



HAVANT BOROUGH TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY

Promoting a sustainable approach to the Borough's trees & hedges for the future



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FOREWORD

I'm delighted to introduce this strategy, and to draw attention to the magnificent natural asset we are all fortunate enough to enjoy throughout our borough.

The Council recognises its role as guardian for the many trees under its protection, and that it must also think ahead as our borough and our planet change. Increasing canopy cover and maximising resilience in tree stock to address climate change—just one strategy element—is truly investing in our future, and I'm pleased the importance of doing so is acknowledged and acted upon. Likewise, ensuring existing borough tree stock is cared for, maintained and given the opportunity to thrive is firmly grasped by this strategy, showing a considered and well-informed approach to our trees and woodland.

I hope you enjoy reading this strategy and recognise the Council's commitment to the many thousands of trees under its care. Together we can make a positive difference to such a precious part of our landscape.



Councillor Grainne Rason

Assistant Cabinet Lead for
Climate and Nature

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Havant Borough Council Tree and Woodland Strategy sets out a clear framework for the sustainable management, protection, and expansion of the borough's tree stock.

Central to the strategy is the principle of “the right tree in the right place,” ensuring that tree planting and management decisions support long-term environmental resilience and contribute to climate change mitigation.

The strategy prioritises increasing overall canopy cover while safeguarding existing trees of value. Over 800 Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are currently in place, protecting more than 3,000 trees, alongside additional controls within designated Conservation Areas. These measures help preserve the borough's natural heritage and canopy cover.

A structured approach to tree management on Council-owned land underpins the strategy, including policies for routine maintenance, risk management of dangerous trees, and operational practices.

In response to climate change, the strategy promotes the selection and planting of climate-resilient species capable of adapting to future conditions, including warmer temperatures and increased flood risk. This forward-looking approach ensures the long-term health and sustainability of the borough's urban forest.

The strategy also encourages community engagement by providing clear mechanisms for residents to check tree protections, request new TPOs, and report tree-related issues, supporting shared stewardship of the borough's green infrastructure. The strategy recognises partnerships with residents, land-owners and developers and will best support the sustainability and management of this precious borough resource and asset.

INTRODUCTION

Havant Borough Council recognises the critical value of trees as part of the Borough as they form an intrinsic part of our natural environment.

They are also key to a healthy, prosperous and vibrant future. Trees and woodlands come in many forms from trees which line streets and form part of our urban areas, hedges, trees in farmland and natural areas. They are all important. They are critical for our Borough's biodiversity and provide places for residents to relax and enjoy nature. They clean our air, help manage our water and are a key part of our landscape and townscape.

Trees and woodlands are also critical to supporting our commitment to reach net zero. Urbanisation and climate change are leading to more frequent and severe flooding, heating and air pollution episodes in Britain. There is a growing focus on nature-based solutions to these problems. Provision of ecosystem services depends on increasingly emphasising urban forest management for health and safety concerns, resolving complaints about trees and to include policies to provide benefits such as storm-water attenuation, heat amelioration and air purification.

The Council owns around 10,000 trees, however the vast majority of trees in the Borough are owned by others. This strategy covers all of Havant Borough and relates to the management of trees, regardless of who owns them. We have produced a separate Tree Management Principles document to inform the management of our own tree stock and which should be read alongside this strategy.

