

## **Swanage Town Council Tree Strategy – adopted 12 December 2022**

This strategy defines the intentions and actions of Swanage Town Council in respect of the stewardship of the Council's trees through planned maintenance and tree renewal programmes. The strategy is to be considered in conjunction with Dorset Council's Tree Policy for Council Owned Trees 2021 (adapted), adopted by Swanage Town Council on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022. These documents provide the framework within which management and decisions regarding trees will be made.

This strategy includes trees that are either owned or managed by the Council in parks, green spaces, footpaths, cemeteries, car parks, woods and other sites where trees exist. The tree policy and strategy will apply to the Peveril and Downs Local Nature Reserve, noting that the Management Plan for this location may contain more detailed and site-specific information.

### **Tree Inspections**

The Council will ensure that an inspection of all trees is undertaken every 3 years by qualified arboriculturists. Inspections will provide the following information:

- Location map;
- Tree species (common name);
- Size (height and trunk)
- Age class;
- Condition
- Recommendations

In addition to the above the Council will visually inspect trees:

- As part of their day-to-day work;
- As a result of feedback from third parties regarding a specific tree(s);
- Following periods of extreme weather.

### **Tree works**

Should the Council deem that works to any tree are necessary within the context of the tree policy, tree strategy and recommendations following inspection, an assessment will be made regarding how the work will be safely undertaken and by whom. The Council has and will continue to ensure, a proportion of team members are professionally qualified in pole pruning, cross cutting and felling trees. In addition, the Council will provide appropriate tools, on-going training and health and safety provision to ensure such works are undertaken safely and professionally.

Any assessment will consider the size, location, risks associated with the tree and the required works and the in-house resource available. Based upon this, a decision will be made to undertake the work directly or via engagement of a suitably qualified contractor. It should be noted that Council employees will not climb trees in order to undertake any works.

The Council will wherever possible recycle and reuse any arisings from tree works. This may include creating and retaining chippings, laying of branches to attract wildlife and collection of leaf mould.

### **Tree Planting**

The Council has and will continue to commit to a programme of new tree planting annually. This will be undertaken within the context of the Tree Policy and will also take into account the following considerations:

- Mature height and spread;
- Site suitability;
- Retainment and extension of canopy;
- Disease resistance;
- Increasing the diversity of the Council's tree stock;
- Climate change, including increased potential for drought conditions;
- Access to enable early years watering and tending;
- Vulnerability to wind and vandalism.

When planting appropriate staking and soil enrichment will be undertaken. Details of the trees and locations will also be recorded and mapped in order to provide an asset record and ensure these are included in planned tree inspection routines.

### **Partnership Working**

The Council recognises the importance of trees to individuals and groups and will seek to work in positive partnerships with others to support:

- Tree planting initiatives;
- Recognition of premium and ancient trees;
- The positive mental health and social value of trees.

### **Site-Specific Tree Strategies**

There are several areas where site specific tree strategies are appropriate. These include, not exclusively:

- Beach Gardens;
- Day's Park;
- Godlingston Cemetery;
- Northbrook Copse.

Tree strategies for these locations will be developed and be appended to the overall Swanage Town Council Tree Strategy. Site specific tree strategies will consider:

- Canopy cover (as a percentage of site area);
- Maturity, lifespan and condition of existing trees;
- Use of area;
- Opportunities to increase biodiversity.

Site specific tree strategies will enable improved financial budgeting for tree management based upon need.

This document will be reviewed at least annually and in conjunction with changes in relevant legislation and best practice.

Gail Percival  
Assets and Compliance Manager