

# Peterborough Tree and Woodland Strategy



**DOCUMENT 1: POLICIES & PRIORITIES, 2011.**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Peterborough is located to the edge of the fens at a meeting point with higher land of the midlands. This junction produces a range of landscapes and associated habitats.

The eastern half of the district is reclaimed high quality fenland agricultural land. Originally Peterborough's the urban margins would have been carr woodlands containing Alder, Birch, Ash and Oak, edging onto vast tracts of brackish marsh and river plains.

Westwards the land rises and meets the eastern reaches of Rockingham Forest. In which the trees have different characteristics, supporting a different range of plants and wildlife. Fields and roads are bounded with treed hedgerows linking a patchwork of woods.

Early settlements such as Flag Fen and Barnack resulted in forest clearance. With sea levels dropping and industrial drainage of the fens, impact on the residual forests intensified.

The rate of change has increased in the last couple of hundred years, the landscape developing into that we see today. The fens still contain a few small remnants of carr woodland that runs distinctively alongside rural roads.

In 1901 Peterborough had a population of 31,000 people. In the last thirty years this has grown to 160,000 with predictions of growth to realise 200,000 by 2020. The challenge is to achieve sustainability.

The Victorian parts of the city to those developed in the 1950's have a structured layout with tree lined roads and formal promenading within parks and open spaces. Along with rapid growth dating from the 1960's to the present a naturalistic approach to landscaping and tree planting was adopted as influenced by the garden city movement.

Trees and woodlands are dominant features within our landscape and collectively form one of Peterborough's most notable features. Trees and open spaces provide a range of important benefits for the public including promotion of good mental health.

This strategy sets out to maximise on the benefits of trees and woodlands, acknowledges their urban setting and the absolute necessity to manage their long-term care. This management is governed by legal responsibilities and influenced by national, regional and Council policy.

This strategy sets out objectives, policies and proposals for actions that will form the basis upon which Peterborough City Council will oversee the planting, maintenance and protection of its trees and woodlands.

## 1.1 Background

Peterborough is one of four environment cities. The Council therefore seeks to demonstrate its commitment to the environment through implementing appropriate works. All local authorities have a duty to manage trees and woods in a way that enhances safety and to protect significant trees for their amenity value.

This document will contribute to delivering the broad range of Council aims and incorporate the four environmental strategic priorities associated with creating the UK's environment capital in conjunction with priorities on community and land use planning issues. It has been influenced through consultation, the DEFRA 2007 publication 'Strategy for England's Trees, Woods & Forests' and will attempt to demonstrate the need for resources.

## 1.2 The Resource

An up to date survey of Peterborough's tree stock would be invaluable and a sound basis upon which to understand the resource. Very approximate estimates of tree numbers are available, these being 105,000 individual trees, growing on highway land, parks and open spaces and an estimated further 1,400,000 trees making up the Council's 280 hectares of woodland. A Forestry Commission's estimate indicates that 3% of the district is covered by woodland. The national average is 9%. The density of cover in the city varies greatly. Areas constructed by the Development Corporation contain more trees per hectare than the older pre D. C. suburbs. More trees and woods stand to the west of the city compared to the sparsely populated fens to the east. Sparse tree cover accelerates water run-off and has a negative impact on storm water capacity.

A significant proportion of the specimen trees in Peterborough are dominated by Norway Maple, Lime and Cherry. In the urban woods Ash and Sycamore dominate. Life expectancy of these trees is reduced by poor site conditions and nutrient deficient sub soils. 60 to 80 years is all that can be expected with as little as 40 for Cherry trees that are now reaching the ends of their lives. Peterborough's tree demographic mirrors that of the city's development, the vast majority of trees having been planted since the 1960's.

### 1.3 Positive Impact of Trees

There is increasing public awareness of the benefits that trees can provide. Residents have greater expectations of the environment in which they live. In urban areas there is demand for recreational open space and pleasant, tree-lined streets.

#### Benefits from Trees

Trees are essential to life and their value cannot be overstated. City woodlands are planted to provide beauty, screening for privacy or to reduce invasive traffic noise. The benefits can be identified as social, environmental, and economic gains.

#### Social Benefits.

The strong ties between people and trees are most evident in the resistance of residents to tree felling. Trees and woodlands contribute immeasurably to Peterborough's landscape and are particularly valuable in urban locations. Research has shown that hospital patients recover more quickly when able to view a landscape containing trees. Their aesthetic value improves the appearance of urbanity, giving variety of scale, form, colour and shape. Trees occupy considerable space. Within privately owned grounds planning is required for their accommodation. Careful selection and appropriate maintenance can enhance the environment for the tree owner without infringing on the lives of neighbours.

#### Environmental Benefits

Trees influence the environment in which we live. Wind speed is reduced, rain intercepted reducing storm runoff to potential flooding and air quality is improved. Temperatures in the vicinity of trees are cooler than those away from

them and hence there is a moderation to the heat island effect caused by urbanity.

#### Economic Benefits

Air-conditioning costs are lower in a tree-shaded home. Heating costs are reduced when a home has a windbreak.

Indirect economic benefits of trees can also be identified. Lowered electricity bills are paid by customers when power companies are able to use less water in their cooling towers, build fewer new facilities to meet peak demand, use reduced amounts of fossil fuel in their furnaces and use fewer measures to control air pollution. Communities also save money if fewer facilities are required to control local storm water.

An attractive, healthy and vibrant city attracts investment. Well maintained trees and woodlands are integral to this.

### 1.4 Negative impacts

Within Peterborough a great many people live in very close proximity to trees, especially within the new townships. Such trees frequently belong to the Council but were originally planted by the Development Corporation. A high density of trees were set with the presumption that numbers would be reduced as their growth progressed. Current issues of overcrowding, blocking of daylight, leaves in gutters and fruit fall making paths slippery, are all prevalent.

The dilemma occurs when trees are causing problems for residents but at the same time are making major contributions to the local environment.

