Foreword

The adoption of South Dublin County Council’s Tree Management Policy ‘Living with Trees’ is an indication of the Council’s commitment to looking after one of its most important natural resources - 60,000 trees. We have a rich abundance of trees located in our parks, open spaces and streets adding character and a sense of place to this County. Trees enhance our streetscape and open spaces, contributing to a healthy environment and valuable biodiversity.

‘Living with Trees’ outlines the Council’s position regarding the ongoing maintenance, renewal and management of trees. This is in line with our Corporate Plan objective - to improve the appearance of the County.

The objectives of the policy are clearly outlined:

- Improve tree management and create a safer, healthier tree population
- Implement a proactive, planned programme of cyclical tree maintenance
- Maximise the use of the Council’s resources to provide a better service and give better value for money.

Our five year Action Plan outlines actions with a timeframe in order to achieve the objectives. Progress on achievements will be presented to the Council each year and information will be made available on a dedicated Tree page on the Council’s website www.sdcc.ie.

The implementation of South Dublin County Council’s Tree Management Policy ‘Living with Trees’ will lead to a more strategic, proactive, planned approach to tree management in our County and lead to an improved service and enhanced public realm.

Mayor Sarah Holland

Chief Executive
Daniel McLoughlin
1. Introduction

Trees make a major contribution to the character, appearance and well-being of South Dublin County. They provide significant economic, social, environmental, ecological and aesthetic benefits to our communities and to our urban and residential streets, parks and open spaces. They also enhance biodiversity and play a crucial role in mitigating climate change. The Council recognises trees as a living asset that requires ongoing maintenance, renewal and management for their for long-term sustainability and community benefit.

The development of a Tree Strategy is outlined as an action in South Dublin County Council’s Corporate Plan 2015-2019 under Objective 1 of the Environment, Water and Climate Change Directorate:

**Improve the appearance of our county in the interest of economic development**

The Tree Management Policy / Strategy will provide a framework to inform and support decisions made by the Council on the management and development of a sustainable tree population in the County. The Policy is intended act as a point of reference for the public, Councillors, Council staff and professionally interested people to enable informed discussion and to establish a clearer, consistent and more structured approach to the issues affecting trees. This will result in a better understanding of these issues and an overall improvement in the standard and continuity of tree care. In turn, this will allow for a pro-active and systematic approach to tree management, resulting in a healthier tree population and creating a greener, more sustainable environment for residents and visitors to the County.

1.1 Why have a Tree Management Policy?

South Dublin County Council has responsibility for the management and maintenance for trees in public spaces – streets, parks and open spaces.

Whilst the County has an estimated population of c.60,000 trees, an inventory of street trees has not previously been undertaken and information on the number, age and condition of trees is limited. It is also well recognised that parts of South Dublin County’s administrative area, such as the long established neighbourhoods of Rathfarnham, Terenure, Templeogue, Tallaght, Clondalkin, Palmerstown and Lucan, have ageing and mature tree populations where tree maintenance is required in order to sustain the health and viability of these trees into the future.
The planting of new trees and replacement planting where trees have been removed has also been very limited in recent years and there is a need to plan for the renewal and continuity of our tree population. The absence of a clearly defined policy for tree maintenance and prioritisation of work has resulted in public expectation of a tree maintenance service beyond that which is necessary or achievable.

At present, much of the Council’s tree resource is managed by responding to complaints but reactive management is not efficient and does not give our customers the best service. The lack of a planned approach to the management of the Council’s tree stock could reduce the quality of the County’s landscape character over time.

The environmental, social and economic factors relating to trees are recognised but the pressures on existing trees, opportunities for new tree planting and the impact of development in its many forms tend to be dealt with in isolation.

The development of this Tree Management Policy signals a new commitment by South Dublin County Council to looking after one of our most valuable natural resources. It represents a significant change in how we manage trees with the development of a more strategic, proactive, planned approach to inspection, planting, maintenance and management. This will enable progress towards an improved service and a more effective and informed tree maintenance programme.

The Council’s aim is move towards more efficient, cost effective proactive management rather than reactive management of the County’s street tree population. Our objectives are to:

- Improve tree management and create a safer, healthier tree population
- Implement a proactive, planned programme of cyclical tree maintenance
- Maximise the use of the Council’s resources to provide a better service and give better value for money.

Central to this approach is to recognise and promote the value of existing trees as well as planning for renewal of the tree population. Expectations of how we manage our tree population have to be balanced with the realities of resource availability.
1.2 Why Trees are Important

Trees are living organisms and are a unique component of the landscape: They offer aesthetic and environmental value as well as social and economic benefits.

Many trees are long-lived, offering enjoyment and a range of benefits to residents both now and in the future. Trees make a huge contribution to the urban landscape enhancing the quality of life for people living, working and visiting the County.

The benefits that trees provide can be categorised as follows:
- Environmental
- Climate Change
- Social
- Economic
- Health & Wellbeing
Environmental benefits

- Air quality – Trees absorb carbon dioxide and other gases from the air producing oxygen in the photosynthesis process. Each year a mature tree produces enough oxygen for 10 people. Trees also trap dust particles thus improving air quality.
- Flooding – Trees help mitigate the risk of flooding – tree canopies intercept rainfall.
- Noise barrier - Tree can reduce noise by acting as a sound barrier, this is particularly important in absorbing traffic noise in built up areas.

Climate Change

- Carbon – trees are carbon sinks, they store carbon as they grow, temporarily reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere.
- Habitats – trees and their ecosystem provide habitats for wildlife – trees and timber with cavities are especially valuable for animals such as bats and birds.
- Habitat connectivity – trees provide green links between parks and open spaces allowing opportunities for wildlife to travel from one place to another to access new habitats.

Social

- Sense of place – trees create a distinctive landscape, making important landmarks and providing a unique sense of place and location.
- Nature – trees connect people with nature, marking changing seasons with leaf colour changes and floral displays.
- Community links – trees are long lived and are a part of the social fabric, culture and history of an area, linking people and building community networks.

Economic

- Property values – research has shown that the presence of trees can increase the value of residential and commercial properties by between 5-18%.
- Village and retail areas – the presence of trees in retail areas positively affects people’s behaviour by attracting consumers to an area.
- Effects on heating/cooling buildings – Trees provide shade, shelter in wind and a regulation of local air temperature thus reducing energy and heat costs.

Health & Wellbeing

- Physical benefits – trees have a positive effect on health through the provision of shade, outdoor recreation amenity and clean air.
- Mental benefits – research has shown that trees reduce stress and give a greater quality of life.
- Emotional well being – trees with seasonal changes, flowers, colours and aromas can stimulate positive emotional feelings.
1.3 Impact of Climate Change and Trees

**Policy:** The Council will protect and increase the county’s overall canopy cover to mitigate the effects of climate change.

As climate change increasingly becomes a reality, planting and caring for trees in our towns and cities will become even more important. The effects of climate change are predicted to result in warmer wetter winters with an increased risk of flooding and hotter drier summers. This policy has previously highlighted the importance of trees in cooling the urban environment and the health, social and economic benefits that trees provide to the public space environment of South Dublin. Trees also have the ability to maintain and recycle vast amounts of water and, while flooding is not currently a major climate mitigation issue for South Dublin, the part that trees play in flood mitigation may become increasingly significant in the future.

While trees may play a part in mitigating climate change, they are also directly affected by it and unfortunately the effects of changing climate will threaten the health and survival of trees. One of the greatest challenges facing the local and national tree population is the control and containment of new pests and diseases from outside Ireland. New pests and diseases are a threat to Ireland due to the increased international trade in plants, timber and general goods, and the more favourable conditions for new pests and diseases associated with climate change. Recent examples include ash dieback and bacterial canker of horse chestnuts. The spread of new species-specific diseases to Ireland emphasises the importance of species diversity. It is important to ensure the future continuity of tree cover across the county by, where practical, managing the age range of trees and by replanting with a more diverse range of species in order to mitigate the risks that monoculture and climate change present for tree management.

1.4 Challenges of Managing Trees

While trees enhance the urban environment, the growing conditions are often hostile to good tree growth. Trees compete for good root growing environments in footpaths and roadside margins with utility networks, foundations for road and footpath works and a variety of pollutants such as car fumes, salt and de-icing agents from roads. Physical damage and disturbance to trees roots is a frequent consequence of road and footpath reconstruction or trenching works of utility companies. Vehicular damage, particularly by skips and high-sided vehicles, and vandalism can damage trees causing death or disfigurement resulting in a misshapen or weak tree. There is also an increasing trend by car users to park their vehicles on verges, causing rutting and soil compaction, which seriously damages tree roots as well as leaving the verge in an unsightly and unsafe condition. Poor management of trees, incorrect pruning and failure to remove tree stakes and tree ties can also negatively affect tree growth. Despite all of this, trees can and do survive, albeit with a more limited life expectancy and with varying degrees of success. However, these challenges demonstrate the need for a strategic approach to tree management, planting and maintenance.
1.5 Vision

This Tree Management Policy supports South Dublin County Council’s mission:

‘To make our county the best possible place in which to live, work and do business’

Our vision is for our trees to thrive in a well-managed, safe, sustainable environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

1.6 Aims of the Tree Management Policy

The overall aims of the Tree Management Policy are to ensure the safety of Council trees, maintain and encourage biodiversity, maintain and improve landscape quality, and through these elements, improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to South Dublin now and in the future. We will achieve this by:

- ensuring that the Council has a clear programme of tree maintenance, management and planting;
- maintaining and improving the tree cover for the future;
- appropriate siting and species selections for all new trees;
- promoting the importance of trees in shaping the distinctive local character and appearance of South Dublin’s urban landscape;
- recognising the significant aesthetic, landmark, ecological, social and economic value that trees provide;
- effectively communicating, educating and engaging with the local community on trees and their importance;
- continuing the proactive management of the Council’s tree population;
- allocating sufficient resources to allow for best practice tree management
- providing clarity over why decisions and actions are taken;
- balancing the risk and nuisance to persons and property against the other aims; and
- recognising the value of trees as a tangible asset.