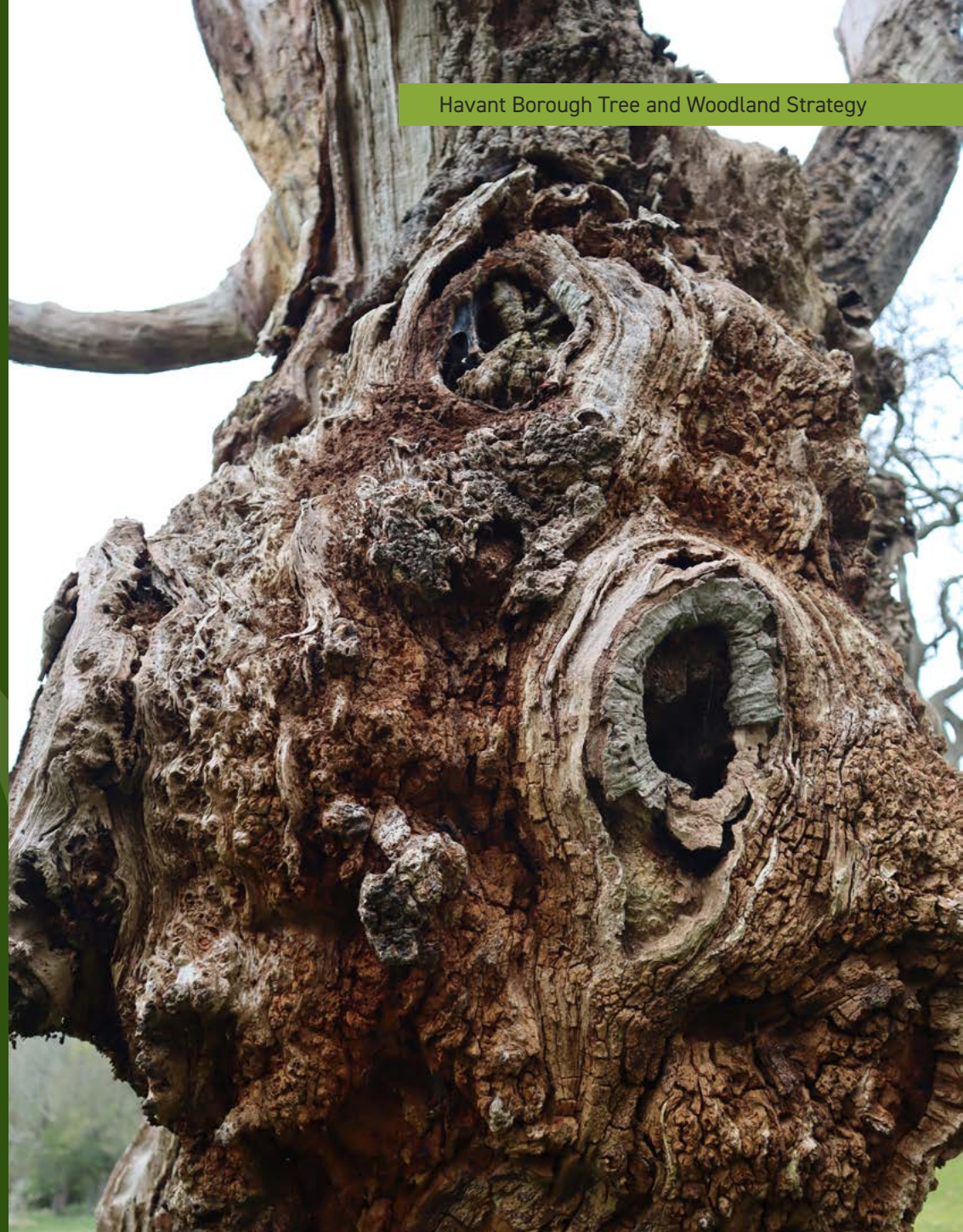
The benefits of having a Tree and Woodland Strategy

The Tree and Woodland Strategy aims to provide the way forward for the management of the Borough's trees. Together with the Borough's Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategies, the Tree and Woodland Strategy will ensure that protecting and enhancing the Borough's environment is at the heart of everything which the Council does. Alongside this Tree and Woodland Strategy, a separate Tree Management Policy sets out how the Council will manage the trees within its ownership in line with the vision and aims of this strategy.



Specifically, the Tree and Woodland Strategy will bring the following benefits:

- Preservation of the area's existing historic, verdant and tree-rich character.
- Contribute to making the Borough a prosperous, safe and attractive place to live and work.
- To protect and enhance the Borough's trees, including their intrinsic habitats and biodiversity, landscape character and local distinctiveness.
- Increased awareness of the value of trees in our society.
- Promoting a high quality of tree management across the Borough.
- To encourage partnerships with local communities, businesses and voluntary organisations.
- Contribute to delivering net zero emissions and climate change objectives.



