within the Parish boundary are important for the local environment and the residents. It will therefore assist Huntingdonshire District Council with the monitoring of TPOs and make recommendations, where it is felt to be appropriate, to issue further TPOs.

4. Enhancing Tree Cover

4.1 The sustainability and health benefits of living within an area with an adequate tree cover are well documented. Trees help to improve air quality, which is important for a village surrounded by major roads. They also help with surface water flooding and biodiversity. Equally importantly trees create an environment that enhances people's wellbeing. Recognising these factors the Parish Council is keen to take every opportunity to increase the area's tree cover.

4.2 Unfortunately the current mix of tree species in the Parish is limited and there are many trees of a similar age. The lack of a broad species mix renders the tree stock vulnerable to being reduced significantly by disease. While the lack of age diversity could mean many reach the end of their lives at the same time. There is a definite need to improve diversity across the tree stock through tree replacement and further planting. In January 2022 the Parish Council endorsed its Biodiversity Action Plan and this will inform all decisions on tree cover going forward.

4.3 When planting new trees the Council will take the following factors in to account on the basis of 'right tree, right place':

- The landscape character of the area
- Soil type, climate and site factors e.g. shade from buildings, impact on the current habitat
- Expected lifespan, height and spread; to favour large trees wherever possible
- Risk of soil compaction around roots
- Capacity to support local fauna
- Government advice on sourcing trees to reduce the risk of introducing pests and diseases
- Improving species diversity
- Preference for broad canopy species as opposed to ornamental trees (helps protect against flooding and the amelioration of high temperatures)
- The location of over/underground infrastructure
- Planting within hard surfaced area should make use of underground structures to ensure sufficient rooting environments for species selected

4.4 The Council should view the planting of new trees as an opportunity to involve the local community. For example the community could take on responsibility the creation and siting of nest

boxes. Most importantly, the Council must endeavour to maintain newly planted trees appropriately to ensure they have the best chance of establishing.

4.5 The Council will also encourage residents to plant trees through providing information on regular basis.

4.6 Development can have a significant negative impact on trees. The Council, when assessing planning development proposal applications, will aim to ensure attractive and valuable landscape features including high quality trees are retained as part of any development. For any planning application where there are trees on or adjacent to the proposed site, applicants will be expected to provide a tree survey, arboricultural implications assessment and an arboricultural method statement to include a tree protection plan. The arboriculturist should also be able to provide details of protection and mitigation measures for the development (based on the technical guidance in BS5837 (2012) 'Trees in Relation to Demolition, Design and Construction'). The Council will not only seek to protect current trees but will positively engage with developers to ensure that new trees are planted within any development in both the streets and within the grounds of buildings.

5. Action Plans

5.1 The current action plan is at Annex C.

Sources

1. [National Tree Safety Group's guidance \(2012\) entitled 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees'](#)
2. [Cambridge City Council Citywide Tree Strategy 2016-2026 - Parts 1, 2 and 3](#)
3. Office for National Statistics Mortality Statistics
4. RGS Arboricultural Consultants 'Tree Survey and Risk Assessment August 2021
5. <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/environmental-issues/trees/protected-trees/>
6. Woking Borough Council Tree Strategy
7. Buckden Parish Biodiversity Action Plan January 2022

Annexes

- A** Buckden Parish Council Tree Log
- B** Buckden Parish Council Tree Preservation Orders
- C** Buckden Parish Council Tree Action Plan 2020 to 2022

ANNEX A: BUCKDEN PARISH COUNCIL TREE LOG

No	Species	Location
1	Apple	High St/Wolsey Gardens
2	Plum	High St/Wolsey Gardens
3	Cherry	High St/Wolsey Gardens
4	Walnut	High St/Wolsey Gardens
5	Plum	High St/Wolsey Gardens
6	Cherry	High St/Wolsey Gardens
7	Cherry	High St/Wolsey Gardens
8	Ash	High St/Wolsey Gardens
9	Ash	High St/Wolsey Gardens
10	Ash	High St/Wolsey Gardens
11	Ash	High St/Wolsey Gardens
12	Ash	High St/Wolsey Gardens
13	Cherry	High St/Wolsey Gardens
14	Cherry	High St/Wolsey Gardens
15	Cherry	High St/Wolsey Gardens
16	Grey Poplar	Silver Street
17	Cherry Plum	Silver Street
18	Lime	Silver Street
19	Bird Cherry	Silver Street
20	Ash	Silver Street
21	Cherry Plum	Silver Street
22	London Plane	The Green
23	Lime	The Green
26	Cypress	St Mary's

27	Cypress	St Mary's
28	Oak	St Mary's
29	Sycamore	St Mary's
30	Yew	St Mary's
31	Judas Tree	St Mary's
32	Black Tulepo	St Mary's
33	Silver Birch	Mill Rd/Vineyard Way
34	Silver Birch	Mill Rd/Vineyard Way
35	Silver Birch	Mill Rd/Vineyard Way
36	Cherry	Mill Rd/Vineyard Way
37	Silver Birch	Mill Road South
38	Silver Birch	Mill Road South
39	Sycamore	Vineyard Way/Swan End
40	Plum	Vineyard Way/Swan End
41	Sycamore	Vineyard Way/Swan End
43	Oak	Vineyard Way
44	Hornbeam	Burberry Rd/Vineyard Way
45	Cherry	Burberry Rd/Vineyard Way
46	Whitebeam	Burberry Rd/Vineyard Way
47	Silver Birch	corner Lucks Lane
48	Swedish Whitebeam	Drs Surgery
49	Silver Birch	Drs Surgery
50	Whitebeam	Drs Surgery
51	Silver Birch	Drs Surgery
52	Whitebeam	Drs Surgery
53	Whitebeam	Mill Road North