1. Introduction

Living with Trees
1.7 Action Plan

An Action Plan has been prepared to support and deliver progress against the vision and aims of the Tree Management Policy. It sets out what we hope to achieve between now and 2020. The plan identifies a number of key actions, responsibilities and timescales for delivery. Successful implementation of the Tree Management Policy and its Action Plan will involve cooperation across Council services and with external utilities agencies.

1.8 Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy will be subject to annual monitoring to assess progress against the Action Plan and to pick up any emerging issues. A more thorough review of the policy will be undertaken every five years to adjust and incorporate any new changes in legislation, local policy, working practices or technical developments which may arise. A mid-term review of the policy will be undertaken in 2017.
2. Tree Management

Policy: The Council will initiate a tree survey of all Council owned and managed trees, so that the collected information can be used to manage the tree resource in a planned and efficient way, which allows for the development and implementation of long term management plans, work schedules and the prioritisation of tree work.

2.1 Tree Management System

The Council will purchase a computerised, GIS based tree management system to enable the mobile mapping, surveying and management of all street trees within the county. This system will also be capable of integration with the Council's Customer Contact System and other operational systems. An integrated street tree management system will provide a comprehensive record of individual trees and enable the Council to trace the full history of any tree including inspections, tree works completed and related customer enquiries.
2. Tree Management

2.2 Tree Survey

It is estimated that South Dublin County Council has responsibility for the management and maintenance of at least 60,000 trees. However, an inventory of street trees within the Council’s administrative area has not previously been undertaken and so accurate and detailed information on the extent, profile, condition and maintenance history of our tree stock is very limited. Information about these trees is essential if our trees are to be managed effectively and to enable planned management. A programme of street tree surveying across the county will be implemented to record details of location, species, age, size, condition, maintenance history and management requirements of individual street trees. Surveyors will input the data collected from surveys into the computerised tree management system. The Council will use the data to better manage its risks and to prioritise actions for our street tree population.

2.3 Tree Maintenance Service

The Council’s tree maintenance service will aim to provide a professional and reliable service to the public, Council members and other Council services. The key roles of the Council’s tree maintenance service are:

- To manage inspections and surveys of trees under Council ownership and management.
- To develop and maintain the planned computerised tree management system.
- To plan and monitor all planned and reactive tree works.
- To compile and deliver an annual programme of tree maintenance works.
- To deal with public enquiries and complaints on tree related matters.
- To provide professional advice to other Council services and Council members.
- To communicate with community stakeholders.
2.4 Annual Arboriculture Programme

The pruning, removal and planting of street trees is currently undertaken under the Council’s Annual Arboriculture Programme. This programme is presented to meetings of the Council’s Area Committees in November. The development of the Annual Arboriculture Programme has largely evolved each year in response to requests for tree maintenance works received from members of the public and public representatives via the Customer Care Contact System.

However, planned maintenance is the Council’s preferred method of maintenance to maintain trees in a safe and healthy condition. In recent years, the programme has increasingly focussed on tree pruning and removal works on entire roads or whole estates as opposed to acting on isolated requests for arboricultural works. The objective of this approach is to increase the efficiency and productivity of the tree maintenance crews and to advance a proactive programme of cyclical pruning that is targeted at priority locations where intervention is most needed.

2.5 Cyclical Programme of Planned Street Tree Maintenance

Policy: The Council will progress the phased introduction of a cyclical programme of tree maintenance.

To ensure ‘Best Value’ service delivery, the Council will continue to advance the phased introduction of a planned cyclical programme of tree maintenance. This represents a move away from pruning individual trees on a one off basis to pruning entire roads or whole estates which is more efficient both in terms of cost, efficiency and community benefit. Having a planned approach also reduces the risk of tree failure and nuisance to residents, and will help to pre-empt complaints and meet the majority of customer requirements for tree works. This planned programme of tree maintenance will be made available to the public via the Council’s Area Committees and the Council’s website.
2. Tree Management

In addition to the rolling programme of planned works, some works will also arise from unplanned events such as severe weather conditions or insurance claims. Trees which threaten public safety and property will always be given the highest priority which may lead to plans for programmed works having to be delayed.

2.6 Reactive and Emergency Works

There will always be a need to carry out reactive works, although the quantity of this work should reduce over time as cyclical work is embedded. Reactive works are carried out to manage risks to the public. They include felling dead trees, removing hazardous branches, and clearing obstructions to sightlines and infrastructure. Reactive works are carried out in response to enquiries from other Council services, residents and Council member or where staff have identified them when travelling in the county.

The Council has an emergency plan for severe weather conditions and has tree maintenance crews on call 24 hours a day for any tree related emergencies.
2.7 Public Awareness, Education & Engagement

**Policy:** The Council will engage with the general public, schools, resident groups and environmental non-governmental organisations to promote a better understanding of the management, care and value of trees and to increase public awareness of their importance in promoting well-being, environmental sustainability and improving quality of life.

Education on good practice in tree management is essential to improve understanding and appreciation of trees. It is an effective method to dispel any negative concerns and fears that residents may have.

Where practicable, the Council will promote awareness and appreciation of trees through encouraging and facilitating the involvement of local communities, schools and other stakeholders in tree planting, management and educational activities. Over the years, South Dublin County Council has taken a leading role in organising events for National Tree Week in March and Tree Day in October, particularly in association with schools and community groups throughout the county. The Council will renew its commitment to organising these events.
2.8 Trees in Parks & Open Spaces

There are 1750 hectares of parkland and open spaces throughout the County which make an important contribution to people’s overall quality of life. Trees are one of the major components that define the landscape and layout of parks and recreational open space and as such the Council recognises the importance of its parkland trees. They provide screening, shade and structure to make our parklands a more attractive environment to visit and in which to enjoy a broad range of recreational activities. These trees also offer a rich and unique wildlife habitat, particularly where they grow to form woodlands.

The parks of South Dublin are well stocked with trees although in places age and species diversity are not optimal. In some parks, there are limited opportunities for planting new trees without encroaching on the recreational open space that, in itself, is important to the structure and use of the parks. Existing trees in parks and public open spaces are managed to reflect the circumstances of the site and their type, age and condition. Ongoing maintenance includes removing dead wood, formative pruning of establishing trees, removing low branches from pathways and removing trees when they come to the end of their safe and useful life. Available resources will be used to plant new trees where a need has been identified.

Larger parks and open spaces offer the most scope and potential to plant a mixed range of diverse tree species, large individual trees and urban forests. Tree lined avenues are also a feature of many of our parks. Trees in parks generally have more room to grow compared to street trees and usually grow to their full height and spread. Trees in these areas can be planted with no restriction on size or habit and can include exotic trees which can be in keeping with existing character or history of a park or area. Noteworthy features may also be included in parks such as plantings to remember historical, public and social events. An example is the Famine Commemorative Arboretum in Corkagh Park established in 1995. The arboretum hosts 150 different species of trees native to the countries to which Irish people emigrated following the famine.
2.9 Trees & Social Heritage

Trees are amongst the most important and significant features in the urban and rural landscape. They are a part of our history and culture and have been worshipped, celebrated and revered in myth and folklore. Some trees are remarkable for their age, size, scientific, ecological or botanical interest or are valued for their intrinsic beauty while trees associated with historic events or landmark trees can be special to local interest and affection. There are a number of trees within the administrative area of South Dublin, on both public and private land, which have helped shape the County’s cultural landscape and character. The Council intends to document a list of significant trees and this information will be used to promote broader community awareness and appreciation for trees and their protection in their contextual landscapes.

South Dublin Libraries Local Studies section refers to the wonderful heritage of ancient trees in South Dublin County preserved in literature and folklore and indeed some these remarkable trees still survive and grow here. Trees associated with kingship, mythical trees, a hanging tree, saint’s trees and venerable old trees have all been recorded here: https://localstudies.wordpress.com/2012/09/19/remarkable-trees-of-south-dublin-county/

One of the trees referred to in the folklore record is the Balgaddy Bush. It lay on the boundary between the parishes of Clondalkin and Lucan, at a crossroads, a location redolent of folklore. The Balgaddy Bush or similar was replanted on the roundabout next to the area. Trees are also recorded in our local place names:

- **Lucan** (Irish: *Leamhcán*, meaning “place of elms”)
- **Terenure** (Irish: *Tír an Iúir*, meaning “land of the yew tree”)

![Trees in Lucan](image-url)
2. Tree Management

2.10 Autumn Leaf Fall Management

The Council’s street cleaning contract includes leaf sweeping during the autumn period. Leaves are removed from public roads and footpaths throughout the county. This usually begins in September and extends to the end of January each year.

Residents are responsible for dealing with leaf-fall on their private property. Leaves from private gardens, drives or pathways should not be swept into the road but should be disposed of in a responsible manner. Options may include:

- home composting
- collection from your home via the Council’s brown bin
- taking them to Ballymount Civic amenity for recycling

Resident Associations, Tidy Towns groups and community groups may wish to compost leaves to create beneficial leaf mould which is a valuable resource and can be used to enrich soils. The Council will pilot a community based leaf composting project in 2016.
3. Tree Planting / Replacement Planting

**Policy:** South Dublin County Council recognises the value of street trees in the urban environment and is committed to planting new trees to ensure that the visual amenity in South Dublin is assured for future generations. We will maintain a database of sites that have been identified as possibilities for new trees and implement an annual programme of tree planting in accordance with available resources.