TREES IN THE BOROUGH

The Borough of Havant largely retains a verdant character, offering an attractive, pleasant environment in which to live, work and relax.

This rich green landscape is not just aesthetically pleasing; it also plays a vital role in climate resilience, biodiversity, community wellbeing, and local heritage.

Many of the trees, woodlands, and traditional field boundaries in the borough are remnants of the historic landscape (including the Forest of Bere), characteristic of southern Hampshire. These features provide a direct connection to the area's rural past and have shaped its visual and ecological identity.

A prime example of this heritage can be seen at Leigh Park Gardens, which forms part of the historic Staunton Country Park. Here, a wide variety of mature trees and rare specimens—such as the Cut Leaf Beech Tree, an unusual and distinctive formation—not only enhance the landscape but also highlight the horticultural importance of the estate's past. These gardens, originally part of Sir George Staunton's 19th-century estate, have been carefully preserved and continue to be a fantastic asset for the community today.

The Council is responsible for maintaining over 10,000 trees and 185 hectares of woodland; however, it is important to note the vast majority of tree cover within the Borough falls outside the Council's ownership. Havant Borough is fortunate to have a significant amount of mature tree cover across many parts of the area, providing character and environmental benefits. However, this very cover can create a conflict of interest, because the trees that make a pleasant area to live and work in are for some residents and businesses a source of frustration.

Issues often occur when the tree makes an important contribution to the local environment and landscape character but also causes problems or an inconvenience to those living nearby. Urban trees, by their nature, are located close to people's dwellings and are a common source of complaint, including; parking restrictions, loss of light, overhanging branches and leaf fall.

Careful pruning can alleviate some of these problems, but sometimes these problems can be attributed to inappropriate placement, species selection or previous pruning methods. Consequently, it is inevitable that responsible management of the trees in the Borough will involve situations where difficult decisions need to be made.

Particularly as our Borough grows and develops, the Council increasingly looks to promote sustainable development which provides homes and job creation whilst also enhancing our environment. Trees can play a key role in this.



HEDGES IN THE BOROUGH

Hedges within urban environments deliver significant environmental, social, and aesthetic benefits.



Biodiversity & Habitat Connectivity

Hedgerows act as ecological corridors that connect fragmented green spaces, enabling the movement of wildlife across urban landscapes. They provide shelter, foraging opportunities, and nesting habitats for birds, insects, and small mammals, thereby supporting urban biodiversity and ecological resilience.

The retention and appropriate management of existing hedgerows is strongly encouraged in accordance with national and local biodiversity objectives, and in recognition of their potential statutory protection.



Air Quality and Climate Regulation

Urban hedges function as physical barriers that intercept airborne dust and particulate matter on leaf surfaces and can help redirect polluted air away from pedestrian areas. Through photosynthesis, hedges capture and store carbon, contributing to climate change mitigation. They also assist in regulating local microclimates by providing shade and facilitating evaporative cooling.



Statutory Protection

In addition to their functional benefits, certain hedgerows are afforded statutory protection under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997, made under the Hedgerows Act 1997. These Regulations protect important hedgerows from removal without prior notification to, and approval from, the Council's Local Planning Authority.



Surface Water Management and Soil Stability

Hedges contribute to sustainable drainage by increasing soil permeability, slowing surface water runoff, and reducing the risk of localised flooding. Their root systems stabilise soil, limit erosion, and assist in filtering pollutants.



Sustainable and Cost-Effective Infrastructure

Over their lifespan, hedges can represent a cost-effective boundary treatment compared with hard fencing. They typically require lower long-term replacement costs and provide multiple ecosystem services beyond their primary boundary function.



Noise Attenuation and Privacy

Dense hedging can serve as an effective natural noise buffer, with the capacity to reduce traffic noise levels by up to 8 dB. In addition, hedges enhance privacy and security for adjacent properties while softening the visual impact of built infrastructure.



A COORDINATED APPROACH

The Council's Corporate Strategy sets out the key priorities of the Council, with a strong environmental focus.

