



## WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL TREE POLICY

Witney Town Council is responsible for some 9000 trees across the town and surrounds. These trees provide a valuable amenity and enhance the look of the town, its parks and surrounding areas. The Town Council has a duty to inspect these trees and ensure it meets all its legal obligations which include maintaining public safety and knowing the location and condition of the trees for which it is responsible.

The Town Council carry out two types of tree maintenance each year, reactive maintenance and planned maintenance. Reactive maintenance is carried out in response to reports of problems with trees.

The owner of the land that the trees grow on is responsible for the tree. If we do not own the land, please contact the legal owner. If you are a Housing Association tenant ask your Housing Association Office.

The Town Council will respond to urgent matters, such as trees that pose a health and safety risk will be dealt with within 24 hours.

All other less urgent matters will receive a response within 7 working days.

Tree maintenance will only be carried out if necessary and in line with the following criteria:

<b>SAFETY</b>	Significant risk to the public Dead trees located near properties or roads
<b>TREE HEALTH</b>	Work which will prolong life and encourage the development of a good tree structure
<b>NUISANCE</b>	Dangerous, diseased, damaging property or to comply with the Highways Act 1980 S.154

Tree maintenance will not be carried out where:

<b>NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS</b>	Shade Leaf, blossom, pollen or seed distribution Television reception View
<b>OVERHANGING VEGETATION</b>	Which is not causing damage or a risk to health & safety Any tree owned by us that is causing any of the above can be cut back to your boundary. (Before cutting back any tree you will need to check whether there is <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protected by a Tree Preservation Order</li><li>• In a Conservation Area.</li></ul> If the tree is protected in any way, you will need to seek our permission.

#### **Claims for subsidence and damage**

When investigating claims of subsidence and/or damage to properties from tree roots emanating from a tree owned and maintained by the Council, the Council requires the property owner to submit a structural engineers report. This will enable the Council to review the evidence and determine the appropriate course of action. The report must cover:

- Physical damage.
- Presence of live roots of a suitable species.
- Seasonal movement or variation of the damage during different seasons.

All claims regarding subsidence will be referred to the Council's Insurer along with a brief report detailing the age, type and condition of the tree and any other factors that may be of importance to the claim.

**If evidence is insufficient any claim will be dismissed.**

Witney Town Council undertakes a rolling 5-year inspection programme.