3.1 Right Tree Right Place

**Policy:** The principle of planting the ‘right tree in the right place’ will apply for all new and replacement tree planting.

The careful selection of appropriate tree species and planting location is essential to minimise future nuisance issues and unnecessary maintenance costs. Potential sites for tree planting will be inspected to assess their suitability for new trees, considering factors such as services, sight
3. Tree Planting/Replacement Planting

lines, warning signs and traffic signals, space for future growth, etc. When positioning new street
trees the Council will specifically aim to:

■ avoid future obstruction of public lighting columns by ensuring that the fully mature new tree 
canopy will be ideally greater than 5m, but certainly no less than 3m from the lighting column
■ seek to ensure that future tree growth does not compromise a minimum footpath width of 
  1.2m
■ make adequate soil volume a priority to sustain tree health and longevity when selecting 
  planting sites and preparing pits for tree planting.

3.2 Tree Planting

Currently the Council plans its annual tree planting in accordance with available budget resources. 
The financial constraints of recent years have resulted in very limited implementation of new or 
replacement tree planting across the county over the last 5 years. From 2015, the Council aims 
to identify an annual target for tree planting to re-establish its commitment to a countywide 
programme of tree planting.

Areas targeted for new tree planting will be those where trees have been removed or where there 
is an identified need to increase the overall tree cover. Requests from Council members and local 
residents for new trees in their road or area will be taken into consideration within the planting 
programme. Individual requests will be prioritised according to the number of trees already on the 
street, including those in front gardens and on adjacent land.
Residents and resident associations must first seek and obtain permission from the Council before engaging in projects to plant trees and shrubs within Council managed streets, roadside margins or open space environments.

The Council’s Tree Planting Programme will be implemented between November and March as this is accepted to be the most appropriate time of the year for planting of bare-root and root-balled trees. Tree planting will be carried out by adequately trained or supervised staff, and followed by appropriate post-planting maintenance.

The Council will develop guidelines for tree planting and all tree planting works will be undertaken in accordance with the Council’s Tree Planting Guidelines and with current British Standard Codes of Practice including British Standard 8545: 2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations.

The vast majority of new trees planted will be of advanced nursery stock; that is trees with a stem circumference of between 12-16cm and a height of 3-5m. The planting of trees of this more robust tree size has been proven to be effective in reducing the risk of vandalism of newly planted trees.

### 3.3 Design of Street Tree Planting Schemes

Many of our streetscapes have been planted with trees over succeeding generations but without the benefit of a clear design. Sometimes this works well, but in some locations the trees actually detract from the overall enjoyment of the street environment because there are too many trees, they are the wrong species or in the wrong place. Given this, we do not believe that it always appropriate to simply replace a tree in the same place.

Where there is a substantial requirement for new or replacement tree planting within a streetscape, our preferred approach is to prepare a tree-planting plan for the site reflecting its character, scale, use and local interests. The design of any new tree planting should ensure that it complements the local landscape character and enhances the immediate environment. Trees will be selected for their appropriateness of scale and proportion to their surroundings and the aesthetic contribution they make to that environment. Planting density and species selection should be guided by available space to ensure that each tree is compatible with its new site and has every opportunity to develop into a healthy mature specimen. The scheme should endeavour to incorporate trees as a positive asset and an integral feature of the landscape setting. Such schemes may be subject to community consultation before being adopted and implemented.
3.4 Species Selection

The choice of tree species for street tree planting is dependent on suitability to the planting location and local landscape character. A greater variety of trees can be planted in parks and open spaces and species will be selected on suitability to setting, biodiversity value and visual appearance. The selection of street trees is guided by their mature size, water demand, crown shape and future management requirements. Species utilised in tree planting programmes will be those judged by the Council to be appropriate for the circumstances based on policy, arboriculture knowledge and experience. Appendix 2 contains a suggested list of tree species suitable for street tree planting. The list is not definitive and additional species will be considered where they have shown to be appropriate for street tree planting.

Having too many of the same type of tree in the county is a concern because of the increased risk of a loss of one or more species of tree to disease or other environmental factors. We can enhance the resilience of our tree population by increasing the diversity and variety of new trees planted. However, where the same type of tree species creates an avenue or clearly defined group within part of a street, new and replacement trees will be of the same or closely matching species in the interest of visual continuity.

As well as increasing species diversity, the Council will also seek to plant large canopy trees, wherever possible, to achieve the maximum benefits that trees provide. Large-growing tree species confer much greater benefits to urban areas than small trees. Where space allows, preference will be given to planting as large a tree as is appropriate for the location.

The Council also encourages the planting of fruit trees in parks, community centres and schools.

3.5 Replacement Tree Planting

**Policy:** The Council aims to ensure, subject to available budget resources, that every tree felled should be replaced to ensure that over the years, the County retains its tree stock for future generations, although it is not always practical or prudent to replace a tree in the same location or with the same species that was previously planted.

If a site where a tree was removed is suitable to support a new tree, the site may be replanted with a suitable tree species. Because the stump has to be placed on a stump removal list and sufficient time needs to elapse to allow breakdown of residual underground root material, the process from removal to replanting may take up to 3-5 years. Replacement tree planting will only take place during the dormant season.
3.6 Use of Tree Guards

The Council does not install mesh tree guards around street trees or trees on public open spaces. It is our experience over the years that tree guards attract vandalism and become traps for unsightly accumulations of litter. They can also have the opposite effect to that which is intended in that the tree guard structure itself can provide leverage against which the trunks of young trees can be broken.

In order to minimise vandalism to newly planted and establishing trees, the Council’s preferred approach is to plant trees of robust size stem girth, usually a minimum of 14-16cm and support the tree with a staking mechanism of about 1m above ground. It is our experience that the heavier stem girth combined with a low stake minimises the ability to cause damage to the tree.

3.7 Post Planting Maintenance Programme

Care and maintenance of young trees is vital. When trees are first planted they are at their most vulnerable and are more likely to die within their first 5 years than at any other time in their life.

In order to aid their establishment, all new planted trees will be watered during the first growing season, between May and August. Local residents are encouraged to help trees outside or near their property by watering them on dry and windy days (10-20 litres per week). Where present, this can be done via the plastic tubing protruding from the earth at the base of the tree, which is buried around its roots. Residents should conserve water and use a basin in the sink to collect water or collect rainwater in a water butt for watering trees.

Maintenance of the tree will also include loosening of tree ties and removal of stakes and ties when the tree has become established.

3.8 Sponsored Memorial Tree Planting

The Council will consider the feasibility of a suitable initiative and develop a protocol to address occasional requests to accommodate sponsorship of trees as memorials or to commemorate major life events. Due to potential sensitivities surrounding memorial tree plantings, any development of a scheme for sponsored memorial tree planting in public spaces would have to carefully consider the selection of suitable sites where the risk of vandalism or damage to the tree would be minimal.
4. Tree Maintenance

Policy: The Council will maintain trees on public spaces, streets, parks and open spaces adhering to relevant industry guidelines when carrying out arboricultural works to ensure all trees are in a safe condition and not causing actionable nuisance or forseen danger.

Street tree maintenance includes the inspection, pruning, removal and replacement of trees.

4.1 Quality of Work

All tree works will be undertaken in accordance with British Standard BS 3998: 2010 Tree Work -Recommendations and current Health & Safety requirements. All staff undertaking tree works shall be competent with appropriate training, experience and qualifications. Any tree surgery contractors engaged to work on Council owned trees shall be competent and adequately qualified, trained, experienced and appropriately insured.

Any tree work carried out should be essential to the long term retention of the tree in its current position rather than simply for appeasement reasons. The Council will aim to maintain a natural silhouette to a tree unless it can be shown to be in the best interests of the long term health of the tree to do otherwise. The Council will not normally consent to pruning works that are greater than the standard set out by the Arboricultural Association or industry best practice, generally accepted to be crown reductions and thinnings of no greater than 30% by volume.

The Council will develop a quality standard for tree maintenance to be used as a checklist for assessment of completed tree works to ensure that all tree works and site clean-up post works operations are completed to a specified standard.

4.2 Public Information on Tree Works

The Council currently presents its Annual Arboriculture Programme to Council members at the Council’s Area Committee meetings usually during November. In order to expand public access to information on the Council’s planned programme of tree works, it is intended to enhance the Council’s website www.sdcc.ie to provide a ‘Trees’ webpage that will include the up to date Arboriculture Programme.
The planned removal of trees can be a particularly emotive and contentious issue and once a tree becomes a removal candidate, and the works are not emergency works, steps will be taken to provide public notice prior to any trees being removed to inform residents and reduce customer enquiries. Trees that are removal candidates are identified by requests from residents or public representatives or through routine survey work by Council staff. Public notification of any proposed tree removals will consist of a variety of methods that may include posting a list of trees on the Council’s website, emailing known residents associations, notices being attached to trees, and/or letter drops to adjacent properties. Timescales for notice will vary according to the type of work, whether it is urgent and the local significance of the tree but wherever practical, the period of notice will be at least 10 working days before any scheduled tree removals. We will not usually give notice where works involve the felling of dead trees or those in imminent danger of failing.

4.3 Reasons for Tree Pruning and Felling

**Policy:** The Council will wherever possible try to avoid removing a tree or undertaking unnecessary pruning works where there is no good arboriculture reason. It has a duty to manage the tree population for the benefit of the wider community and in accordance with good arboriculture practices.