This is then implemented through supporting strategies, project development and decisions. Alongside the Tree and Woodland Strategy and Tree Management Policy, the Council has strategies related to Climate Change and Biodiversity. These have been prepared in a coordinated way given the clear overlaps.



Climate Change



Biodiversity

Woodland habitats across Havant Borough have been assessed to identify opportunities for strengthening the ecological network, supporting nature recovery and addressing climate change. Key areas of existing connected woodland habitats—aligned with the Local Ecological Network (LEN) core data—have been mapped, highlighting priority zones for intervention through woodland, hedgerow, or tree planting, as well as natural regeneration. This is set out in the Borough's Biodiversity Strategy.



Biodiversity Urban Forest Opportunities

Opportunity 1

The Council will assess and pursue opportunities to manage its land to improve woodland connectivity and enhance existing woodland, trees, and hedgerows.

Opportunity 2

The Council aims to increase overall tree canopy cover within the Borough. This will involve:

- Establishing a robust baseline.
- Setting a locally achievable yet ambitious canopy target.
- Considering a 15% coverage target for coastal areas, as recommended by the Urban Forestry and Woodland Advisory Committee.
- Ensuring species selection supports local biodiversity objectives.

Enhancing Woodland Quality

Effective woodland management is essential for biodiversity. Active interventions—such as selective thinning and creation of light gaps—mimic natural disturbances, supporting a diverse age structure and improving ecological value. Without management, woodlands may become overly uniform and less supportive of wildlife.

Restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) is also a priority. These sites often retain ancient woodland characteristics and offer strong potential for ecological restoration.



Havant Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan in relation to Trees

In 2024, Havant Borough Council adopted a new Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, setting out clear and ambitious targets to tackle climate change at the local level. The strategy aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 68% by 2030, with the Council itself aiming to reach net zero by 2035, and the wider borough aiming for net zero by 2045. These targets align with the UK Government's national goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

Tree planting plays a key role in Havant's approach to climate mitigation. Trees naturally absorb carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere—creating what are known as 'carbon sinks' through a process called carbon sequestration. Havant Borough Council strongly supports tree planting, but emphasises that it must be done with care: planting the right tree in the right place is essential for long-term survival and environmental benefit.

As Havant and the wider region experience the impacts of climate change—such as hotter summers, more intense rainfall, and greater flood risk—it's critical to consider tree species that are resilient to these changing conditions. The Council is encouraging the use of climate-adapted tree species that can thrive amid rising temperatures and unpredictable weather patterns.

The Council's Climate Change Action Plan includes ongoing support for local tree-planting projects across the borough, with a focus on enhancing biodiversity and ensuring that planting occurs where trees will thrive. An example of this is the Plaza Greenspace Project, which showcases how trees, hedges, and other planting can be successfully integrated into small urban areas. This project not only helps to absorb CO₂ but also improves climate resilience by reducing the effects of both urban heat and surface water flooding.

To build on this work, Havant Borough Council is launching a new study into local green spaces, examining how they can be improved to become more climate resilient. This will explore opportunities for improved tree planting, the development of mini urban forests, and the creation of cool, shaded areas where residents can relax and escape the heat. The study will also review how to bring more greenery into the borough's urban spaces—such as street verges, parklets, and pocket parks—supporting the broader aim of reinstating elements of natural 'wilding' across Havant.

The Council is also working with Hampshire County Council on a county-wide initiative to plant one million trees by 2030. This ambitious target will help Havant contribute meaningfully to regional and national climate goals.

Furthermore, the emerging Local Plan includes a new policy focused on using trees to combat urban heating. While the exact policy number is still to be confirmed, it is designed to support shading and cooling in new developments, highlighting the critical role trees play in climate adaptation and improving residents' wellbeing.

Through these initiatives, Havant Borough Council is taking a proactive, nature-based approach to climate action—demonstrating local leadership, supporting biodiversity, and ensuring the borough is better prepared for the challenges of a changing climate.



VISION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

Moving forward, consideration of the impact on trees will be part of the comprehensive consideration of the environment which will feature as part of every decision, project and initiative which the Council takes forward.

