

Tree Management Policy

Fair Oak and Horton Heath

Parish Council

August 2021

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1. Introduction

The parish of Fair Oak and Horton Heath is situated in a semi-rural location, a few miles to the west of Eastleigh. The Parish has a rich tapestry of habitats, consisting of farmland, hedgerows, woodlands, residential areas and meadows. Trees are important features for the parish of Fair Oak and Horton Heath providing an important historical connection for the people of local area.

Trees and woodlands make a significant contribution to this diverse landscape. They provide a meaningful connection to the rural landscape, in the form of landmarks and boundary features, greatly adding to the settings of buildings, open spaces or have a special cultural or wildlife value.

2. Aim of the policy

The overall aims of the policy is to ensure the suitable management of the council's trees; maintain and encourage biodiversity; maintain and improve landscape quality; work towards a carbon neutral future; and through these elements improve the quality of life for the residents.

This will be achieved by the:

- pro-active management of the tree stock, prioritizing public safety and adhering to statutory obligations
- maintenance and increase in the tree population
- selection of appropriate species for new and replacement planting, taking into account their suitability for the location
- Parish's commitment to strive to plant three trees for each tree removed
- engagement with local residents to promote the benefits of trees

3. The value of trees

Trees provide many documented environmental, wildlife, social, cultural and health benefits. Examples of the benefits of trees include:

- provide valuable habitat for wildlife, including essential food sources for pollinators
- filter airborne particulates and produce oxygen
- deflection and reduction of noise
- absorb and slow down rain water, and mitigate localised flooding
- cooling of urban areas by providing shade and reducing localised temperatures
- slow wind down and reduce heat loss from buildings
- carbon storage and help with long term climate change
- provide a historical and cultural connection to the landscape
- enhance the urban areas with the softening of straight lines and hard edges
- promote a sense of mental wellbeing and natural therapy
- add value to properties

Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council recognise the value of trees, and seeks to preserve healthy trees with minimal intervention to promote their natural form and character, and for the trees to continue to benefit the local area.

3.1. Tree planting and establishment

Tree planting is an important part of managing tree stock. It is often overlooked and unfortunately, too often when new trees are planted, it is carried out inadequately with detriment to the new trees. Poor tree planting practice results in waste of budget to replace the dead tree.

The planting of new trees will be used to increase canopy cover and provide the many benefits that have been outlined above. This will be achieved with the selection of suitable tree species for the site, taking into consideration the available soil, ultimate size, character and form, ecological and aesthetic value.

Where trees are removed, consideration for the replacement of three trees will be given unless space, soil borne diseases, or above and below ground utility services determine otherwise. This is to ensure the Parish's canopy cover is maintained and enhanced.

New trees will be planted to BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape recommendations. The new trees will have sufficient rooting medium, with additional soil improver if required.

A maintenance and watering regime will be adhered to in order to ensure the survival of new trees for a minimum of three years. Each tree should receive 50 litres of water per week from the beginning of April to the end of September.

Staking and protection will be determined by the tree size, type and site. A standard new tree will be a single stake with a cage surrounding the stem with mulch around the base and an irrigation system.

3.2. Community engagement

The Parish will strive to engage with the local community with appropriate planting projects.

Community engagement encourages local residents to come together, participate in a physical activity, connect with the natural world and give them a sense of ownership over the site. This is important where the site needs multiple small trees or whips planting and maintaining under the guidance of someone who understands tree or shrub planting.

4. Tree management

Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council is responsible for the management of the tree stock on land it owns.

The majority of trees grow without incident. However, where trees do need to be managed for public safety, statutory requirements such as highway clearance or good arboricultural management e.g. woodland thinning, the Parish will seek advice from qualified and insured arboriculturalist to conduct a tree survey.

Duty of care

Under English Law the Parish has a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent or minimise the risk of personal injury and property damage from a Parish owned tree. The Occupiers' Liability Acts of 1957 and 1984 govern this legislation.

Budget

The Parish will ensure that sufficient funds are available for the management of its tree stock, to include surveying, tree surgery works and tree planting and establishment.

Tree survey

As part of the Parish's duty of care, tree surveys are to be carried out on a regular basis to identify any trees which present an unreasonable risk to people or property. These works will be determined by a suitably qualified and insured arboriculturalist, either as part of the annual tree survey or responding to individual events such as damage as a result of extreme weather.

4.1. Tree retention and protection

The Parish will ensure the retention of trees on public land if appropriate to do so.

Tree management techniques to enable tree retention, where felling might otherwise be considered, shall be consulted with an appropriately qualified and insured arboriculturalist. This is especially important with regard to veteran trees.