The Council will undertake tree works to fulfil its legal obligations to ensure the safety of the public and properties. Tree works will be undertaken:

- Where an inspection has identified visible decay, fungal brackets indicating possible root and trunk decay or any other defect that would lead to the tree failing.
- A tree is dead or visibly in decline.
- To abate an actionable nuisance, where branches are touching buildings, e.g. physical contact with walls, windows and gutters.
- Where road signs, traffic signals, street lights, and sightlines for vehicles and pedestrians are obscured.
- Evidence has been provided that the tree is a contributing factor in causing structural damage that cannot be reasonably addressed by an alternative solution and proactive tree management has had no mitigating effect.

Tree removal or pruning will not be undertaken where:

- Trees are perceived to be too large.
- Satellite dish TV reception is interrupted.
- Sunlight may be blocked from reaching properties or gardens.
- Views are obstructed.
- Seasonal or naturally occurring events happen, e.g. falling leaves, fruit, seeds or berries, honeydew sap, bird droppings, pollen allergies.
- Insects or other non-hazardous wildlife are present.
4. Tree Maintenance

The type of pruning works undertaken depends on the trees location and its species. Bad or unnecessary pruning can do more harm than good since each cut has the potential to change the growth of a tree, cause damage or allow the entry of wood decaying organisms, therefore no branch should be removed without a good reason. Older trees do not tolerate pruning as well as younger trees and substantial pruning can be very damaging. The effect of pruning also varies between species and some are not naturally tolerant of cutting. In general, minimal pruning works will be undertaken in order to sufficiently manage a tree. This may often only involve removing the lower branches to increase clearance for pedestrians and vehicle traffic and/or cutting back the branches from adjacent buildings.

4.3.2 Formative Pruning

Young immature trees, particularly in an urban setting, can benefit from pruning in their formative years. This should be carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 3998: 2010 Tree Work – Recommendations as required throughout the early years of a tree’s life in the landscape. It involves removing crossing branches and potentially weak forks to encourage a good natural shape, reduce health issues and reduce the need for major pruning when the tree is mature.
4.3.3 Topping of Trees

Topping of trees (reduction in height) causes large wounds, exposing trees to decay pathogens and causing their long-term decline, as well as being unsightly and potentially unsafe. Topping is therefore only considered where trees have serious defects, that cannot be reasonably addressed otherwise, and their short-term retention is essential or highly desirable.

It is often the view of residents that removing the crown or ‘topping’ a tree or trees will improve light levels or views or improve reception to TVs, satellites etc.. Whereas this may be true in the short term, any pruning, but especially ‘topping’, will cause decline in some species or rapid growth in others. Regrowth resulting from ‘topping’ will often be denser than the original crown and be weakly attached to the branches it develops from. Wounds associated with topping are often large and are more likely to be colonised by wood decaying fungi. ‘Topping’ is not good practice and can lead to dangerous trees in the future. For these reasons the Council will not ‘top’ trees.

4.3.4 Removal of Trees

Trees are removed only when necessary as a last resort. The criteria for tree removal are:

■ tree is dead, dying or is considered hazardous due to its poor structural or biological condition. Hazardous conditions may exist above and/or below ground and may include significant root, trunk or crown decay, split trunks and crotches, and large dead limbs.

■ The tree has declined beyond the point of recovery and is no longer meeting the functional or aesthetic requirements of a street tree. Typically, a tree with 30 percent or less of its foliage remaining would meet this criterion.

■ Fatally diseased trees (eg. Ash dieback, Fireblight Disease) may be removed before they reach the primary threshold in order to prevent the spread of disease to healthy trees.

■ To allow space for development of nearby trees that may be more desirable for retention

■ To allow space for new planting

■ To make way for any approved engineering or building works when unavoidable construction work will immediately compromise the stability or viability of the tree.

■ Tree proven to be causing significant structural damage that cannot be reasonably addressed by an alternative solution and proactive tree management has had no mitigating effect.

■ To abate actionable nuisance

■ The trunk of the tree is within 2m of a public lighting column and the long term viability of the tree if retained in its location would be compromised by a requirement for ongoing maintenance in order to maintain the effectiveness of the adjoining street light.
4. Tree Maintenance

4.4 Unauthorised Pruning, Removal or Damage to Council Owned Trees

**Policy:** The Council may seek to prosecute anyone found to be carrying out unauthorised work or causing damage to its trees without permission and where appropriate apply the maximum penalty.

The unauthorised removal of trees affects the amenity of an area and destroys the many positive benefits of trees in a locality.

All Council staff operate from vehicles displaying the Council’s logo and tree contractors operating on behalf of the Council are required to erect signage which refers specifically to South Dublin County Council. If someone is observed pruning, removing or causing damage to a Council owned tree who may be without consent (person not associated with a relevant sign or vehicle and / or without clothing that clearly identifies who they are) the Gardai should be called and the Council notified. Unauthorised damage, pruning or removal of a Council owned/managed tree may be prosecuted by an Garda Síochána under the Criminal Damage Act 1991.

Unauthorised works or damage to Council-owned trees may result in a charge being levied. This charge will reflect the amount of damage sustained and where the life/safety of the trees is undermined, it will include the cost of total tree replacement and compensation for loss of tree value. These charges will be drawn up by professional parks staff and each case will be assessed on an individual basis using a recognised tree valuation system (eg. CAVAT or Helliwell).

4.5 Arrangement or Payment for Street Tree Maintenance by Residents

Where tree work is not justifiable as the result of a request for service from a resident, some residents may seek to pay for the work themselves. This will often be in relation to minor seasonal nuisance issues. If the Council was to engage in pay for service agreements, this would create an unfair two tier system. This would fail to deliver an even handed service for residents who are unable to pay for service. The Council will not enter into any arrangements where members of the public pay for, or contribute towards the cost of tree maintenance works. We will also not allow tree surgeons engaged by members of the public, access to climb trees under our stewardship. Except in the case of overhanging branches any unauthorised works to Council owned trees carried out by any person would be treated as criminal damage.
4.6 Stump Removal

When a tree is felled by the Council, it is not always possible to remove the stump immediately. Stump removal may be delayed at least 6 months after tree removal. Under these circumstances a short tree stump is left as a temporary measure. The stump is usually left at around 1m high so that does not constitute a trip hazard in the intervening period. Tree stump removal is normally undertaken during the winter months between November and February or may be done when there are a sufficient number for their removal to be economical.

4.7 Timber and Green Waste Use Policies

Policy: The Council will seek alternative uses for arisings from tree work to ensure as much as possible is reused or recycled.

A large quantity of wood and woodchip is produced each year from pruning and felling trees. Wherever possible, the wood debris from tree work is converted and recycled into woodchips for use as a mulch in planted areas or surfacing for woodland paths within the Council’s parks and open spaces. Larger sections that can’t be processed by the woodchipper are recycled according to the condition and species of timber. At present, these are generally made available to wood turners for carving and crafting or for firewood to charitable organisations through official local contacts. Timber and green waste generated from tree works in woodlands is usually left in situ to create wildlife habitats.
4.8 Nesting Birds

**Policy:** The Council will carry out inspections of trees prior to tree works for bird nests during the nesting period of March 1 – August 31 and comply with the relevant legislation and seek expert advice from relevant organisations where necessary.

The Wildlife Act 1976 (as amended 2000) is the principle legislation protecting nesting birds in Ireland. The Act makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird and to take, damage or destroy any nest that is either in use or being built. Section 40 of the Act prohibits cutting of vegetation on uncultivated land between March 1st and August 31st. However, it is accepted in practice that street trees are cultivated and as such, this allows for tree maintenance works to be carried out during the closed period subject to compliance with best practice protocols in regard to pre-works assessment of trees for active nests or nesting birds. Where an active nest or nesting birds are observed, no tree works should be carried out.

The primary reason for a year round programme of street tree maintenance is to ensure public safety and minimise tree hazards. Phenological and biological research also indicates that a number of tree species including cherry and walnut are best pruned in mid-summer to avoid introduction of disease while maple and horse chestnut will bleed sap extensively if pruned during early season growth.

To comply with the Act, the Council will draft a best practice protocol to ensure minimal impact on wildlife and nesting birds. The Council’s tree maintenance crews or contractors engaged by the Council, will be required to thoroughly check trees for nesting birds during the nesting period (March 1 – August 31) and take appropriate measures to prevent disturbance prior to the commencement of routine works. Advice from external experts will be sought where necessary. These measures may mean delaying the works until young birds have flown.
4.9 Pest & Disease Control

Policy: The Council will investigate signs of pests and diseases and where practicable, will respond in accordance with current best practice.

In the last few years, several new pests and diseases have emerged in Europe as significant risks to tree health and plant biosecurity. Due to Ireland’s island status, there is a better chance of remaining free of many pests and diseases not currently found on the island. However, the growth of global trade in plants and the increasing movement between countries of plant material increases the risk of new pests and diseases entering Ireland. There is also a risk of exotic pests arriving in dunnage and timber packaging through our ports. The predicted changes in climate may increase the risk of these pests and diseases spreading. Small changes in temperature or weather patterns, due to climate change, can enable organisms to become established in areas where previously they would have struggled to survive.

4.10 Ivy on Trees

Policy: The Council will seek to retain an acceptable level of ivy on trees where the inspection for decay or defects is not compromised.

The Council acknowledges the considerable value of ivy (Hedera helix) as a habitat and food source for wildlife. Unless ivy has established on young or weak trees, where it may compete for water and nutrients and suppress healthy growth, it causes little harm. However, where ivy has taken hold on mature trees, especially those close to roads and public areas, judgements must be made on its retention based on the health of the tree and the possibility of cavities or defects being hidden from view as well as its increased vulnerability to wind damage. In these situations, removal of ivy may be deemed necessary for risk management purposes.
5. Prioritising Tree Work

It is recognised that residents’ views on trees can vary greatly and a tree that is of great beauty and value is one person can be perceived as an unsightly nuisance to another. People rarely contact the Council when they are happy about local trees. Only when trees become an apparent problem are comments made, and therefore a distorted picture of peoples’ perception of trees develops. It is important to seek alternatives to felling or severe pruning when conflicts arise, so that the trees can remain for the silent majority who value them.