Past inappropriate species selection has produced much negative impact. Resulting problems may be difficult or impossible to resolve now. Specimens were chosen that were destined to outgrow the space available but were capable of making an instant impact. Height and spread are major issues of concern for residents today. Requests for topping or outright felling are frequent which is indicative that the situation now needs to be reviewed. It is not possible to continually prune trees so as to allow ease of living alongside them. Such a response would be expensive, ongoing and eventually lead to very poor quality and potentially unstable trees.

Many home owners are worried about subsidence and the stability of foundations over shrinkable clay soils. Water demanding trees can drain the soils. These may not rehydrate until the following autumn. Species selection is the key to minimising this risk. Willow trees are quick growing, very easy to establish, cheap to purchase but totally unsuited to urbanity. Very thirsty, prone to dropping limbs and short lived they have nothing to offer but trouble in the wrong place.

Cherry trees were planted on mass but are now all rapidly approaching the ends of their lives. In addition, these trees have a marked tendency to grow surface running roots that can severely lift and damage footpaths. Slower, smaller and longer lived trees would offer far greater long term amenity value.

Old shelterbelts have now grown tall and spindly. Where these back onto housing residents frequently worry about stability, overhanging branches and lack of daylight. Tall shelterbelts tend to open out at their base, so losing their ability to screen roads and deaden traffic noise. Selection of tall evergreen shrubs rather than forest scale trees would possibly have matured to better effect.

## 2 THE VISION

The population of Peterborough is set to reach 200,000 by 2020. The Council's vision is to accommodate this growth in a sustainable way and one that will address issues of social and economic exclusion whilst maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment.

The overall purpose of this document is to provide the framework for a strategic approach to the management of trees and woods:

**“A sustainable tree and woodland population, for a growing city.”**

Tree and Woodland protection is concerned with managing the balance between risks and benefits so as to ensure a sustainable outcome.

## 2.1 Aim

The Council's aim is:

**“To sustainably maintain and improve the quality of the existing tree and woodland cover.”**

**“To expand the extent of woodland cover in response to opportunities created through external funding or working in conjunction partners i.e. PECT and the creation of the Forest For Peterborough.”**

The Council will act to enhance the quality and diversity of its trees and woodlands through a programme of regular tree inspections and maintenance. This programme will address the Council's legal responsibilities and enable it to respond to resident's concerns.

## 3 THEME 1: COMMUNITY AND PLACE

**Objective 1 To ensure that trees and woodland are managed in a way that contributes to the aims and objectives of the Council.**

**Objective 2 To improve the local environment, the quality of people's lives and their appreciation of trees and woodlands.**

Involving people in the decision making process for the planning, management and use of woods will enhance feelings of ownership, community cohesiveness and promote the well being of neighbourhoods.

## 3.1 Community

When communities become involved in decision making and management they are more likely to use the resource with respect. Individual sites need to be evaluated for their contribution to the community and their recreational potential assessed.

Trees and woods offer a variety of outdoor opportunities for recreation and learning. The priority will be to provide high quality access near to where people live and work. To ensure woods remain valued as life long resource appropriate information needs to be freely available. This should include recognition of their historic, archaeological and cultural significance.

Partnership working promotes community involvement and so links to existing partners should be strengthened and new ones established by providing advice and support to communities with plans to create and maintain their own woodland. Partnerships can be guided by and qualify for funding from the Woodland Trust under the 'Space for People' initiative. The imminent tree planting campaign to create the Forest Of Peterborough is another example of productive partnership.

The planning process can contribute to the community by examining the existing provision of trees and woodland relative to predictions for future needs. Expertise within the planning process assists with identification of suitable trees that can grow to maturity within their proposed setting and available space. The process of Planning Gain through Section 106 Agreements can influence future provision. At present 12% of Peterborough's population have access to woods of 2 hectares or more within 500m of their home. A further 19% already have such woods but they are not accessible. The Council could consider working with partners to improve access and where there is a deficiency in woods, plant new ones. Enhancements to the urban woods (shelterbelts) could go some way towards meeting requirements.

### Consultation

Residents develop great fondness for trees and woodlands and hence resistance to tree felling is prevalent. A vital component of arboricultural

management is selective felling. Weaker or diseased trees are removed. This creates the space required to let those remaining to grow on to maturity. Releasing information through a consultation protocol sighting why certain operations are necessary and with details of operational aims, could secure public support and assist Councillors. Emergency works to clear significant hazard should be exempt as these need to happen without delay.

## 3.2 Place

Trees provide visual and physical features which can be used to either separate or link areas, bringing seasonal change to an otherwise static urban landscape. They provide attractive settings to residential and business development, helping to create a sense of place and permanence. To enhance local distinctiveness selection must identify the most appropriate trees and management regime.

## 4 THEME 2: SUSTAINABILITY AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

**Objective 3 To identify and preserve trees and woodlands which are recognised for their contribution to maintaining a diverse environment.**

The Council recognises the importance of trees and woodlands and shall preserve those of significance. When necessary the Council will protect trees using Tree Preservation Orders including selected trees identified as under threat from development .

**Objective 4 To secure new tree and woodland planting as part of the sustainable growth of Peterborough.**

The Council will ensure that new trees appropriate to the location are planted and that development proposals include this enhancement towards the goal of sustainability.

### 4.1 Sustainability

National and local policy makers have to appraise their policies and practices to ensure they are sustainable. This process is contained within Local Agenda 21 and constituent Biodiversity Action Plan. Biodiversity, the variety of life, including all species of plants and animals and their natural support systems, has an important role in the development of sustainable communities.

The Natural Environment and Rural Community Act 2006 directs that *“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, in so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving bio-diversity.”* Section 74 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 is referenced to all public authorities.

By Incorporating conservation of bio-diversity into relevant strategies, linking these to environmental planning and statutory obligations for enhancement within forward planning and development control, the Council can reach set targets..

#### Climate Change

Measures to adapt to the predicted effects of climate change will be incorporated into the strategy, taking full account of “Climate Change Strategy for Peterborough”.

