Objectives & Guidelines

Ensure that DPM maintains a safe tree stock.

Ensure consistency with regards to requests to prune and maintain trees.

The policy details:

* + Benefits of Trees
  + Tree Management General
  + Claims of Subsidence and Damage
  + Obstruction by Overhanging Branches
  + Television Reception
  + Shade or Blocking of Light
  + Leaf or Fruit Fall and Secretions
  + Interference with utilities
  + Tree Management – Green Space
  + Tree Management – Private land
  + Replacement Planting

**Benefits of Trees**

Trees have many benefits, for example, they:

* Provide shelter - Dappled shade from trees provides a useful barrier from ultra violet radiation and trees reduce wind speed around buildings.

Cool the air - trees help to regulate evaporation.

* Stabilise soil – this is particularly important on sites adjacent to water bodies.
* Filter air pollution – trees act as filters to remove particulate pollution deposited on leaves. They also remove carbon dioxide from the air releasing oxygen as a by-product.

* Reduce noise - trees planted close together can absorb noise and provide a barrier.

* Benefit wildlife - trees provide a habitat and food source for a broad range of mammals, birds and insects.

* Improve the landscape - trees form a backdrop to the urban setting and help to improve people’s enjoyment.

DPM wants to create a GREEN estate and is committed to explore and develop opportunities to utilise the arising (woodchips, logs and standing timber) generated by arboriculture operations towards greater environmental sustainability.

**Tree Management - General**

Trees will not be removed unless there is a demonstrable arboriculture, safety or legal reason for the removal.

All requests for arboriculture works to trees growing on DPM land will be inspected and authorised by DPM.

If tree works are required in the bird nesting season (March – August), trees will be examined for evidence of nesting. Where a bird’s nest is found, tree works will be delayed until the end of the nesting season.

No tree work will be undertaken on trees where there is potential to impact upon any protected species (for example bats or badgers) until consultation has been undertaken with an ecologist and/or appropriate external consultants. Any work that is subsequently undertaken will be in accordance with current legislation, policy and best practice guidance.

All tree pruning and arboriculture works are undertaken in accordance with the British Standard for Arboriculture BS3998 and will follow guidance from the Arboriculture Association’s Guidance Note – An introduction to trees and their management.

**Claims of Subsidence and Damage**

When investigating claims of subsidence and damage to properties from tree roots emanating from a tree owned and maintained by the DPM, DPM requires the property owner to submit evidence from their insurance company or a professional body. This will enable DPM to review the evidence and determine the appropriate course of action. The report could include the following:

* Age of the property
* Depth of foundations
* History of any modification (extensions) to the building
* Condition of the drains
* Spatial arrangement and amplitude of damage
* Data of tree roots
* Soil tests
* Seasonal monitoring
* Survey of level distortion

**Obstruction by Overhanging Branches**

Tree branches from DPM trees that obstruct footpaths, the carriageway, highway signage, street lighting or CCTV will be inspected and have the necessary pruning work undertaken within a timescale appropriate to the situation.

Tree branches from privately owned trees that obstruct footpaths, the carriageway, highway signage, street lighting or CCTV will be inspected and discussed with the owner.

**Television Reception**

There is currently no legal right to good television reception; and no legal requirements to rectify a loss of television or radio service in respect of trees. Interference is not at present a legal nuisance; and in many cases it is possible to resolve issues of poor reception involving trees by finding an engineering solution.

DPM will only consider requests to prune trees to improve reception where the following conditions have been met:

- It can be demonstrated that the householder has taken every effort to find an engineering solution to the problem and has not been successful.

- The work required is consistent with good arboriculture practice and will not unduly affect the amenity or health of the tree.

- If the above conditions are met, DPM will offer a chargeable service to undertake the necessary work.

**Shade or Blocking of Light**

There is no legal right to light in an open space or in a garden. DPM will consider applications to prune its trees for right to light on an individual basis. DPM will offer a chargeable service to undertake the necessary work.

**Leaf or Fruit Fall and Secretions**

Clearing of leaves from gutters and pathways and weeding of set seeds are normal routine seasonal maintenance which property owners should arranged to be undertaken within their property boundary.

Honeydew is not readily controllable by pruning; and cleaning of affected surfaces is also considered to be routine maintenance by the property owner.

As fallen leaves, blossom and berries are uncontrollable, DPM will not prune trees to reduce the amount of leaf litter, blossom or berries which fall from the trees onto private land.

**Interference with Utilities**

DPM will not fell trees which have roots that have entered drainage systems. Tree roots do not have the capacity to break into good condition drainage systems, but they will exploit any existing leaks or faults in drains. The removal of one tree will not prevent other vegetation from exploiting the same opportunity and so the DPM presumption is that the appropriate way to deal with tree root blockage of drains is to ensure that the drains are watertight.

DPM will prune street trees to ensure free, unobstructed passage for pedestrians, traffic, and visibility of all road signs, street lamps and street furniture.

Where adequate illumination of the highway is present, DPM will not take action to improve the levels of illumination of private property through the pruning of trees.

**Trees Management – Green Space**

DPM will maintain the overall number of trees on the estate through replacement planting programmes.

**Tree Management - Private Land**

In cases of tree disease outbreaks (for example Dutch elm disease, Poplar Scab or Ash die back), DPM will seek advice and information regarding control and prevention methods to private land owners.

DPM does not provide a service to arbitrate in disputes caused by privately owned trees, unless the issue directly affects DPM land.

**Replacement Planting**

DPM will select trees that are appropriate for their location and the anticipated maintenance needs throughout the life of the tree.

New tree planting, including the establishment and maintenance of the trees, will be undertaken following sound horticultural and arboriculture practice to comply with the relevant British Standards:

(i.e. BS4428: 1989; BS3998: 1989; BS7370: 1991)

Both native and non-native tree species will be planted dependent upon the appropriateness of the intended location and the purpose of the planting scheme.