The Council’s role is to try to achieve a compromise, which is acceptable to the community at large but not necessarily to every individual within the community and to safeguard the tree population for the future, within available resources. The implementation of this Tree Management Policy will clarify many of the existing ideologies and improve the management of customer expectations and the Council’s website will be enhanced to provide a ‘Trees’ webpage that will include answers to frequently asked questions about trees.

5.1 Response to Enquiries

During 2014, the volume of tree maintenance requests doubled when compared with numbers from the previous year. This is partly reflective of an ageing and maturing tree population, particularly in long established neighbourhoods of Rathfarnham, Terenure, Templeogue, Tallaght, Clondalkin, Palmerstown and Lucan, where tree maintenance is required in order to sustain the health and viability of these trees into the future. It has also been prompted by a growing public awareness and concern with regard to trees arising from damage to trees during the severe storms of recent times and associated perceptions that all trees require regular maintenance. In addition, the obligation on property owners to pay Property Tax is concentrating increased demand on Council services including tree maintenance.

The Council’s Customer Contact System is usually the first point of contact for enquiries and complaints from the public, including those relating to trees. Details of the customer’s name, address, contact details, nature of the enquiry and location of the enquiry are logged into the Customer Contact System. The enquiry is then referred to the relevant Council section for response.

Any tree-related emergencies are referred for immediate action in accordance with the Council’s emergency procedures. An emergency is defined as a tree that is in immediate danger of collapse or a tree that is causing an obstruction requiring urgent attention.
For non-emergency tree enquiries, customers will be informed of Council policy within 10 working days of receipt of an enquiry. Where a site inspection is considered necessary, customers will be informed that such a site inspection will be undertaken within 60 working days of receipt after which the customer will be notified of what action, if any, is considered appropriate.

5.2 Inspections

Currently, the Council undertakes tree inspections primarily in response to requests for tree work. Each inspection involves an assessment of the tree’s health and condition, and identifies if any work is required, having regard also to any issues raised in an enquiry that has been received in relation to a specific tree.

Based on figures for 2014, the current requirement for tree inspections is c.1600 per annum. These inspections are primarily of individual trees across a wide geographic spread throughout the county. In order to make most efficient use of the Council’s staff resource who undertake tree inspections, non-emergency inspections are normally undertaken when there is sufficient number of tree inspections listed for undertaking within a particular geographic area. Priority for inspection of requests for tree pruning or removal will be given to those that comply with the criteria for tree pruning removal works as specified in section 4.3.

During 2015, training is being provided in Tree Survey & Inspection to ensure that the Council has an adequate complement of competent staff available to deal with the current and ongoing demand for tree inspections.

In order to progress to a planned rather than reactive approach to tree management, the Council will adopt a more proactive management approach through regular cyclic inspections. The frequency of inspections will depend on available resources and the severity of identified issues for monitoring in our street tree population. Following inspection where it is identified that tree works are required, they are categorised and will be included for attention on the Council’s Arboricultural Programme if required and be undertaken in accordance with a priority based system.

The results of tree inspections will be recorded on the electronic tree management system. Customer enquiries will be linked to the system which will provide a clear audit trail of the enquiry and action taken.
5.3 Tree Risk Management

Industry best practice now strongly favours a risk-based system of tree management relying on a programme of regular inspection prioritised by potential hazard and its potential impact on known targets in the surrounding area.

Whether trees are managed for their amenity, social, heritage or environmental benefits, their management must however be balanced and proportionate to the actual risks from trees. It is both normal and natural for trees to lose branches or fall and the risk to human safety is very low. While no research has been carried out in Ireland with regard to the level of risk posed by falling trees, research by the UK Centre for Decision Analysis and Risk Management demonstrates about a one in 10 million chance of an individual being killed by a falling tree (or part of a tree) in any given year. However, the low level of risk may not be perceived in this way by the public, particularly following an incident and its coverage in the media.

The Council has both a moral and legal duty of care to ensure members of the public and staff are not put at risk because of any failure to take reasonable precautions to ensure their safety. All such processes balance the need for safety with the amenity and other benefits of trees on a risk assessment basis. Exposure to an element of risk is however accepted as an unavoidable consequence of all environments where trees are present.

The Council will develop a pro-active and systematic good practice approach to tree management and inspection with the aim of promoting good tree health, condition, diversity, public amenity and a balanced age profile. This approach will highlight necessary works at an early stage and enable hazards to be identified and made safe in a cost effective and efficient way.

All identified tree work will be prioritised and carried out according to identified hazard or risk. Work is in progress to survey and record Council owned/managed street trees. The aim is to develop a computerised record of Council owned trees and a prioritised regime of re-inspection based on the level of risk. Resources will need to be identified to develop this system into the future to cover all Council owned trees.

5.4 Priority Rating System for Tree Works

To enable efficient use of resources, tree works will be prioritised and programmed based on the Priority Category as shown below, and in each category a list of maintenance that would normally fall into that priority has been given as guidance. However until the tree has been inspected and the relevant information has been recorded its true priority cannot be established. It is strongly emphasised that these categories and figures are only guidelines which are applicable under normal circumstances only. The occurrence of emergencies, storms and other events beyond our control do occur and thus would have to take priority over programmed work. This would result in scheduled work being delayed.

The following categories will be used when prioritising tree works:
## Tree Maintenance Priority

### Priority 1: Emergency Works
- Response to trees that are perceived to pose imminent danger to people or property
- Target completion – within 24hrs
  - Making safe of storm damaged trees in adverse weather conditions
  - Large limbs snapped and hung up over high vehicular and pedestrian flow

### Priority 2: High Priority Works
- Works on trees that are not considered high risk but where remedial work is required
- Target completion – action immediately or within 3 months
  - Dead, dying, diseased and dangerous in high pedestrian and traffic flow areas
  - Tree branches below 2.5m causing obstruction over high pedestrian flow footpaths
  - Tree branches below 4.5m causing obstruction over high traffic flow roads
  - Tree branches causing damage to property
  - Trees with root plate movement

### Priority 3: Medium Priority Works
- Improvement works that are considered desirable to enhance street scene or public space. Works to abate nuisance caused by Council trees
- Target completion – action within 12 months
  - Crown thinning of trees close to public lighting
  - Crown lifting/ removal of low branches over footpaths and roadways
  - Pruning of trees near buildings to prevent damage from occurring
  - Snapped limbs/branches on public open space with low pedestrian access
  - Works which promote the effective establishment of newly planted trees

### Priority 4: Low Priority Works
- Target Completion – action when resources allow within 24 months +
  - All other general tree maintenance work that is causing no risk of harm to persons or property.

### Priority 5: No action / Unnecessary Works
- This category consists of trees that have been inspected and considered healthy and safe with no works required at this time of inspection regime
6. Felling & Pruning Policies

To ensure that requests for tree works are dealt with efficiently and consistently, South Dublin County Council’s policy in relation to the more common types of request is outlined below.

6.1 Obstruction of Street Light

Policy: The Council will undertake work to a tree in Council ownership/management to ensure that trees do not unduly obstruct the streetlight.

Tree pruning will be undertaken where reasonably feasible to address obstruction of a street light where a tree is within 5m of the lighting column. Where the trunk of a tree is within 2m of a lighting column, the removal of the tree is considered to be the most appropriate long-term option.

Where a tree is removed from a roadside verge, due to proximity to a public lighting column, a replacement tree will not be planted back into the same verge.
6.2 Obstruction of Road Traffic Sight Lines, Traffic Signals or Street Signs

**Policy:** The Council will undertake work to a tree in Council ownership/management to maintain clear sight lines, where reasonably feasible, at road junctions and access points and for traffic signals and street signs.

Where an ongoing pruning requirement arises as a result of sightlines, road signs or traffic signals being obscured by tree growth or regrowth, consideration will be given to the removal of trees to minimise ongoing repeat maintenance costs.

6.3 Obstruction of Roads, Cycleways and Footpaths

**Policy:** The Council will undertake work to a tree in Council ownership/management where a tree is causing an obstruction to a public highway, public footpath or cycleway, public right of way, access to property or public open space, where reasonably feasible.

Tree pruning to achieve the following height clearance is considered appropriate where reasonably practical and where it can be achieved without harming tree health or form:

- Pedestrian areas: 2.5m
- Cycleways: 3m
- Distributor roads / streets: 4.5m

Any works necessary to prevent an obstruction in the width of a public footpath due to the presence of a Council owned tree will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If a privately owned tree or other vegetation is causing an obstruction to a footpath or road, powers exist under Section 70 of the Roads Act 1993 which enable the Roads Authority to deal with the matter. The section allows for the serving of notice on the landowner setting out remedial works to be carried out. Failing action by the landowner, the Roads Authority can arrange to have the necessary works carried out and seek to recoup the cost of the works from the landowner concerned.
6.4 Trip Hazard

**Policy:** The Council will undertake measures to make safe an unacceptable trip hazard on a public footpath or road caused by the growth of a Council owned/managed tree.

The roots of trees exploit the soil in various ways dependent on species, local conditions and history of site disturbance. Pressure exerted by the radial growth of roots can deform the surfaces of footpaths, roads or other light structures, especially in the close confines of the urban setting. Damage occurs most commonly close to the tree and will diminish rapidly with distance. To constitute a trip hazard the deformation will be assessed by the Council. Where a hazard exists and is attributable to tree roots engineering options will be explored before root pruning or tree removal is undertaken.

It is often possible to repair paths to take account of adjacent trees and tree roots. Where roots protrude they can be root pruned, or the path can be re-laid around the tree with flexible material such as asphalt to provide a smooth surface or using reinforced concrete or other engineering solutions.