Climate change has the potential to make a significant impact on trees and woodland. Adaptation is a key requirement. It should be addressed at the earliest opportunity to allow for long term management and applied maintenance that supports establishment. The difficulty is selecting planting stock that will thrive in both current and future climates. Young trees, street trees and those within hedgerows are likely to be the first affected. Water demanding species, and those prone to gale damage will be removed and replaced with more suitable choices

Specific cases of sensitivity can be sighted by examination of the following two trees:

Horse Chestnut has been a landscape feature since its introduction into the UK in the late seventeenth century. Easily recognised and commonplace this tree is now being severely disfigured and potentially threatened by Leaf Miner (Cameraria ohridella ) which may well be spreading because of mild, wet winters resulting from global warming.

Beech trees are native to the British Isles but are now showing signs of stress brought on through the mild winters that do not allow for vernalization. Predictions are that Beech will prosper further north where the colder winters better suit.

Based on Forestry Commission figures mature woods sequester approximately 200 tonnes of carbon per hectare, therefore carbon held within woodland trees owned by the Council is estimated to be less than 1% of the City's annual carbon output. Measures to maximise carbon sequestration will be investigated in conjunction with central government initiatives.

## 4.2 Natural Environment

The green infrastructure is a network of interlinked spaces in and around the city and between urban and rural areas. Trees and woods are a very important part of this, and playing a vital role in defining Peterborough as an "Environment City".

Trees and woodland, especially old trees and ancient woods, are amongst our richest habitats. The highest levels of biodiversity are often found in woods that are actively and sensitively managed. Their diversity is even greater when they form part of a mixed landscape in close proximity to other features such as ponds, grassland and even residential gardens. Hedgerows linking woodlands act as wildlife corridors and so greatly promote the extent and range of wildlife.

The challenge in the future will be to maintain and enhance diversity. Planning and management needs to be aimed at providing a natural environment which is resilient to climate change. Climate change will impact on the range of native wild plants and animals and hence the character of our woods. Some invasive non native species will need to be checked.

Woodlands protect ground water from pollution and lessen the likelihood of flooding by intercepting rain before it reaches watercourses. Strategically planted shelterbelts intercept air pollutants. To realise integrated and multifunctional landscape management the council will need to work closely with external partners and a variety of landowners.

## 5 THEME 3: ASSET MANAGEMENT AND STANDARDS

### Objective 5 To ensure that legal responsibilities are met.

The Council will develop and sustain procedures necessary to provide tree and woodland management in a way that accommodates liability. These procedures will include best practice and aim at the highest possible level of service relative to available resources.

### Objective 6 To aspire to seeking certification from the Forest Stewardship Council.

Funding and officer time permitting, the Council will seek to demonstrate competence with professional stewardship of its trees and woodlands through certification. The latter has potential to enhance prospects for securing external funding.

### 5.1 Asset Management

Trees growing in an urban environment require a more intense and therefore expensive management regime than would be required for their survival within woodlands. In addition to this, consideration needs to be given to the expectations of the public.

Trees have been the subjects of disputes and litigation for a couple of centuries, this leading to the formation of a highly regulated industry accommodating concerns of damage to property, personal injury and lack of daylight.



The Council has “a duty of care to maintain its trees and woods in a safe condition”.

To meet this duty the Council will take appropriate action to lessen risk and so minimise exposure to liability. The Health and Safety Executive requires that an effective local authority system contains:

- An inventory of the tree and wood stock within its ownership and responsibility.
- An overall assessment of the risks these pose.
- Risk assessments of prominent individual trees based upon their location, species, size, age and history.
- Pro-active system of regular inspection by a competent person and a system of obtaining additional specialist advice when inspection reveals defects and factors outside the experience and knowledge of the inspector.
- A system to enable people to report damage to trees and to trigger inspection.
- A method of recording and reviewing the systems along with any remedial actions.
- Risk management plan.

This strategy will influence the Council’s risk management plan for trees and woods, updating and implementing the original strategy and management plans

By introducing a pro-active tree management system and therefore minimising reactive works, optimum use of resources and a move towards achieving a defensible risk management system can be achieved.

Rotational management for each of the category of trees and woods will be based upon risk assessment and identification of priorities. More frequent tree inspections will be carried out where there is greatest cause for concern. Following this, allocation of resources can then be applied to best effect with appropriate consultation to take place in advance of the work.

For a pro-active tree strategy to be effective the Council will need to invest financially in its trees and woodlands In order to achieve a basic standard.

The benefits of pro-active management should become apparent as the level of demand for response based work diminishes, thus saving money by keeping ahead of complaints.

## 5.2 Standard of Service

In order to achieve sustainable tree management a strategic operational approach is essential. It has to be understood that surgery is not necessarily for the benefit of the trees but will buy time and enable them to remain in situ for a while longer, perhaps until more suitable and less vigorous replacements get established. The management and maintenance of trees is a skilled task. It often requires different services and organisations to work closely together in order to achieve appropriate management. Risk to public and property needs to be minimised in balance with risk of damage to the trees themselves.

An important part of delivering an effective risk management system is ensuring that the tree managers have the necessary skills, qualifications and experience.

A qualified arboriculturalist is integral to defensible tree and woodland management as is sighted within BS5837. This has been substantiated by industry best practice, peer review and confirmed in common law precedence.

Knowledge and skill is needed by those who undertake the works, i.e. pruning, planting and removing trees. Officers who inspect the trees, respond to service requests and specify works, must also be appropriately qualified.

Use of specific software can assist with monitoring customer concern, reacting to and prioritising works and the way these works are undertaken. It can lead directly to improvements in consultation and communication. Specific software can positively affect new woodland management plans and form an integral part of the street tree and village tree cyclical management programs.

## 6 COUNCIL TREES

Tree management directs maintenance operations to existing trees as well as operations to promote the establishment of new planting, incorporating a long term view of how best to care for this resource.

### 6.1 General

The City Council's tree stock can be divided into seven principal categories.

