

PAMBER PARISH COUNCIL

TREE POLICY

Background

This is a policy for the management of trees owned and managed by Pamber Parish Council (PPC) on behalf of the residents of Pamber Parish.

A principle of English Common and Statute Law is that land and tree owners have a duty of care to visitors, residents, passers-by and indeed trespassers when on their land. This means that the Parish Council has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of death or injury to those on Parish Council land.

Pamber Parish Council owns or manages trees at Pamber Heath Memorial Hall, St Stephens Hall, Little London and Pamber Park. Any queries on trees belonging to Pamber Parish Council should be made to the Clerk of Pamber Parish Council on 07942 637210 or e-mail: clerk@pamber-pc.gov.uk

Trees situated within the public highway, adjacent to the road or on roadside verges, are generally the responsibility of Hampshire County Council. You can contact them by e-mail at info@hants.gov.uk or telephone 0300 555 1388. You can also logon to their website: www.hants.gov.uk and report a problem.

Trees help to add variety to our landscape and provide valuable habitats for many species while providing us with cleaner filtered air. PPC aims to preserve trees for future generations to enjoy.

Work that Pamber Parish Council will carry out on Council owned trees

As a general rule, PPC's approach to dead or dying trees is to leave them standing in order to promote habitat for micro-fauna. However, PPC will remove any trees or limbs, living or dead that represent a danger to the public or property.

PPC will operate a three-tiered approach to ensuring that the trees it manages are in a safe condition and ensuring that they do not cause a legal nuisance. The frequency that trees should be inspected will depend upon the likelihood of harm being caused to persons or property if the tree becomes unsafe. Consequently, trees will be separated into two zones. Zone 1 will cover trees that are in falling distance of a public highway, property, and areas near high footfall (see Tree Policy map – PHMH attached). Zone 2 will cover trees in all other areas (see Tree Policy map – PP attached).

Tier One

After a reported incident or concern by a member of the public with regard to trees in Zones 1 or 2, or notification by Hampshire County Council to the clerk in regards to a tree owned by PPC, then an inspection of the tree will be carried out as soon as it is practical to do so and the requisite action taken.

Tier Two

Inspection of trees in Zone 1 areas will be carried out annually by PPC's Trees' Warden. An inspection by a qualified arboriculturalist will be carried out every five years, in addition to the Trees Warden's recommendations in the interim periods.

Tier Three

Inspection of trees in Zone 2 areas will be carried out annually by PPC's Trees' Warden. An inspection by a qualified arboriculturalist will be carried out every five years, in addition to the Trees Warden's recommendations in the interim periods.

The inspections are a visual inspection of the tree, looking for biological signs, such as undersized leaves, discoloured foliage, dead branches, large or numerous cankers (localized dead areas of bark, caused by fungal or bacterial infections that enter through wounds or natural openings), fungal fruiting bodies and signs of structural weakness.

Where appropriate, PPC's Trees Warden will seek the advice of a professionally qualified arboriculturalist, tree surgeon or Local Authority Tree Officer and commission work if necessary.

All inspections of trees will be documented and reported to the PPC clerk as soon as is practicable.

Work that Pamber Parish Council will not carry out on Council owned trees

PPC have no obligation to carry out the following tree works:

- Cut back branches overhanging private property.
- 'Top' trees or remove branches to increase daylight or decrease height in relation to property.
- Remove branches or trees affecting views or interfering with TV reception.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent falling leaves, honeydew from aphids or other minor debris.
- Remove roots from drains or repair root damage to structures, where the tree has not been clearly demonstrated to be the principal cause.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent potential root damage to structure.
- Remove branches nearly touching buildings, walls, roofs, fences, etc.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent access to squirrels or birds.

If members of the public would like tree works carried out as per this Section, they should make their own arrangements as described below.

Carrying out tree works yourself (or by appointed contractors) and pruning guidance

In Common Law, a property owner can cut back overhanging branches to the boundary of his/her property. The Parish Council would usually have no objection to property owners carrying out tree work or engaging a contractor at their own expense, provided that:

- Access is not gained onto the neighbouring land or to a tree within that land; if access to our land or to a tree on that land is required, our permission must be sought.
- The tree is not situated in a Conservation area or protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- Any work done to a tree is not detrimental to its health or stability; for their own protection members of the public are advised to obtain advice from a qualified tree surgeon.
- Any felled branches arising from the tree pruning are disposed of correctly and not left on the Parish Council's land. Should this not be the case, the Parish Council will arrange for it to be removed and the costs thereof, together with an administration charge of 20% of the cost of removal will be invoiced to the property owner carrying out the work.
- For tree pruning work, whoever does the work, it must be carried out to an acceptable standard, in accordance with the British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work 3998:2010.
- The property owner notifies the Parish Council (before the work begins) of the proposed work and commencement date.

The Parish Council does not carry out works to privately owned trees