Where trees are considered to be causing damage to paths or footpaths, the Council will not normally consider tree removal except where there is a risk to public health which cannot otherwise be mitigated. Removal of the tree will usually be the last resort, accepting that in some circumstances where the tree is of low value or easily replaced removal may be the most appropriate solution. The Council will seek to explore engineering options through internal consultation between the Public Realm and Roads Maintenance sections to reduce trip hazards before root pruning or tree removal. The Council will develop a protocol for resolving issues where tree roots are in conflict with public areas under hard surfacing.

6.5 Trees in Conflict with the Built Environment

Trees in an urban environment will inevitably conflict with people and infrastructure which creates pressures for trees to be pruned or felled. The Council recognises that trees under its ownership/management may be implicated in causing damage to nearby built structures but is also aware that this is not always the case and that nearby trees often get blamed for damage before a thorough investigation is carried out. Some other reasons for structural failure are inadequate foundation design, general structural failure, poor quality construction, nearby excavations or major works to adjacent properties.

Property owners will be expected to provide evidence that a particular tree is causing damage to the property and that all reasonable engineering alternatives have been explored before felling will be considered.
Although the level of evidence required may differ on a case by case basis, the Council, as a minimum, will normally require an engineer’s report including an accurate survey, a history of the damage to a built structure and a plan and profile of foundations where relevant.

If this evidence is not sufficient to demonstrate that the tree is responsible for the damage, the Council may require further information including an arborist’s report, crack monitoring, soil analysis and root analysis to be submitted.

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, provided that there is no other recourse available.

6.6 Trees and Drains

**Policy:** The Council will not prune, fell or cut the roots of a Council owned/managed tree to prevent roots entering a drain that is already broken or damaged.

The Council will not normally take action in response to complaints that Council trees are damaging drains. Tree roots do not have the capacity to break into a sound drain but typically they will invade drains that are already broken or damaged. Trees themselves very rarely break or damage the drain in the first place. Tree roots found in a drain are usually symptomatic of an underlying problem requiring repair of the broken pipe. The Council’s presumption is that the appropriate way to deal with tree root blockage of drains is to ensure that the drains are watertight. Any concerns about the condition of public drains should be reported to the water authority. Householders are usually responsible for the maintenance of the drains within their own property.

6.7 Trees, Riverbanks & Watercourses

The Council will develop a protocol for maintenance and management of trees along riverbanks and watercourses in consultation with relevant internal Council Departments and fisheries authorities.

6.8 Trees and Utilities

Utility companies have certain legal rights to carry out works to public or privately owned trees to address health and safety problems and to maintain a clearance between trees and their apparatus. This may sometimes involve the loss of trees or removal of large parts of a tree leaving a misshapen and unbalanced crown and reducing the amenity value of the tree. Excavation works near to street trees brings considerable potential disturbance within the root zone of trees, often reducing their stability and long-term viability.
6. Felling & Pruning Policies

Where works to trees are necessary as a result of proximity or conflict, the Council will encourage utility operators to adopt the most appropriate long term solution, giving consideration to tree health, local tree cover and visual amenity.

Utility companies must consult with the Public Realm section of South Dublin County Council in advance of any pruning, trenching or other works likely to affect Council owned trees, and will refer to the procedures and conditions of the Council’s Roadmap system.

The Council will develop protocols for dealing with trees and utilities in consultation with the main utility providers and adhere to the recommendations of the current NJUG (UK National Joint Utilities Group) Guidelines for The Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees.

6.9 Valuing Trees and Compensating for Tree Damage

Policy: The Council will initiate use of the CAVAT system to value all Council street trees and use this information to assist in the management of the tree stock.

In recent years there has been increased interest in quantifying the benefits of trees and translating them into financial terms. A system known as CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees) has been developed by The London Tree Officers Association to allow authorities to prepare a valuation of their tree stock which can then be used to justify managing the trees as if it were a financial asset of the community. The CAVAT system takes into account: tree size, longevity and condition, site suitability and other attributes to give a monetary value used to help guide management decisions. This is a major step forward as traditionally, the management of trees and woodlands by local authorities has been seen solely as a cost, with no acknowledgement of the financial benefits that trees bring.

It is important to place a monetary value on South Dublin County Council’s trees because of the contribution trees make to the economic, social and environmental landscape of the county. Assessing the value of each tree will enable a more effective and efficient level of understanding to be applied to a given tree or group of trees when deciding their future management or removal. The Council will also use the CAVAT tree valuation system or other industry standard valuation system as necessary to provide the basis in calculating the replacement value of any trees that have been significantly damaged or removed and the Council will seek this level of compensation from organisations found to be responsible for such damage.
6.10 Telephone Wires

*Policy:* The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to remove or reduce interference with telephone wires.

Telephone service providers have statutory powers to clear their operational equipment or may be able to suggest an alternative solution to the problem. Where pruning is necessary discussion with the Council is advised to agree the most sensitive pruning regime possible.
6.11 Street Trees Overhanging Neighbouring Properties / Roots Encroaching into Gardens

**Policy:** The Council will not prune trees that overhang neighbouring properties unless the trees are dangerous or are causing actionable nuisance.

The Council has no legal obligation to prune overhanging trees unless they are causing direct damage to an adjacent property or are imminently dangerous. This reflects the Council’s position as an owner of thousands of trees and the resources available. Given that many thousands of Council trees overhang boundaries, it is not an effective use of resources to prune every overhanging limb.

Tree roots in gardens are a natural occurrence and root presence is unlikely to be affected by tree pruning. However, situations where a tree is genuinely generating root encroachment to an exceptional, severe and unreasonable degree are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Adjacent landowners are entitled to prune encroaching tree branches or roots back to the boundary of their property. Legally, they are required to retain the prunings and offer them back to the Council but the Council is not obliged to accept them.
6.12 Trees Overhanging Private Property from Neighbouring Private property

If a tree is growing on privately owned land, then the maintenance rests entirely with the landowner. Wherever possible however, we would advise that the best way to resolve problems with trees or hedges growing in adjacent properties, is for property owners to talk to their neighbours and to try to come to an amicable agreement. The interactions between neighbours on such issues are private matters and are best dealt with by the parties concerned through discussion, mediation or ultimately through civil procedures.

6.13 Dangerous Trees in Private Ownership

Owners of trees and woodlands have a statutory duty under the Occupiers Liability Act 1995 and the Roads Act 1993 to maintain their trees to ensure they are not dangerous or in a hazardous condition and that they do not pose a threat to the public.

Section 70 of the Roads Act 1993 obliges landowners and occupiers of land to take all reasonable care to ensure that the trees, hedges and other vegetation growing on their land are not, or could not become, a danger to people using or working on a public road. Examples of hazards might include dead or dangerous trees, or trees and hedges overhanging roads, blocking footpaths or obscuring road signs or sight lines i.e. the view of the road ahead.

Under this section, the Council can serve a written notice on a landowner or occupier requiring the carrying out of specified works within a period of time stated in the notice to ensure the safety of those using or working on a public road. An owner or occupier who fails to comply with a notice under this section shall be guilty of an offence and the Council may take the action specified in the notice or such other action as it thinks fit, including prosecution. Where the Council considers that a tree, shrub, hedge or other vegetation presents an immediate and serious hazard to persons using a public road, it may take immediate action to reduce or remove the hazard and seek the costs from landowners where the Council have to carry out the work.

It should also be noted that the Communications Regulations Act 2002 and the Electricity Regulation Act 1993 give authority to utility suppliers to prune trees.
6.14 Trees Touching or Causing Direct Damage to Property

**Policy:** If a tree in Council ownership/managed by the Council is touching your property (dwelling house, garage etc) the Council will take action to remove the nuisance.

The Council will cut back trees to provide 2m clearance from properties where they touch windows, walls, roofs or gutters to avoid damage. In many cases the solution will be for the Council to prune the tree, but in some circumstances it may be more appropriate to fell the tree. If pruning is appropriate we will endeavour to undertake works to stop the problem reoccurring within three years. A balance will be struck between the nuisance experienced by individuals and the benefits offered by the tree to the wider community.

6.15 Trees Blocking Natural Light / Sunlight

**Policy:** The Council will not normally prune, top or fell a Council owned tree to improve natural light in a property. Each case will be evaluated on its own merits.

A common complaint about urban trees is that they block light from properties or shade gardens. However, the seriousness of this effect is as variable as the perception of it and often the removal of the tree will have little effect on the amount of sunlight reaching the house or garden. An example of this is where the house is north facing and the tree is small or at a distance.

There is no right to light under the law and therefore the Council has no legal obligation to abate this perceived nuisance. However, situations where a tree is genuinely blocking daylight from habitable rooms to an exceptional, severe and unreasonable degree are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. A habitable room is defined as residential living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens (if they include a dining space and are larger than 12.6sqm). Bathrooms, toilets, landings and lobbies are excluded. Each case will be evaluated having regard for balancing the severity of the nuisance to the individual with the benefits of the tree for the wider community. Pruning will normally only be carried out where the tree is a significant contributory factor and there is a reasonable chance that pruning will improve the situation. The effect of restricting light can sometimes be reduced by crown thinning and crown lifting. Although this may not increase the amount of light to the maximum level possible, it is usually a satisfactory compromise. Any decision to undertake tree works would take into account the health and significance of the tree, its contribution to wider public amenity, the orientation of the house, and whether the tree was already present when the occupier moved into the property. Shading of habitable rooms of property will be given more weight than the shading of the garden.
6.16 Obstruction of a View

Policy: We will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to improve the view from a private property.

