



Havebury Housing Partnership

TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy is intended to be the framework for managing our extensive tree stock and the responsibility of tenants with trees in their gardens. It takes account of health and safety legislation alongside industry best practice to ensure there is a consistent and proportionate response to the management of trees.
- 1.2 A tree budget is allocated annually which will be used primarily to maintain a healthy stock and reduce the risk of injury and claim from residents and the public. Further detail is set out in the Tree Management Procedures P052 which should be read in conjunction with this policy.

2 Scope

- 2.1 National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) produces the guidance manual, 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees.' This guidance has been used to develop the principles we will adopt to managing the stock as follows:

- Health, safety, and maintenance of trees in public spaces, communal areas, and resident's gardens.
- completion of a comprehensive survey of the stock, independent of our Arboricultural Maintenance Services Contractor
- Expectations placed on the Arboricultural Maintenance Services Contractor in providing details of their Planned Maintenance Tree Programme.
- Our approach to trees in tenant's gardens either during occupation or void periods.
- Recovery of costs through service charges and re-charging in appropriate cases
- We will manage tree risk using a planned and proactive approach, proportionate to the quantified risk posed by trees to the safety of residents and the public.
- We will try to retain trees where possible unless the risk is too great, or the cost is prohibitive.

3 Responsibilities

- 3.1 A principle of Common Law and relevant Statute Law is that landowners have a duty of care to visitors, residents, passers-by and indeed trespassers when on their land.
- 3.2 Leadership team are responsible for approving this policy. Delegated staff are responsible for the oversight and implementation of this policy in line with our tree management plan/programme.
- 3.3 This policy has been created with consideration to current national, regional and corporate policies and legislation, including:
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
 - The Health and Safety at Works Regulations (1999)
 - Occupiers Liability Act (1957 & 1984)
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003)
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)
 - Highways Act (1980)
 - Town and Country Planning Act 1999
 - Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

- 3.4 Most of our tree stock is situated away from the Highway but where trees are adjacent to roads and footpaths, we have a duty to maintain a safe highway, which may include pruning, or removing trees for the following reasons:
- Obstruction by trees, for example.
 - Low hanging branches
 - Irreparable damage to highway trees by passing vehicles.
 - Dangerous trees near roads and footpaths.
 - Tree roots causing a trip hazard.
- 3.5 We will carry out works to trees growing on our land where they are:
- a. Obstructing footpaths or roads
 - b. Touching or damaging buildings
 - c. Roots causing damage to drainage systems, or subsidence.
 - d. Obscuring street lighting
 - e. Dead or to be in such poor condition to be a danger to people or property (this doesn't include potential slip/trip hazard from falling debris such as seasonal leaf fall, honeydew etc.)
 - f. Damaging a path causing a hazard, where root pruning or repair is not an option.
- 3.6 Our associated procedure will clearly outline its responsibility to the management of trees in tenant's gardens. The tenancy places the responsibility on the tenant. However, there may be occasions when we decide to provide support, particularly if the circumstances relate to health and safety or vulnerable tenants. Each situation will be considered on an individual, case by case basis.
- 3.7 We will undertake a program of new tree planting where it is reasonable and/or practicable.
- 3.8 Tree planting plans for new developments will be assessed for "right tree, right place" and may have to be re-planned if necessary.

4 Method

- 4.1 We will maintain a database to show the location, species, and other details of its tree stock in its communal areas.
- 4.2 We will commission a tree stock survey every 3 years; the inspection will be completed by a qualified Arboriculturist. Frequency of tree surveys and re- inspections will be based on prioritising those trees that pose a greater risk to people and property.
- 4.2 Following the tree stock survey, and alongside our Arboricultural Maintenance Services Contractor, we will devise a proactive programme of tree maintenance.
- 4.3 Ad-hoc works will be issued appropriate to risk alongside the programme.
- 4.4 Periodic checks will be carried out and documented by the Tenancy and Estates Team as part of general estate management.

- 4.5 Significant risks will be recorded and reported for action in line with prescribed timescales relating to severity.
 - 4.6 Monthly meetings with our ground's maintenance contractors will ensure planned works are on schedule and additional works are being completed to minimise risks to the public and our liabilities.
- 5 Monitoring**
- 5.1 The neighbourhood and estates team leaders will review and monitor in line with procedures.