Consideration to the proximity of Parish owned trees to any construction or development will be given before the Parish's approval for the construction works. If works are considered reasonable then the appropriate protection to trees above and below ground will be given before the construction or development activities commence.

4.1.1. Tree removal

Whilst every effort is made to retain trees, there are times when tree removal is the only reasonable course of management.

Most trees that need to be felled are done so because the tree presents an unreasonable risk to public safety. Other reasons why trees need to be removed include where a tree is causing property damage, where it impedes the growth of other more important trees as part of a recognised arboricultural practise or where planning approval has been granted.

4.2. Tree surgery works

Tree contractors that are suitability qualified, insured and experienced will be given the recommendations from the tree survey to be carried out. All works are to be carried out to BS 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations.

Works will be carried out in accordance with tree survey recommendations and coordinated as per the priority schedule.

Tree works will be planned and carried out to adhere to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, this is particularly relevant to birds, bats and badgers.

All resultant material from tree works will be either processed on site where appropriate or removed from site and disposed of responsibly and with environmental consideration.

4.2.1. Trees requiring immediate action

Trees are dynamic, living organisms and their condition is subject to change throughout their lifetime. Extreme weather or a sudden decline in the tree's health can result in a part or total failure of the tree. If a Parish owned tree presents a high risk to people or property and is considered to be an emergency situation, instruction will be given to a tree contractor to make the tree safe within 24 hours. If the risk is considered to be lower, then the tree will be made safe as soon as it is practically possible.

4.2.2. Tree works will not be undertaken

The Parish will not carry out tree works for the following reasons:

Branches that overhang private property

Trees do not respect boundaries and it is unreasonable to for the Parish to prune back their own trees from a private boundaries. Under English Common Law, land owners have the legal right to prune branches up to the boundary only as long as the tree is not protected by a tree preservation order or is located in a conservation area. If this work then kills or destabilise the tree then land owner can be prosecuted for criminal damage.

Size or height

Mature trees can be large with the associated lateral spread; however, this does not make them dangerous. The topping or reduction of trees due to its height would have a detrimental impact on the tree's health and appearance. Trees will be allowed to reach full maturity unless there is a legal requirement to the Parish otherwise.

Interference with television signal or other communication devices

Advice from the television provider should be sought for alternative routes.

Shedding of leaves, fruit, nuts or seeds

This is largely seasonal and persists mainly in the autumn. Fruit trees provide the benefit of spring blossom and autumn fruit which makes them valuable wildlife assets and a potential source for free food.

Sticky sap or honeydew

This is caused by aphids feeding of the tree which then excrete a sugary sap. This is often colonised by a mould which causes the honeydew to go black. There is no reasonable way to remove the aphids which cause the problem. Honeydew is a natural and seasonal issue, and pruning to remove this would not be reasonable.

Bird droppings

While birds can be a nuisance they are part of the natural environment and it would be considered unreasonable to prune or fell a tree for this reason. Warm soapy water will often remove the bird droppings.

Loss of sunlight or excessive shading

In law there is no general right to light.

Encroachment on utility services

Parish owned trees which encroach onto power lines or phone lines are maintained by the appropriate utility company. They should be contacted regarding branch interference. It is not the place of the Parish to maintain third party property.

Alleged damage to property or structures by roots or branches

The Parish regularly surveys its trees and as part of the management system, property damage is avoided as a result of the action of Parish owned trees. Subsidence claims are examined to identify genuine cases. In the first instance the property insurer should be consulted.

5. Enquiries

Enquiries about Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council owned trees should be made via email to enquiries@fairoak-pc.gov.uk or phone 023 8069 2403.

Tree Planting Schedule

Fair Oak and Horton Heath

Parish Council

August 2021

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1. Scope

Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council has made a commitment to increase its tree stock and replace each tree removed with three replacements.

Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council has identified a number of sites in which it feels additional trees would make a positive contribution to the local community.

Sites to be planted are:

- New Century Park
- Knowle Park
- Horton Heath Community Centre
- Fair Oak Cemetery
- Oak Walk

2. Planting locations

2.1. New Century Park

3 no. Turkish Hazel

5 no. Silver Birch

4 no. Lime Tree

3 no. Field Maple

3 no. Tulip Tree

5 no. Norway Maple

3 no. Honey Locust



There are gaps in historic planting schemes which are an obvious location for new trees. Sites have been carefully chosen to retain flat open space for recreational use. Where possible trees have been planted in groups to aid establishment.

2.2. Knowle Park

A choice of either 16 no. English Oak or 16 no. Scarlet Oak or 16 no. Field Maple



English Oak - Classic landscape tree, characteristic of the area and one of the best for wildlife.

Scarlet Oak - Large tree with dark green leaves turning to a flaming scarlet colour in the autumn. Good examples of these trees can be found around the front of the Wyvern campus.