There is no legal right to a ‘view’. Vegetation and trees grow and, over time, contribute to the county’s distinctive character. It would be impracticable to prune every tree that affected a view, and this would have a major negative impact on public amenity.

However, where there are historic vistas or area defining views appropriate tree maintenance will be considered to preserve the landscape character.

6.17 Tree Considered Too Large

Policy: We will not prune or fell a Council owned/managed tree because it is considered to be ‘too big’ or ‘too tall’.

Residents may feel apprehensive about the size of a tree and consider it dangerous. However, trees are not dangerous just because they are perceived as tall, too big for their surroundings or move in the wind. Tree movement in high winds is natural and one of the ways they are able to withstand strong winds. Other problems would need to be shown for the Council to consider the tree to be dangerous.

6.18 High Hedges

There is currently no legislation in Ireland regulating the height of trees and hedges. In the UK the control of height of evergreen hedges comes under Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. The Council does not get involved in issues regarding the height of hedges on private lands unless they are hazardous to public road users. Residents with issues in relation to trees and hedges on neighbouring properties are encouraged to try to resolve the issues between the two parties or seek independent legal advice. Involvement in resolving tree and hedge disputes between private landowners is not considered part of the remit of the Council.
6. Felling & Pruning Policies

6.19 Driveways and New Entrances

**Policy:** Removal of Council owned/managed trees will be managed by protocol through the Planning Application process. No action will be undertaken until such time as driveway widening or the creation of a new entrance has been subject to the planning process.

6.20 Tree and Solar Panels

**Policy:** The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned/managed tree to facilitate installation or improve natural light to a solar panel.

Whilst the Council appreciates that there is a need to provide renewable energy resources, trees have an important role in maintaining and improving local amenity, in addition to contributing to local and national targets in tackling climate change. The presence of existing trees and how these trees will grow in the future must be fully appreciated when considering a suitable location for the placement of solar panels.

6.21 Trees Affecting TVs and Satellite Reception

**Policy:** The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned/managed tree solely to improve TV and / or satellite reception, where the trees in question would not otherwise require works.

The Council acknowledges that television and satellite entertainment are important to residents. However, a balance has to be found between these and the local environment. The Council will encourage residents to seek reasonable alternative solutions to improve television or satellite reception rather than requesting tree pruning or removal. In most cases the situation can be significantly improved or solved by relocation of the aerial. Boosters are also available which can improve the reception. These options are far cheaper and less destructive than the felling or pruning of a tree. When positioning a new satellite receiver, residents are recommended to carefully consider existing trees and their potential for growth to avoid problems in the future.
6.22 Trees Affecting CCTV

**Policy:** The Council will not normally prune or fell a Council owned/managed tree to improve CCTV sightlines.

Exceptions may include Garda CCTV, trees adjacent to CCTV cameras that monitor ATMs or within the field of view being covered to ensure that public security is not compromised. The installation of new CCTV cameras must take into consideration existing trees to prevent requests for unnecessary pruning works or the removal of trees to improve desired sightlines.

6.23 Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

**Policy:** Where a Council owned tree is associated with criminal activity and/or anti-social behaviour, measures to reduce the problem will be considered on a site-by-site basis.

Where a tree is associated with criminal activity and/or anti-social behaviour, steps to reduce the problem will typically require the coordination of a number of agencies including the Gardaí. Pruning or felling a tree is not always the answer to the problem.

6.24 Leaf Fall

**Policy:** The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to remove or reduce leaf fall or remove fallen leaves from private property.

The loss of leaves from trees in the autumn is part of the natural cycle and cannot be avoided by pruning. The maintenance of gutters is the responsibility of the property/land owner and the Council is not obliged to remove leaves that may have fallen from Council owned trees. Where gutters are regularly blocked by fallen leaves gutter guards may be fitted to provide a low maintenance solution. The Council organises a street cleaning service which will sweep leaves from most streets and residential roads during the autumn period. The composting of leaves is encouraged as a way of environmentally recycling this valuable resource.
6.25 Sticky Deposits from Honeydew

Policy: The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree solely to remove or reduce honeydew or other sticky residue from trees.

Certain species of tree for example lime and sycamore are susceptible to aphids or other leaf-feeding insects. Honeydew is the sugary sap / sticky deposit which results from insects feeding and is subsequently colonised on surfaces by sooty mould fungi giving it a black appearance. Honeydew is a natural and seasonal problem and the severity varies from year to year depending on conditions. A balance between the inconvenience of honeydew deposits and the wider benefits of trees must be achieved and as such there is unlikely to be justification for the pruning or removal of trees due to honeydew deposits. Residents are advised to make their own arrangements to minimise the problem; regular car washing, covering the car or parking in an alternative location. Where honeydew affects cars, warm soapy water will easily remove the substance.

6.26 Bird Droppings

Policy: The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree solely to remove or reduce bird dropping.

Bird droppings can be unpleasant and a nuisance, but the problem is not considered a sufficient reason to prune or remove a tree. Roosting birds are a natural occurrence as is their production of droppings. Generally, felling a tree will not alleviate the problem as birds will relocate to another tree in the locality. Similarly pruning will not resolve the problem as birds will relocate to other branches. Pruning or felling of trees will not be considered as a way of resolving such matters. Warm soapy water will usually be sufficient to remove the bird droppings. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife Acts 1976 and Habitats Regulations 1997-2005.
6.27 Fruit / Berries / Nuts / Blossom

**Policy:** The Council will not fell or prune Council owned trees solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/or seasonal phenomena such as fruit / berries, nuts or blossom which are legally outside their control.

Problems caused by falling fruit, berries, nuts or blossom are natural and seasonal occurrences and not something the Irish legal system recognises as a ‘legal nuisance’. Whilst we appreciate these problems, they are judged a relatively minor inconvenience when considering the many benefits of having trees within an urban environment. Fruit trees such as apple, cherry and pear are welcomed in many locations for having the double benefit of spring blossom and autumn fruit. This makes fruit trees good for wildlife and a source of free food. However, where fallen fruit is leading to a significant anti-social behaviour problems the Council will consider measures to reduce the problem including whether a phased removal and replacement with alternative species is reasonable. If there is a hazard on the public footpath the Council’s Public Realm section should be notified of the problem to arrange clearance.

6.28 Tree and Poisonous Berries

**Policy:** The Council has no general policy to remove trees bearing poisonous fruit / foliage (such as yew trees). However where it is claimed or known that young children, under supervision, are likely to be exposed to poisonous berries or foliage, such cases will be investigated and appropriate action considered.

6.29 Wild Animal / Insect Pest

**Policy:** The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to remove or reduce incidence of perceived pests such as bees, wasps, or wild animals.

Policy: The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to remove or reduce incidence of perceived pests such as bees, wasps, or wild animals.

6.30 Pollen

**Policy:** The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to remove or reduce the release of pollen.

Policy: The Council will not prune or fell a Council owned tree to remove or reduce the release of pollen.
7. Trees and Development

Mature trees can be an asset to a new development. They give a place a sense of character, as well as providing a ready-made landscape. Retaining trees is always desirable, though many trees are lost each year in the course of development. Some are removed due to their condition or because they are directly in the way of development. However, many are lost due to unsuitable protection during the construction phase.

7.1 Tree Retention and Aftercare on Development Site

**Policy:** The Council will use its powers to ensure that where it is conducive with the objectives of the County Development Plan, and other planning objectives there is maximum retention of trees on new development sites.

The Council is committed to continuously improve the way that tree, biodiversity and landscape issues are considered in relation to applications for new development. There is increasing pressure to both maximise available development opportunities and at the same time protect and enhance existing landscape and biodiversity features.

In the processing of planning applications, the Council will seek the retention of trees of high amenity / environmental value taking consideration of both their individual merit and their interaction as part of a group or broader landscape feature.

The Council will consider the use of Tree Preservation Orders in accordance with Departmental Guidelines for trees of exceptional amenity, landscape or heritage value.

On construction sites all work must be in accordance with British Standard 5837 (2012): Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations and with the Council’s Guidelines for the Open Space Development & Taking in Charge.

The Council will promote the replacement of trees removed to facilitate approved planning and development of urban spaces, buildings, streets, roads, infrastructural projects and private development sites.
7.2 Tree Planting on Development Sites

The Council will ensure that tree planting on development sites is adequate and appropriate by requesting that landscaping proposals and plans to include tree planting proposals are submitted as part of a planning application. Careful consideration is given to the proposed tree planting for new developments, to ensure that they do not block light into existing dwellings/buildings, to ensure that they enhance the local ecology and add to biodiversity as appropriate to the site and also to ensure that they enhance the aesthetics of the site.

Tree Surveys and Arboriculture Impact Assessments, along with Tree Protection Plans are required early on in the planning application process for sites with existing trees so that the positioning and grouping of trees of value can be incorporated into the design of the site. This assists in the retention of as many trees as possible.

Tree bonds are then routinely applied to existing trees on development sites which merit retention, in order to ensure their protection and retention. The Council has sequestered tree bonds, or parts thereof, from several sites where tree protection was inadequate and there was resulting damage to, or loss of trees, as a result.
7.3 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)

Making a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is the primary mechanism available to a planning authority to ensure that trees of significant value are preserved. Section 205 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 provides the legal framework and procedures for making a TPO.

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) enables local authorities to preserve any single tree or group of trees and brings them under planning control. Tree preservation orders are only made if it appears that a tree or group of trees need to be protected in the interests of amenity in the environment.

The establishment of a TPO brings the designated tree(s) under planning control and restrictions do apply. The permission of the planning authority must be sought before any tree with a TPO is lopped, topped or felled. When the authority proposes an order they have to publish a notice in one or more newspapers. Observations and submissions can be made to the planning authority within a period of not less than 6 weeks. Tree preservation orders are only made after careful consideration of all submissions and observations by the local authority.