- **Street Trees:** Planted in pavements or road verges. These they help to filter traffic pollution, provide shade for car parking and improve the overall appearance of the street scene.
- **Residential Areas:** Growing within and around housing estates. Planted by the original Parks Department or the Development Corporation to enhance the local environment.
- **Parks and Open Spaces:** These are frequently the trees of greatest local significance and provide maximum visual amenity for both residents and visitors.
- **Woodlands:** These are some of the remaining pockets of the original Rockingham Forest that once covered the area. Grimeshaw Wood is a local accessible Nature Reserve and hence is a valuable amenity resource.
- **Urban Woods:** Formerly classed as shelterbelts they were mostly planted alongside the parkways and in areas that separated the new townships. They provide visual amenity and habitat for wildlife.
- **Village and Rural Trees:** The villages have a unique character, much of which is achieved by their content of historic trees as well as those growing within the surrounding countryside.
- **Other Sites:** The Council own and maintain numerous other sites such as schools, allotments, cemeteries and crematoria. Many such sites contain trees of local importance.

For consideration is the idea of introducing a tree database system that records details of tree numbers, their locations and condition. This would go some way in promoting the pro-active element of the contract which to date has only been implemented for street and village trees.

By maintaining a diversity of species and ages within the Council's tree stock, devastating threats such as disease, climate change and extensive over maturity can be minimised. Diversity can be used to achieve sustainability.

The intention is to respond to enquiries by giving details of the works to be done and when. Compromise will be necessary in situations where trees are generating complaints but at the same time are still offering good general amenity value. Individual cases will be assessed on their merits.

#### Council tree and woodlands general policies (CTWG)

**These policies and priorities apply to all trees and woodlands managed by the Council.**

##### Policy CTWG1

**The Council will ensure that the tree and wood populations are protected, their establishment directed and where appropriate in conjunction with specifically identified funding at some future date, expanded.**

Priorities:

CTWG1.1 To provide and maintain a computer system which enables accurate analysis of the tree and woodlands, facilitates the management of resources and enables their prioritisation.

##### Policy CTWG 2

**The Council will maintain its trees and woods in accordance with its obligations to observe duty of care and the safety of both people and property..**

Priorities:

CTWG 2.1 To set out risk management plans for the tree population.

CTWG 2.2 To survey all Council owned trees and woods, incorporating risk management.

CTWG 2.3 To undertake maintenance works in support of duty of care.

**Policy CTWG 3**

**The Council will maintain its trees and woodlands in such a way that demonstrates best practice, providing worthy examples for others to follow.**

## Priorities

- CTWG 3.1 To provide plans for long term management and development of trees and woodlands as essential components within the landscape.
- CTWG 3.2 To ensure the best use of resources is made during the planning of operations.
- CTWG 3.3 To supplement the Council's spending by seeking additional funding from external sources where ever possible.
- CTWG 3.4 To realise any economic potential of trees and woods where this does not conflict with the other policies and priorities of the Strategy.

**Policy CTWG 4**

**The removal of trees and woods shall be resisted, unless there are sound arboricultural or pressing social reasons such as serious safety concerns to indicate otherwise.**

## Priorities

- CTWG 4.1 The removal of healthy trees in response to complaints shall be resisted unless the complaint has an overriding justification and no alternative management practice can be implemented.

**Policy CTWG 5**

**The Council will encourage a better understanding of tree and wood management and in so doing promote community involvement.**

## Priorities

- CTWG 5.1 To identify trees and woods of particular interest and develop a Method of consultation with local residents on works to be undertaken..

- CTWG 5.2 Establish and support a voluntary urban tree warden scheme to work with officers to encourage community involvement in tree planting and management.

- CTWG 5.3 Develop a practical consultancy protocol supported by sufficient resources to ensure successful implementation.

**Policy CTWG 6**

**The Council will encourage new and replacement planting placing great emphasis on use of appropriate tree species.**

## Priorities

- CTWG 6.1 To develop a planting plan that sustains the tree population, With emphasis on the long-term replacement of mature and over mature trees.
- CTWG 6.2 Identify a specific budget to fund the replacement of dead or inappropriate trees.
- CTWG 6.3 As and when prospects materialise, to work with other organisations to secure additional funding for the management of existing tree stock as well as the planting of new woodlands in accordance with the aims of PECT.

**6.2 Street Trees**

The City has approximately 14,000 street trees which have to survive in a difficult roadside environment. Utilities demand space as do road signs and streetlights. The limited space is made all the more challenging because of polluting car emissions, road salt, oil and other contaminants. Against the odds trees can and do survive, albeit with a limited life expectancy.

The character of Peterborough's street trees varies considerably, from the older Victorian planting in roads like Broadway, the inter-war developments such as Dogsthorpe, to the newer developments built by the Development Corporation. The Victorian areas contain large old trees, many of which are managed as pollards. Today there is access to a wider range of smaller ornamental trees that are suitable for restricted sites.

Today many of Peterborough's streets have tree populations that are over-mature. Such trees are vulnerable to climatic change, disease and damage. In a few years an over-mature population of street trees will be disappearing as individual trees deteriorate and have to be removed. In these areas new trees could be introduced between the mature specimens to ensure that there will be continuous future tree cover.

As a result of the 1998 Tree and Woodland Strategy all street trees have been surveyed. The aim has been to carry out a four year cyclical maintenance program. The program is divided into the city wards. Several are selected to receive attention each year. This program is set to the maximum frequency that resources will permit.

### Street tree policy (ST)

#### Policy ST 1

**To endeavour to protect street trees from threats such as loss of verges and damage to same.**

##### Priorities

ST1.1 Secure the necessary resources to maintain the street trees on a three year cyclical maintenance programme.

ST1.2 Work with and monitor the activities of utility companies in order to minimise accidental operational damage to trees.

#### Policy ST 2

**To place a priority on the replacement of ageing street trees, particularly where these adjoin major traffic routes. To ensure selection of the largest growing varieties up to the limitations of the available space.**

##### Priorities

ST2.1 To plant new and replacement street trees in appropriate sites, giving priority to streets where trees are currently standing or have stood in the past.