Field Maple - Medium sized tree with fresh light green leaves in the spring and in autumn turning yellow, red and golden brown.

I feel this avenue requires a larger tree species to create a statuesque entrance to the park.

The aim with this site is to replace previously planted trees which have not established well and are generally in poor condition with an avenue of single species of broad leaf trees, which is yet to be decided.

The removed trees will be re located around the skate park.

2.3. Horton Heath Community Centre

3 no. Silver Birch



There is one location which is appropriate for a group of Silver Birch. This will give additional partial screening for the site from adjacent properties.

2.4. Fair Oak Cemetery

1 no. Field Maple

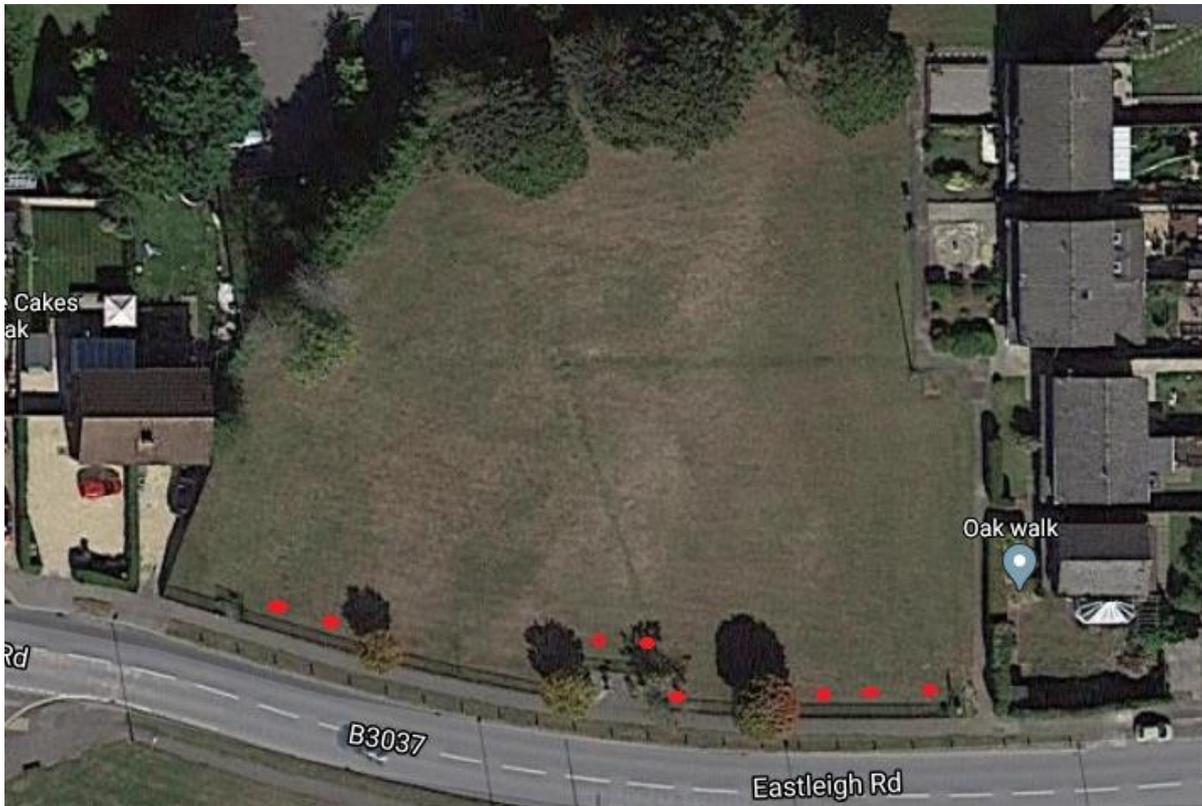
2 no. English Oak



This site is heavily treed except for one location between two groups of mature trees. Care has to be taken with regard to planting too close to grave sites.

2.5. Oak Walk

8 no. Whitebeam



There is sufficient room on this site to plant a number of trees, likely to be small to medium in size to compliment the existing tree species in sight. It will not only enhance the open space but the street scene in general.

3. Approximate tree planting costings

Costs are based on a single tree planted.

1 no. Oak - Root balled 12-14 cm girth = £192

Sundries; stake, mesh, ties, compost and mulch = £35

Labour = £70

Total trees to be planted = 56

Tree, labour and sundries = £297

Total = £16,632

All prices are excluding VAT

This is a guide, final price will vary depending on tree species and size and whether not all sundries are used, for example not all trees will require mesh dependant on each site.

Discount can be given for multiple trees.

The Parish should consider the cost to of watering as well to establish an overall cost.

Please see Tree Management Plan 3.1 for frequency of watering.