The Council will carry out a review of its existing TPOs and will seek to identify important/special trees in the county and protect those worthy of Tree Preservation Orders.

There are currently three TPOs in place in south Dublin County as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dublin County Council TPO 1973</td>
<td>St. Brigids (now Newlands garden centre), New Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin County Council TPO 1987</td>
<td>Beaufort Downs, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin County Council TPO 1990</td>
<td>Townslands of Quarryvale and Brooklawn, Palmerstown, Dublin 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Living With Trees
Action Plan
2015-2020

Objectives
■ To establish the current position with regard to street trees in the County
■ To implement a proactive tree management programme
■ Prepare and implement a public awareness and education programme

Objective 1
To establish the current position with regard to street trees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Evaluate and purchase a tree management system</td>
<td>Purchase and use of system</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Survey all street trees in County and collate all data on computerised tree management system</td>
<td>Number of trees surveyed</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2015-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Prepare a system for the ongoing update of street trees data in a spatial format</td>
<td>Real time availability of information on street tree location, number, condition and maintenance history</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Use the CAVAT system to value all Council street trees and use this information to assist in the management of the tree stock</td>
<td>All trees have accurate CAVAT value</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Review existing Tree Preservation Orders in the county</td>
<td>Annual Review</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Objective 2

To implement a proactive tree management programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Ensure tree maintenance is completed in a safe manner in accordance with recognised standards and best practice</td>
<td>Ongoing development and training of all Council staff involved in tree work Employment of qualified, trained, competent contractors</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Use the Council’s planning powers to retain and protect trees on development sites and enforce as necessary</td>
<td>Annual review</td>
<td>Public Realm &amp; Planning Department</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Maximise the recycling of tree related green waste generated by the Council’s own tree management.</td>
<td>Annual review</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Establish guidelines to prioritise maintenance work on street trees</td>
<td>Guidelines in place and used</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Develop a 5 year cyclical tree maintenance programme for street trees</td>
<td>Publish programme on Council’s website</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Develop best practice protocol for tree maintenance works and nesting birds</td>
<td>Protocol agreed and in practice</td>
<td>Public Realm; Heritage Officer</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Provide staff training in tree survey and inspection</td>
<td>Training completed</td>
<td>Public Realm; HR Training</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Develop a quality standard specification for assessment of tree maintenance works post completion</td>
<td>Quality standard completed and in use</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Develop an annual tree planting programme</td>
<td>Number of trees planted</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Develop tree planting and management guidelines</td>
<td>Guidelines in place</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>Monitor the removal of street trees and ensure that new trees are proposed.</td>
<td>Annual review</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Number</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Completion Details</td>
<td>Department(s)</td>
<td>Year(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>Work with a range of partners agree procedures and develop protocols to secure active protection of Council-owned trees from avoidable damage caused by the activities of other agencies.</td>
<td>Procedures and protocols agreed and in practice with internal Council Departments and external agencies</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>Develop a protocol for resolving issues where tree roots are in conflict with the built environment</td>
<td>Procedures and protocols developed and in practice</td>
<td>Public Realm, Roads Maintenance, Council’s Insurer’s</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>Develop a protocol for maintenance and management of trees along riverbanks &amp; watercourses</td>
<td>Procedures and protocols developed and in practice</td>
<td>Public Realm, Drainage</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>Develop protocols for dealing with trees and utilities in consultation with the main utility providers</td>
<td>Procedures and protocols agreed and in practice with utility providers</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>Pilot a community based leaf composting project</td>
<td>Project in place</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>Pilot a tree replacement programme in an urban street setting</td>
<td>Agree area and complete</td>
<td>Public Realm, Roads Design</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>Document a list of the significant trees of South Dublin</td>
<td>List established</td>
<td>PublicRealm</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>Develop a tree risk management system</td>
<td>System developed and in place</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>Undertake a mid-term review of the Tree Management Policy</td>
<td>Mid-term review completed</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>Undertake review of Tree Management Policy 2015-2020 and draft new 5 year Tree Management Policy</td>
<td>5 Year Review completed</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Living With Trees Action Plan 2015-2020

Objective 3
Prepare and implement a public awareness and education tree programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Develop a ‘Trees’ webpage on the Council’s website <a href="http://www.sdcc.ie">www.sdcc.ie</a></td>
<td>Webpage in place and maintained</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Make tree maintenance programme available on website</td>
<td>Information available on website</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Promote Tree week and Tree day in association with the Tree Council of Ireland</td>
<td>No. of Tree week &amp; Tree Day activities organised each year</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Prepare feasibility study for sponsored tree planting</td>
<td>Plan completed</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Develop tree trails in each of the regional parks</td>
<td>Tree trails in parks</td>
<td>Public Realm</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Consultation Process

South Dublin County Council’s draft Tree Management Policy “Living with Trees” was presented to the meeting of the Environment, Public Realm & Climate Change Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) on February 3, 2015.

It was agreed to proceed with a public consultation process and invite the public to submit comments and observations to inform further development of the draft policy. It was also agreed to establish a working group comprising members of the Environment SPC with supporting Council officials to work on the development of the draft policy.

Public Consultation Process

The public consultation process was launched during National Tree Week by the Mayor, Cllr Fintan Warfield on Monday, March 2, 2015 at a tree planting event in St. Paul’s Secondary School, Greenhills. The draft Tree Management Policy document was displayed for public viewing on the Council’s website www.sdcc.ie from March 2 - April 10, 2015. The public consultation process was promoted via a press release, social media, notice on the Council’s website and public information sessions. Notices were emailed to Resident Associations, Tidy Town groups and to interested bodies such as An Taisce, Environmental Protection Agency, Tree Council of Ireland, ESB, Bord Gáis, and Eircom.

A presentation on the draft Tree Management Policy was made to the Elected Members of South Dublin County Council on March 23, 2015.

The SPC Tree Management Policy working group met on March 23, and June 23, 2015.

Public information sessions involving a presentation and discussion on the draft Tree Management Policy were held at the Council’s public libraries as follows:

County Library Tallaght Thursday 2nd April, 2015 11-1pm Lucan Library Tuesday 7th April, 2015 3.30-5.30pm Ballyroan Library Wednesday 8th April, 2015 7-8pm Clondalkin Library Wednesday 8th April, 2015 12-1.30pm

A series of internal information sessions were also undertaken to invite the input of the Council’s Public Realm staff who operate the Council’s tree maintenance and management programme.

The closing date for receipt of written submissions was Friday, April 10, 2015.
Respondents to Public Consultation

The following is the list of the parties submitting formal written observations or submissions:

■ Angela O’Donoghue, Vice Chairperson, Glendoher & District Residents Association
■ Fonthill Resident’s Association
■ Recorder’s Resident’s Association
■ Tara de Buitlear & Declan Corrigan, Tallaght Community Council
■ Ian Carroll
■ John O’Gorman
■ Paddy Tonge
■ Cllr. Deirdre O’Donovan
■ Cllr. Paula Donovan
■ Butterfield Residents Association
■ Boden Park Residents Association
■ Brookvale Downs
■ Clondalkin Tidy Towns
■ Firhouse Tidy Towns
■ Palmerstown Tidy Towns
■ Rathfarnham Tidy Towns
■ Niall Redmond
■ John Bielenberg
■ John Mullen
Appendix 2: Sample List of Tree Species Suitable for Street Planting

The selection of street trees is guided by their mature size, water demand, crown shape, future management requirements and suitability to the location. The following is a guide to the type of species considered appropriate for street planting. It is not an exhaustive list, and other trees may be equally suitable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Name</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Height at Maturity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acer campestre ‘Elsrijk’</td>
<td>Field maple</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acer platanoides ‘Globosum’</td>
<td>Maple</td>
<td>6-8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amelanchier arborea ‘Robin Hill’</td>
<td>Serviceberry</td>
<td>5-10m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betula albosinensis ‘Fascination’</td>
<td>Chinese Birch</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betula pendula</td>
<td>Silver Birch</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betula utilis ‘Jacquemontii’</td>
<td>Himalayan Birch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpinus betulus ‘Frans Fontaine’</td>
<td>Hornbeam</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corylus colurna</td>
<td>Turkish hazel</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crataegus monogyna ‘Stricta’</td>
<td>Hawthorn</td>
<td>5-10m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malus trilobata</td>
<td>Crab Apple</td>
<td>5-7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malus tschonoskii</td>
<td>Crab Apple</td>
<td>5-7m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrus calleryana ‘Chanticleer’</td>
<td>Ornamental Pear</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus aucuparia (Cultivars)</td>
<td>Rowan</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus aria ‘Lutescens’</td>
<td>Whitebeam</td>
<td>7-10m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus discolor</td>
<td>Chinese Rowan</td>
<td>7-10m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus intermedia ‘Brouwers’</td>
<td>Swedish Whitebeam</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus ‘Sheenwater Seedling’</td>
<td>Rowan Hybrid</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorbus x thuringiaca ‘Fastigiata’</td>
<td>Rowan Hybrid</td>
<td>7-10m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilia cordata ‘Greenspire’</td>
<td>Small leaved Lime</td>
<td>10-15m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trees with a larger mature size will also be planted as street trees when appropriate to the location. Examples of large growing species to be considered for planting may include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Name</th>
<th>Common name</th>
<th>Height at Maturity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alnus cordata</td>
<td>Italian alder</td>
<td>15-20m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betula ermanii</td>
<td>Ermans Birch</td>
<td>15-20m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juglans regia</td>
<td>Walnut</td>
<td>15-20m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quercus ilex</td>
<td>Holm Oak</td>
<td>20m +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinia pseudoacacia</td>
<td>False acacia</td>
<td>15-20m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3:
References and Sources of Information