ST2.2 In streets where tree planting is not possible in pavements or verges, to encourage residents to plant trees in their front gardens.

## 6.3 Trees In Residential Areas

A large proportion of public sector housing in the city was built by the Development Corporation. Extensive planting of both trees and shrubs took place on small open spaces in close proximity to these properties using a limited range of stock.

Quick growing species were often chosen and planted to provide rapid temporary greening of the new areas with extensive shrub beds and group planting of trees. Much of Peterborough lies over shrinkable clay soils which has led to problems with building subsidence as caused by large water demanding trees growing in close proximity to foundations. In addition, lack of thought was given to growth potential at maturity or to the need to thin out stock at a relatively early stage. This thinning work was never carried out on the scale required.

Present management concentrates on dealing with complaints from residents. These generally stem from the large number of trees planted within a restricted area at close proximity to housing.

It is estimated that there are over 50,000 individual trees in North and South Bretton, Orton Waterville, Paston and Ravensthorpe alone. Since 1998 these townships have been surveyed and various works carried out but to date, insufficient resources have been available to carry out comprehensive and ongoing cyclical management of these trees. A current tree survey is now due, this to assess the situation after the works implemented so far.

#### Residential area tree priorities (RA):

RA 1 To develop a cyclical management plan with sufficient funds to support operations.

RA 1.1 To commence a removal and replacement programme to minimise the risk of structural damage by selecting trees that grow to a lesser size at maturity.

RA 1.2 Where replacement planting of any persuasion is inappropriate, to plant new trees nearby instead of the location that has been cleared.

## 6.4 Parks and Open Spaces

Trees are fundamental to the structure of parks and very important contributors to the environment of the area. The nature of different parks and green spaces is very variable. For example, Central Park has a declining tree population displaying over maturity in comparison to Bretton Park with younger but neglected stock now in great need of selective thinning. The latter is now urgently required to prevent very high losses over the next ten years. For this reason management has to be planned on a site by site basis.

Certain newer areas of Peterborough contain large open spaces of short grass and minimal structure planting. These areas are ideal for enhancement. By creating small woods so too can opportunities for wildlife be promoted at the same time as landscape enhancement.

Since 1998 several parks have been surveyed and essential works carried out. These include Central Park, Itter Park, Stanley recreation Ground and Cherry Orchard Recreation Ground. There are approximately 30,000 individual trees on these sites. To effectively manage these trees on a cyclical basis additional funding would be required.

### Park and open space tree priorities (POS):

- POS 1. To develop a minimal cyclical management plan with allocated funding to support operations.
- POS 1.2 To ensure that trees are fully integrated within management and improvement plans for Parks and open spaces.
- POS 1.3 To commence a replacement program that incorporates a diverse range of tree species and where appropriate, to re-establish historic landscapes.
- POS 1.4 Where appropriate and possible to increase the numbers of trees as a product of partnership working.

## 6.5 Woodland

The County of Cambridgeshire is one of the least wooded in the country with a coverage of only 1.9 %. That within the Peterborough area is up to approx. 3%. A considerable proportion of this is ancient semi-natural woodland which represents a valuable wildlife and landscape resource.

The City Council owns six ancient woods, managing Grimeshaw Wood (inc. Highlees Spinney), Pocock's Wood in Bretton and leasing the others to Nene Park Trust and Woodland Trust. These areas amount to approximately 27 hectares and have attracted the designation of Local Nature Reserves.

The typical composition of local ancient woodland is Oak, Ash and Field Maple, traditionally managed as coppice with standards for timber production. Such management ceased early last century and many woods have either become neglected or used for commercial forestry.

A new woodland management plan is required that will detail work prescriptions for the next 20 years and long term objectives to sustain them for the next 50. Neglect over the last 75 years in addition to close proximity of new urbanity has taken its toll. To implement a new woodland management plan additional resources are required.

The management plan would set a strategy ensuring preservation of integrity and that operations would be sensitive to matters of ecology and sustainability. In drawing this up extensive consultation would be required with local and regional groups. The plan would not only conform to the UK Forestry Standard but also assist with applications for grants from the English Woodland Grant Scheme.

### Woodland policy and priorities

#### Policy CW 1:

**The Council will aim at sustainability in the management of its woodlands as determined by guidance within a revised Woodland management Plan.**

Priorities:

- CW 1.1 To maintain continuous tree cover and manage the woods towards sustainability.
- CW 1.2 To make provision for public access.
- CW 1.3 To maintain woodland boundaries, combat fly-tipping and other anti-social behaviour.
- CW 1.4 To improve the range of habitats with the woods.
- CW 1.5 To increase biodiversity, and control invasive species.
- CW 1.6 To preserve the historic features in the woods.
- CW 1.7 To increase the amount of standing and fallen deadwood where this does not compromise safety.
- CW 1.8 To provide educational opportunities.
- CW 1.9 Restore coppice interspersed with standards.
- CW 1.10 Encourage suitable natural regeneration.

## 6.6 Urban Woods

The areas originally classified as shelterbelts were planted by the Development Corporation in the 1970's and 80's as part of the landscape master plan. As time has passed the function of this planting has shifted and today the title of urban woods is more appropriate. These woodlands cover a total area of 250 hectares and have approximately 400 miles of boundary alongside roads, residential, commercial and industrial premises.

These trees are a mix of natives, those naturalised and shrub species that provide woodland like settings. The mix is predominantly made up of fast growing species which are now maturing. Components of the Development Corporation management plan were implemented but the time has come for a new management plan to direct operations in the light of the current urban woodland content and condition in 2010. Such a revision would support

application to the English Woodland Grant Scheme and the Forestry Commission.

Serious neglect due to lack of funding is now badly affecting these urban woods, their quality and ability to fulfil two of their intended functions, notably to act as visual and sound deadening barriers. Neglected woodlands become difficult to manage in a sensitive or cost effective manner.