The Council's overall vision for the Borough's trees and woodlands is “*the right tree, in the right place, for the right reasons*”.

Building on the vision, the strategy's objectives are:

- To protect, promote, sustain and enhance our trees and woodlands—collectively known and referred to as the Urban Forest.
- To recognise the Urban Forest's contribution towards the character and appearance of the natural environment of the Borough for the benefit of all those who live, work in and visit the area.
- To protect trees from unnecessary felling or disfigurement.
- To have an approach of 'no net loss' of trees in the Borough, aiming to annually plant more trees than are felled in any one calendar year.
- To promote good management of trees to take account of the impacts of climate change.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

Arboriculture is a relatively new discipline and every tree in the Borough needs management and maintenance. This involves:



Crown Lifting

This involves pruning to achieve a desired vertical clearance above ground level or other surface by removing small diameter secondary branches.



Crown Reduction

This is the removal of a specified percentage of branches from the crown all around the tree, by retaining the main framework of the crown and therefore a high proportion of the foliage bearing branches.



Crown Thinning

This is rarely a once-only operation and should be undertaken to meet a specific tree management objective. It involves the removal of a specified percentage of branches throughout the crown and should retain an even density of foliage throughout a well-spaced and balance branch structure.



Formative Pruning

The main aim is to produce a tree which, in maturity, will be free from any major physical weakness. The term can also be applied to more specialised practices such as pollarding, utility pruning and restorative pruning.



The latest research has illustrated the importance of what is termed target pruning—minimising wound area, aeration of wood tissues and encouraging good wound response in the tree. Therefore, the Council will not carry out topping of trees and will utilise the best practice pruning techniques highlighted within the British Standard 3998 Tree Work - *Recommendations*.

It may be necessary to organise works beyond this scope, either to address a health and safety concern or to undertake work to maintain a tree previously 'topped' in the past. The Council through its contractor will utilise risk assessment procedures to determine the extent of work required.



Management of Ancient and other Veteran trees require specialist input in order to prevent avoidable loss of ancient trees and maintain a tree population in which the values associated with ancientness are sustained.

Veteran trees are a valuable and irreplaceable part of the landscape, offering ecological and aesthetic benefits. However, as trees age, they naturally develop structural weaknesses such as hollowing, deadwood, and reduced limb stability. While these characteristics are part of their ecological importance, they can also increase the risk of falling branches or limb failure. For this reason, it is essential that members of the public are discouraged from sitting, gathering, or walking directly beneath veteran trees on Council managed land. This approach is not about restricting access to green spaces, but about managing foreseeable risks in a responsible way that protects public safety while still conserving these important natural assets.

Havant Borough Council will endeavour to take a balanced and proactive approach by implementing a combination of clear signage, subtle physical barriers, and thoughtful landscape design. Low fencing, log barriers, or natural planting can help guide foot traffic away from high-risk zones without detracting from the setting.

Informative signs explaining the ecological significance of veteran trees, alongside the safety rationale, can encourage public understanding and cooperation. Regular tree inspections by our qualified arborists will underpin these measures, ensuring that risk levels are continuously assessed and managed. By combining education, design, and maintenance, councils can safeguard both the public and the long-term preservation of veteran trees.



Statutory Tree Protection

Under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 the Council has powers to make and enforce Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and designate Conservation Areas under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which gives protection to trees of a certain size. TPO's place a responsibility on the owners of such trees to request permission from the Council prior to undertaking any pruning or felling works. The Council has a statutory duty to respond to such requests within 8 weeks. Owners of trees within a Conservation Area have to request permission from the Council before undertaking any tree works. The Council has the option to allow the notification to expire or to respond within 6 weeks, either raising no objection for the works or by placing a TPO upon the tree or trees affected.

Using TPOs allows HBC to use its 'powers' responsibly and resource effectively. There are currently over 2,000 TPO's and 14 Conservation Areas within the Borough. The Council will continue to use TPOs to increase the level of protection afforded to specific trees or woodlands which are considered to be under threat. The majority of trees that provide amenity value within Havant Borough are in private ownership.