54	Lime	Mill Road North
56	Whitebeam	Mill Road North
57	Lime	Mill Road North
58	Whitebeam	Mill Road North
59	Lime	Mill Road North
60	Lime	Mill Road North
61	Whitebeam	Mill Road North
62	Norway Maple	Mill Road North
63	Oak	Mill Road North
64	Elm	Mill Road North
65	Oak	Mill Road North
66	Sycamore	Mill Road North
67	Whitebeam	Mill Road North
68	Cherry	Mill Road North
69	Norway Maple	Mill Road North
70	Norway Maple	Mill Road North
71	Whitebeam	Mill Road North
72	Grey Poplar	Mill Road North
73	Hazel	Morris Close
74	Hawthorn	Morris Close
75	Ash	Morris Close
76	Hawthorn	Morris Close
77	Alder	Morris Close
78	Alder	Morris Close
79	Alder	Morris Close

80	Alder	Morris Close
81	Ash ?	Morris Close
82	Horse Chestnut	Cemetery
83	Horse Chestnut	Cemetery
84	Holm Oak	Cemetery
85	Holm Oak	Cemetery
86	Japanese Cherry	Cemetery
87	Sycamore	Cemetery
89	Cypress	Cemetery
90	Yew	Cemetery
91	Norway Maple	Cemetery
None	Holly	Cemetery
None	Apple	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Yew	Cemetery
None	Blackthorn	Vineyard Way/Swan End
None	Cypress	St Mary's

None	Cypress	St Mary's
None	Holly	St Mary's
None	Holly	St Mary's
None	Yew	St Mary's

ANNEX B: BUCKDEN PARISH COUNCIL TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

Ref No	Location	Ref	Tree	Validated	Missing	Notes	Planning Ref
L/TPO/156L	Valentine House, George Lane		Sycamore	✓			
L/TPO/156	Valentine House, George Lane		London Plane	✓			
028/87	Back of George Hotel		Yew	✓		been topped	16/01250TREE in 2016
	Back of George Hotel		Lawson	✓		been topped	none found
	Back of George Hotel		Evergreen		✓		none found
008/68	Buckden Towers		many			not checked as area TPO	
L/TPO/356	38 Lucks Lane		oak	✓			
L/TPO/356L	38 Lucks Lane		oak		✓	is this a double entry?	none found
034/00	adjacent 64 Manor Gardens		birch		✓		none found
L/TPO/381	15 Hunts End		yew	✓			
L/TPO/292	43 Church Street		wellingtonian	✓			
L/TPO/053	11 School Lane		walnut		✓	felled	0900841TREE in 2009
L/TPO/170	10 Bishops Way		willow	✓		pollared in 2006	0603443TREE in 2006
L/TPO/163	11 Bishops Way		willow		✓	felled	18/01507/TREE in 2018
011/89	Low farm Stirtloe		colime	5	2	5 remaining from original 7	0500643TREE in 2005
019/95	Mill	T1	hawthorn			impossible to check	
019/95	Mill	T2	hawthorn			impossible to check	
019/95	Mill	T3	hawthorn			impossible to check	
019/95	Mill	T4	hawthorn			impossible to check	
019/95	Mill	T5	willow			impossible to check	
019/95	Mill	T6	willow			impossible to check	
019/95	Mill	T7	willow			impossible to check	
019/93	Buckden Marina			✓			
L/TPO/216	Carters Boatyard	T1	willow	✓		recently pollarded	0700597TREE in 2007
L/TPO/216	Carters Boatyard	T2	willow	✓		recently pollarded	and 19/02332TREE in 2019
L/TPO/216	Carters Boatyard	T3	willow	✓		recently pollarded	as above 2
L/TPO/216	Carters Boatyard	T4	cedar	✓			
L/TPO/216	Carters Boatyard	T5	cedar	✓		request submitted to fell	20/01020TREE in 2020
L/TPO/142	Martins Farm, Leadens Lane		walnut		✓	been felled	0401764FUL in 2004

ANNEX C: BUCKDEN PARISH COUNCIL TREE ACTION PLAN 2020 TO 2022

Aim	Actions	Time Frame	Responsibility	Progress
Maintenance	• Full professional tree survey in August 2024 • Go out to tender, specify require recommendations on tree protection, increasing tree cover and retaining fallen wood to act as wildlife habitats (no chipping) • Select preferred provider • Review report and develop tree maintenance action plan • Implement annual checks of trees as per strategy(para 2.9) • Take action to pile fallen wood, resulting from storms, up under hedges or next to trees to create wildlife habitats	• March 2024 • May 2024 • October 2024 • April 2024 • As and when storms occur	• Tree Warden (TW) and Chair of GI&BAG • TW and GI&B AG • TW and GI&B AG	
Protection	• Ensuring protection of trees is adequate • Continue to comment on requests for work on trees covered by a TPO • Action any protection recommendations from triennial tree survey	• October 2024	• TW and GI&B AG • TW and GI&B AG	
Enhancement	• Planting trees • Continue to encourage residents to plant trees, in particular fruit bearing trees • Increasing tree diversity • Monitor developments to identify opportunities to increase tree diversity	• October 2022 • starting June 2022	• TW and GI&B AG • TW and GI&B AG	