### Policy UW 1:

**The Council will manage the urban woods towards sustainability in accordance with the objectives and guidance set out in a revised Urban Woodland Management Plan.**

Priorities:

- UW 1.1 To manage the woodlands on towards sustainability.
- UW 1.2 To manage the woods to provide continuous woodland cover.
- UW 1.3 To maintain and enhance landscape amenity.
- UW 1.4 To increase biodiversity and maximise wildlife habitats.
- UW 1.5 To provide opportunities for improved access and recreation.
- UW 1.6 To protect and preserve archaeological and cultural features.
- UW 1.7 To include measures that can assist with adaptation to climate change as well as to maximise capacity for carbon sequestration in conjunction with central government initiatives.
- UW 1.8 To identify potential new sites for woods and encourage their creation adjoining existing woods and where appropriate making full use of natural regeneration.
- UW 1.9 Replacement trees to be established by natural regeneration and enrichment planting.

### Policy UW 2:

**The Council will encourage community involvement, endeavouring to consult with residents when work is proposed and seek to address the problems of anti-social behaviour in urban woods.**

#### Priorities:

- UW 2.1 A protocol for communicating details of works proposed and to be a good neighbour ensuing that operations are undertaken in a manner sensitive to the wishes of residents.
- UW 2.2 To encourage public appreciation, recreational use, enjoyment and community involvement.
- UW 2.3 Introduce measures to control vandalism, unauthorised tipping, the dumping of waste and litter and resident encroachment.

## 6.7 Village and Rural Trees

Many of the trees in the villages and rural areas are privately owned. In spite of this the Council still has responsibility for a significant proportion which total approximately 5000. These trees being approximately 200 years old are amongst the oldest managed by the Authority.

Locally, Elm was one of the most important trees. When Dutch Elm Disease struck this dominant hedgerow tree was lost. Considerable areas of relatively denuded landscape have not been replaced, particularly within areas of more intensive farming. To this day there remains a reliance upon Elm regeneration that exists within a continual state of growth followed by disease related decline. Planting of Ash or Oak would lessen dependency within the landscape upon this regeneration.

Distinctive village scenes can be maintained and enhanced by planting trees that originally generated such landscapes. In places this could mean selecting non native stock so as to stay with the original theme.

Age related risks of village trees and their close proximity to property necessitates that funding be identified for bi annual inspections to be followed by a programme of works based upon the findings, this followed by production of cyclical management plans. To date only a small proportion of trees alongside

rural roads have been identified and inspected. It would be wise to bring these trees into cyclical management without delay so that the City Council can demonstrate duty of care.

### Village and rural tree policies and priorities (VR):

#### Policy VR 1:

**The Council will preserve and enhance the distinctiveness of village and rural trees.**

#### Priorities:

- VR 1.1 To complete surveying operations and introduce a management cycle of no greater than three years.
- VR 1.2 To replace all trees which are removed in these areas
- VR 1.3 To replant using suitable native trees except where this would result in loss of familiar vernacular.

## 6.8 New and Replacement Planting

Trees have a finite life expectancy that varies from flowering Cherry at approx 35 years to Yew that can live for 1000 years. Stress associated with the urban environment significantly reduces life spans. Surveys and inspections in the city have revealed the fact that large numbers of trees in the medium term and therefore even more so in the long term, are totally unsuitable for their locations. The present strategy requires that each tree removed is to be replaced. Constraints on resources only allows this to happen at high profile locations resulting in a year on year net reduction in trees numbers.

The great majority of enquiries and demands for service result from an initial inappropriate choice of species. The Development Corporation had the task of "greening the city " and this directed selection. The task was achieved but in terms of longevity the entire situation has moved on. Now and into the future the greatest cost savings in tree management can be realised by strict observance of the philosophy:

### “Right Tree in the Right Place”

This should be followed every time a new or replacement tree is selected and planted so as to minimise problems of trees growing too tall or broad, associated loss of light, dropping of berries or leaves falling into gutters etc. Numerous short lived Cherry trees as planted by the D. C, are coming to the ends of their lives. Quick, cheap and cheerful these trees are going to be missed but in terms of longevity, surface rooting tendencies and nuisance fruit fall, were an inappropriate choice. Tree planting in certain locations has resulted in ongoing and disruptive problems. Perhaps consideration perhaps should now be given to spending money on stepping up specifications promoting establishment of fewer newly planted trees rather than focusing so heavily on numbers.

Within residential areas available space is a critical consideration. Adherence to Right Tree in the Right Place framework will ensure new planting is appropriately designed and located. Direction for tree and location selection is set out briefly in Appendix 4 “Right Tree in the Right Place Framework”.

In some parts of the city there is minimal public open space resulting in a low number of trees. Those present are often privately owned. The Council could consider giving carefully selected trees to owner occupiers to make good this deficiency

Tree planting is an activity that residents can get involved with. At the same time the importance of watering, weeding and revisiting stakes and ties has to be acknowledged. Involvement should be encouraged as it significantly increases tree survival rates and creates a sense of ownership.

#### New and replacement tree priorities (NRP):

Priorities:

- NRP 1. To develop a detailed Right Tree in the Right Place framework for guiding tree selection on existing Council sites as well as for observation within the planning process..
- NRP 1.1 The Council will plant appropriate new and replacement trees To ensure that the current extent of tree coverage is maintained.

- NRP 1.2 To incorporate aftercare into all maintenance programmes.
- NRP 1.3 Formulate a planting program with greatest priority given to appropriate sites in deprived communities, key transport corridors and gateways, large open spaces with little existing natural vegetation and finally areas within new developments in this order.
- NRP 1.4 Recognise local distinctiveness when selecting and planting trees
- NRP1.5 Encourage community involvement, commemorative and sponsored planting schemes on Council land.
- NRP1.6 Use planning conditions within Section 106 Agreements to secure funding for tree planting and subsequent establishment operations.

## 6.9 Other Sites

The city has many other trees within school grounds, churchyards, cemeteries, crematoria and other premises. Schools contain a significant number of prominent trees offering a huge educational resource.