The Council will ensure the process of placing TPO's upon trees within the Borough is undertaken in a consistent manner with clear explanations provided to those directly affected by the decision. The Council will act to investigate whether a TPO is justified whenever it is made aware of a potential threat. This includes pressures for development within the area which can necessitate the proactive use of TPO's and planning conditions as a proactive tool to ensure sustainable tree cover for future generations.

The Council recognises the Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders (TEMPO) as industry best practice to assess whether a TPO should be put in place. TEMPO is designed as a field guide to decision-making and ensures that a systematic assessment has been made. TEMPO is unique in that it is the only method that considers all of the relevant factors in the TPO decision-making chain.

Where damage is caused to a tree which is protected by a TPO, the Council will undertake the necessary investigation and consider prosecution if deemed appropriate.

Policy 1

Protecting the Borough's trees through Tree Preservation Orders

The Council will:

- Place Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on trees which are justified as having high amenity value through a TEMPO assessment.
- Enforce TPOs and conservation area controls where necessary.
- The loss of more mature trees will be particularly resisted and need strong justification given the high value they add to the landscape and townscape of the Borough.
- Utilise planning conditions and technical supervision to ensure a high standard of arboricultural work to protected trees.
- Enforce the planting of replacement trees for those felled.



Legal Protection – Wildlife & Countryside Act

Features such as holes and splits in trees are often used as roosting or breeding sites for bats. Bats are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it illegal to intentionally or recklessly 'kill, injure or take', or 'damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place' which supports any bat species.

All bat species plus Hazel Dormouse are European Protected Species and afforded strict legal protection under the Conservation (of Habitats and Species) Regulations 2017. It is illegal to undertake activities that would result in their capture, killing, disturbance or injury—on purpose or by not taking enough care; damage or destruction of their breeding or resting places—even accidentally; or obstructing access to their resting or sheltering places—on purpose or by not taking enough care.

Further advice and guidance on bats in trees can be found at the [Bat Tree Habitat Key](#) and the [Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 4th edition](#).

Nesting birds are also protected under the Act, making it illegal to intentionally 'kill, injure or take any wild bird' or 'take, damage or destroy the nest' of any wild bird intentionally while that nest is in use or being built.



Trees and development

Current national and local planning policy seeks to increase the density of development in urban areas, while also seeking environmental gains in terms of an increase in tree and woodland cover alongside and as part of biodiversity net gain. This puts pressure on both existing trees and the ability to plant new trees.

Trees on a site should be considered as an asset rather than a problem—they will add considerably to the character of new development, enhancing the placemaking that can take place. Whilst the best trees should be preserved, it is accepted that some tree loss alongside new planting is often inevitable when a site is developed. It is essential that this is considered as an intrinsic part of designing a development, using up to date and robust evidence on the tree stock within a site.

The Council will continue to require planning applications to take into account the advice and guidance contained in the latest version of British Standard BS 5837:2012 (*Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction Recommendations*).

Moving forwards, the Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan—entitled Building a Better Future. This plan will need to include a robust and proportionate policy(ies) which require the consideration of trees and hedgerows when designing development schemes.



Considering works to private trees

Havant Borough is fortunate to have a significant amount of mature tree cover across many parts of the area, providing character and environmental benefits. The provision of tree advice to customers who own protected trees is invaluable not only in terms of promoting best practice for the care and management of those trees, but also increasing awareness of their value and importance in our communities. It additionally provides the Council with a greater degree of awareness in terms of the potential threats to trees in its area.

However, the presence of trees can also create a conflict of interest, as the trees that make a pleasant area to live and work in are for some residents and businesses a source of frustration. This can arise:

- When applications are made to prune or fell protected trees.
- When applications are made for development of whatever size in the vicinity of protected trees.

Issues often occur when the tree makes an important contribution to the local environment and landscape character, but also causes problems

or an inconvenience to those living nearby. Urban trees, by their nature, are located close to people's dwellings and are a common source of complaint, including; parking restrictions, loss of light, overhanging branches and leaf fall.