Whilst there has been an assessment of the trees at schools a cyclical management program is still absent. There are approximately 4,000 trees on education sites managed by the Council. Initial work needs to be extended so as to bring all trees into a management program.

Trees within churchyards, cemeteries and crematoria are highly prominent, enhancing the distinctiveness of their location as well as being part of the local history. Bretton Crematorium was built in ancient woodlands and so the trees very much set the tone, especially being situated next to Pockocks Wood.

At the moment these trees are not covered by a management program. They are amongst the oldest trees in the city and those that carry the greatest level of risk but have yet to be entered into a schedule for cyclical works.



## Other site priorities (OS):

priorities:

- OS 1. To fund completion of surveys from which appropriate inspection and maintenance cycles will be determined.
- OS 1.1 To survey trees and woods for additions to the register of landmark trees.

## 6.10 Landmark Trees

Trees and woods offer a sense of permanence. Old woods and veteran trees are good indicators of an area's past. However, with age comes the highest degree of risk and vulnerability to changing site conditions. It is important that veterans are identified and carefully managed to ensure their risk is minimised.

### Landmark tree policy and priorities (LT):

#### Policy LT 1:

**The Council will preserve and protect the trees on the landmark register.**

Priorities:

- LT 1.1 To continue to survey trees and woods so as to find and then register all landmark trees.
- LT 1.2 To extend the resources available to ensure that all landmark trees can be adequately maintained.

## 7 PRIVATE TREES

Many notable trees within the city grow in private gardens. The majority of land owners take a positive view of their trees and are aware of the grant aid schemes and sources of advice to pay for maintenance works. There is potential for further planting and schemes to promote this in order to assist with greening of the city.

As the Local Planning Authority the Council has a statutory duty to protect trees of greatest amenity value. This section sets out the City Council's approach to the protection of privately owned trees.

## Private tree and wood general policies (PT)

### Policy PT 1

**The Council will ensure that trees and woodlands are protected, developed and where circumstances permit through partnership working, expanded.**

Priorities

- PT 1.1 To utilise and enforce planning powers to retain and protect trees through TPO's and conservation area status
- PT 1.2 To comment and advise on strategy and other initiatives which affect trees and woods.

### Policy PT 2

**The Council will respond to tree issues within planning applications in such a way that ensures the retention of good quality tree and woodland coverage or ensures its creation.**

Priorities

- PT 2.1 To be guided by best practice for a consistent approach to reviewing planning applications.
- PT 2.2 To consider prosecution when conditions of consent are breached or there are breaches of TPO's or the requirements of Conservation Area regulations.
- PT 2.3 Trees and Woods be given significant consideration within planning applications, requiring submission of Arboricultural Impact Assessments and location plans.
- PT 2.4 When granting permission set conditions for the retention, protection, planting and care of trees.
- PT 2.5 Utilise commuted sums associated with Section 106 Agreements to fund the long term care of trees. To utilise and enforce planning powers to retain and protect existing trees threatened by new development including proposals for changes to existing properties.

**Policy PT 3**

**The outright removal of trees and woods shall be resisted unless there are sound arboricultural or technical reasons such as irrefutable identification of subsidence.**

Priorities

PG 3.1 To protect trees of amenity value.

**Policy PG4**

**The Council will promote awareness and better understanding of tree and woodland management through use of community consultation and involvement.**

Priorities

PT 4.1 To promote good standards of tree and woodland care.

PT 4.2 To encourage owners of notable trees that are worthy of protection to adopt best practices for tree care.

PT 4.3 To set up a tree warden scheme to reach and encourage volunteers and educate same with active involvement in trees.

PG 4.4 To prepare and circulate code of practice for (1) pre-application guidance and (2) working on development sites where proposals have potential impact.

**Policy PT 5**

**The Council will encourage new and replacement tree and wood planting, using appropriate tree species.**

Priorities

PT 5.1 To require developers to submit details of tree species and numbers within their proposals.

PT 5.2 To promote tree and wood planting where it is considered this will enhance general amenity.

PT 5.3 To encourage actions that will increase woodland cover in the locality.

**7.1 Trees and Development**

The growth of Peterborough’s population and economy provides a great opportunity for a strategic approach to tree and woodland planting. There are a number of initiatives to enhance the natural environment. They all offer opportunity to increase tree and woodland cover but each one has its own agenda and priorities. Efforts should be made to secure their coordination and compatibility.

Economic activity and future development will bring into being attractive green residential and business environments. Developers will be key players in the majority of land use changes. As such they need to respect existing trees and where appropriate, incorporate tree planting within new developments.

Use should be made of planning conditions and Section 106 Agreements to secure funding to pay for landscape enhancement and tree management. Long term management plans will be required along with stated lump sums allocated to them.

Development proposals and their potential threats to existing trees are responsible for triggering the majority of new TPO’s. Plans are often submitted indicating trees for retention that are in such poor condition that they are barely worthy of this cover.

Proposals to construct extensions onto existing buildings potentially takes building lines ever closer to boundary trees, resulting in conflict if this impact is not detected at the application stage and accommodated.

Developers often assume that all trees on a site will have to be retained and consequently view trees as a hindrance rather than an asset. It is still common for planning applicants to submit inadequate details to support the decision making process regarding trees in relation to proposed development. This requires more officer time and expense.

The extent of tree protection is frequently below that it should be during development and measures to accommodate construction can fall short. To ensure that trees are successfully retained it is vital that the root system is properly protected from direct and indirect damage and hence the need for reference to British Standard 5837 "Trees in Relation to Construction".

## Tree and Development policies (TD)

### Policy TD 1

**The Council will reject development proposals with inadequate provision for the retention of trees and woods.**

Priorities:

TD 1.1 To utilise and enforce planning powers to retain and protect existing trees within new development as well as trees threatened by proposed changes to existing properties.

TD 1.2 To monitor and enforce planning conditions of consent. where necessary.