Careful pruning can alleviate some of these problems, but sometimes these problems can be attributed to inappropriate placement, species selection or previous pruning methods. Applications for tree works will be considered on a case-by-case basis considering all of the issues relevant to that case. Whilst the loss of trees or significant pruning would be resisted in principle as part of the implementation of Policy TP1, it is accepted that this is necessary in some situations, provided that the appropriate justification has been provided.

The Council will consider a policy in the new Local Plan which will set out how such conflicts will be managed. This would need to set out how the Council will consider the ultimate mature size of the tree, available space and the relationship to buildings when making planning decisions which would impact on trees.

Policy 2

Considering works to private Trees

The Council will:

- Promote 'Best Practice' and undertaking tree works that comply with British Standards.
- Continue to provide a paid pre-application and advice service in relation to trees and development.
- Assess tree applications on a case by case basis considering national policy and regulations, local policy and best practice.



Subsidence and heave to TPO Trees

On occasion residents or insurance companies may contact the Council if they believe a tree has caused damage to buildings. This is typically to address damage which could have been caused by subsidence or heave:

- Subsidence is a complex interaction between the soil, building, climate and vegetation that occurs on highly shrinkable clay soils. Where the soil, supporting all or part of a building, dries out and consequently shrinks, it results in part of a building moving downwards. Trees lose water from their leaves through transpiration and are replenished by water taken from the soil by the roots. If the tree takes more water from the soil than is replaced by rainfall, the soil will gradually dry out. Trees have a large root system and they can dry the soil to a greater depth, critically to below the level of foundations. The amount of water trees can remove from the soil can vary between species.
- Heave is the opposite of subsidence and occurs when a shrinkable clay soil re-hydrates (re-wets) and begins to increase in volume, exerting upward pressure. Heave can also cause damage to buildings, although it is considered to be finite and as such less of an ongoing problem than subsidence.





A number of factors are involved when determining the cause of subsidence to a building, the location of trees being just one factor. Monitoring of the subsidence, by qualified experts in various fields, is required over a number of months to ascertain the true reason for the movement in a structure. Havant Borough Council recognises the Joint Mitigation Protocol (JMP) as industry best practice and will determine subsidence cases on this basis. The JMP is a standardised approach to managing subsidence claims where trees are identified as a potential cause of structural movement. It aims to define best practices for investigating and processing building damage caused by tree roots, including setting benchmarks for response times and evidential standards.

The protocol's primary objectives are to streamline claims handling, support prompt decision-making, and facilitate timely mitigation efforts—ultimately leading to faster resolutions. At the same time, it acknowledges the important role of trees in urban settings and ensures that local authorities receive comprehensive investigative evidence at the outset. This enables informed and timely decisions

regarding the most appropriate action concerning the tree. Notably, the protocol marks a significant milestone, as it reflects a unified agreement among building insurers and their representatives that remedial pruning can be a viable alternative to tree removal.

(Details can be found at [Joint Mitigation Protocol](#))

Where necessary, the Council will obtain expert specialist advice to verify submitted evidence and where it demonstrates that the tree is an influencing cause, permission to remove the tree will not unreasonably be withheld.

The Council will seek to avoid potential subsidence incidents by taking a proactive approach when determining planning applications. In those areas where the risk of subsidence is greatest, because of the presence of a highly shrinkable clay soil and important landscape trees, the Council will require evidence that measures will be taken to try to prevent future subsidence damage. In some instances, engineering solutions, such as differential building joints and special foundations, may be required.

Policy 3

Considering proposed works to private trees due to subsidence or heave

Where an application to work on a protected tree in relation to a subsidence case is received, it must be supported by strong evidence that the tree in question is or is likely to contribute to (on the balance of probabilities) damage to a building and the criteria set out in this strategy are met. Although the level of evidence required will differ on a case-by-case basis, the Council will normally require:

- An engineer's report (including an accurate survey).
- A history of damage and precise level monitoring information to demonstrate that the tree is responsible for the damage.
- If this evidence is not sufficient, the Council may require further information including crack monitoring, soil analysis, foundation details, root analysis and drain surveys to be submitted.
- There will be situations where a tree makes a negligible contribution to the character or quality of the local environment. In these situations, the Council will agree to its removal based only on a visual assessment of the damage.





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Use of the Council's discretionary powers

Tree owners have a duty of care towards any tree or trees within their ownership regardless of whether they are protected or not.

In particular, tree owners will need to ensure they address any issues or concerns regarding health and safety.

On some occasions, this can lead to disputes between landowners, particularly where trees overhang neighbouring land or are causing damage to land or property. Such disagreements are ultimately a civil matter between the landowners in question.

The Council has discretionary powers under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to deal with trees in private ownership that pose an imminent danger of damage being caused to people or property. Such situations might include the root plate moving,

extensive decay in the trunk or roots, catastrophic root damage or the failure of a major fork or branch.

The Council may serve notice on a tree owner to carry out the specified safety works within a period of not less than 21 days. Where these are not carried out, the Council has powers to enter the land and undertake the works. Where the Council does undertake safety works, it will seek to recover reasonable costs from a landowner. Where an owner is unable to meet these costs or where land ownership is not clear, the Council will put a charge on the land.

There is no requirement under this legislation for the Council to become involved with private trees that are merely causing a nuisance to a neighbouring property for example, by causing shade, blocking views or dropping leaves, flowers or fruit etc. These situations will remain a private matter between the two parties.

Policy 4

Use of the Council's discretionary powers

The Council will:

- Provide advice through its paid pre-application service to homeowners where this is sought.
- Utilise its discretionary powers under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to manage dangerous trees on private land to protect public safety, with decisions made on an individual, case-by-case basis.
- Resist the use of powers under the same regulations to deal with matters which do not pose an imminent danger of damage to people or property.



Promoting the Borough's trees — engaging with our communities

Havant Borough has a number of active volunteer groups who support our woodlands and open spaces.

In addition to this, the Council supports a Tree Warden Network comprising volunteers with an enthusiasm for the protection of their environment, working in partnership with the Council and the Tree Council.

The scheme represents an ongoing opportunity for the Council and the community to work together to protect and enhance the local environment.



Policy 5

Engaging with the Borough's communities

- Continue to support and encourage development of community participation.
- Continued designation of high-profile tree champion for the borough to act as a focal point and figurehead for wider community participation.
- HBC and Contract Partner will endeavour to work with local community groups and other organisations to ensure their involvement in future management plans for our trees.



IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & REVIEW

All decisions and actions to manage the tree stock across the local authority should be underpinned by the policy statements contained in the strategy.

The strategy has benefit from a designated tree champion from within the Borough—in the form of a designated Councillor.

The adopted Tree and Woodland Strategy will be considered when preparing the new Local Plan for the Borough. The strategy itself will also be a material consideration during the planning process in respect of both applications for tree works and planning applications for development which may impact on trees.

The adopted strategy should also be referenced during tree preservation order compensation claims, and with tree-related subsidence claims, as the Council's considered process for managing its trees and dealing with such a claim.

An annual analysis of tree removals and tree planting will be undertaken to inform on-going actions. This will include increasing and diversifying tree canopy coverage within the district to take account of predicted climate change impacts.

Consideration of whether a review of the strategy is needed in whole or part will include:

- Systematically undertaking a detailed analysis of the monitoring information.
- Identifying and addressing obstacles to the implementation and delivery of the strategy.
- Recommendations for amendments to the policy or practice as required.



TREE & WOODLAND ACTION PLAN

Havant Borough Council commits to:

- Recognising and committing to the value of trees in the Borough, embedding this fully into the Council, decision making, project implementation and Business as Usual operations.
- Recognising the climate change and nature emergencies which the Council declared and the role which trees can play in responding to both crises.
- Ensuring that there remains sufficient resourcing to implement the policies in this strategy, across the Council.
- Consideration of new planning policy(ies) regarding tree protection, replacement and planting in the new Local Plan.
- Continue to appoint a 'tree champion' within the Administration.
- Promote and encourage community engagement to recognise and promote the importance of trees to the Borough's environment.



HAVANT BOROUGH TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY

Havant
BOROUGH COUNCIL