## 7.2 Protecting Trees

So as to support the proactive use of orders as well as the necessity to reappraise the value of old orders funding is required to pay for officer time. This time can also be applied to enforcing statutory powers applicable to Conservation Areas or offering advice to tree owners on how best to look after their property and avoid inappropriate pruning etc.

The implementation of statutory restrictions on the rights of landowners is always a potential source of conflict. However, many of our finest trees and woodlands would not be here today if such protection had not been applied.

The quality of private tree care is variable. Some owners are indifferent and some motivated but poorly advised. Greatest contributions come from tree owners who take pride in their trees, seek the best advice and engage quality contractors to implement work.

## Statutory Protection.

In accordance with the duty as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act the Council will incorporate policies relating to Trees and Woodlands within its Local Plan through the review process.

There are over 350 TPO's and 29 Conservation Areas. Pressure from development could best be dealt with by a pro-active use of TPO's. However, limited resources prevent this from happening and so TPO's tend to be used reactively when a threat to the retention of a tree is identified.

Since 2007 the Council has prioritised and reviewed many of the older TPO's. This process has now halted due to a lack of resources.

Working on trees protected by Orders or within Conservation Areas places a duty on the tree owner to apply for permission from the Council for consent to undertake the work. The Council has a duty to respond to these applications within 8 or 6 weeks respectively.

## Protection through Advice.

Free advice is given by the City Council and is seen as an important contribution to the general protection of trees. When advice is sought in conjunction with planning applications and TPO's this enables the provision of an efficient and cost effective service.

Arboriculture is an established technical discipline in which qualifications at various levels are available. Ongoing research continually changes the technical competence requirements of professionals and hence the public should seek out a reliable source for advice and look for membership of appropriate professional bodies.

Contractors with poor technical abilities to carry out tree surgery can lead to poor results. There are only a few reputable companies capable of working to British Standard 3998, 1989, operating in the Peterborough area. This factor alone results in unnecessary damaged to trees in the form of unsuitable "pruning".

The Arboricultural Association produces a list of contractors and consultants who have been examined and found to reach the required standard. More local assessment and advice is required.

## Protecting private trees policies (PP)

### Policy PP 1

**There will be a presumption against the cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of any protected tree. The Council will not give consent to fell a protected tree or woodland unless it is satisfied that this is necessary and justified. Any such consent will be conditional upon appropriate replacement.**

Priorities:

- PP 1.1 The Council will continue to protect significant trees.
- PP 1.2 Consent for works will be provided if the Council is satisfied that the long term health and appearance of the tree is not impaired.
- PP 1.3 The work does not unjustifiably inhibit or prevent the full and natural development of the tree.
- PP 1.4 The work is necessary for the continued retention of the tree.
- PP 1.5 The work is consistent with good arboricultural practice.
- PP 1.6 The work is consistent with sound woodland management.
- PP 1.7 To maintain records of TPO's and complete the appraisal of older TPO's. Where necessary revoke old Orders and serve new.
- PP 1.8 To develop an internet based system for inspection of TPOs and the making of applications to carry out works to protected trees.
- PP 1.9 Consider TPO's for all appropriate trees on land no longer the responsibility of the Council.

## 8 IMPLEMENTATION

To secure the long term health of the region's trees and woodlands the philosophy of the right tree in the right place must be widely understood. This will enable national, regional and local policy to be implemented to best effect.

Key to supporting this strategy will be resources. Delivery of the direction will require local interpretation and setting of priorities, the latter to be based upon assessment of local need, available resources and whole landscape consideration.

It is not possible to anticipate every situation and therefore whilst these policies guide decisions they should not be considered totally prescriptive. Individual policy should not be considered in isolation but all relevant policies should be taken into account when reaching a decision.

Allied to this document is the need for a Supplementary Action Plan to co-ordinate the priorities and available resources.

Many different departments and agencies potentially have an interest in the benefits of this strategy and can affect its delivery. The Action Plan will indicate from where major contributions are sought from others and where the strategy is likely to assist them to determine their own priorities.

The policies will assist the Council in making strategic decisions on development and growth, economic planning, developing sustainable communities and direct asset management. Increasing the inclusiveness of local communities in these issues will be important, both for decision making, but also for active participation in management. Private owners should be encouraged and advised of the wider importance of their trees and woods and be involved in partnerships.

Partnerships will greatly assist the Council to identify and secure external funding and sponsorship, and contribute to achieving the aim and objectives of the strategy. The English Woodland Grant Scheme as well as the Forestry Commission are two organisations that can be approached in the making of applications for funding.

## 8.1 Measures of Success

Implementing this strategy will lead to greater operational activity in tree and wood management. Equally, it will increase an appreciation and understanding of trees and woods.

To evaluate the impact of the strategy and decide how to act and revise the priorities a range of indicators of the present state, and trends over time are needed. These indicators should include: extent, condition, management, use and an assessment of their contribution to quality of life.

*Outcome* indicators relevant to the strategic objectives are as follows:

Reducing the cost of insurance claims year on year.

Reducing the number of emergency call outs to damaged or failed trees

## 8.2 Strategy Review

This strategy is an evolution of the 1998 Tree and Woodland Strategy. It updates that strategy and reflects the Council's key responsibilities to manage its own tree stock, to protect trees of amenity value and to secure new tree and woodland planting as the city grows.

There should be annual progress reviews to facilitate budgeting and allocation of resources. More detailed reviews at five year intervals could examine policies, aims and objectives, all of which could then be changed or adjusted if required.

The formation of a Tree Forum is recommended, this to meet twice a year and represent both the Council and community groups.

# 9 APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Policies for Council owned trees and woods

**General policies (CTWG);** applicable to all Council trees and woods.

CTWG 1: The Council will ensure that the tree and woodland populations are protected, their establishment directed and where appropriate in conjunction with specifically identified funding at some future date, expanded.

CTWG 2: The Council will maintain its trees and woods in accordance with its Obligations to observe duty of care and the safety of both people and property .

CTWG 3: The Council will maintain its trees and woodlands in such a way that demonstrates best practice, providing worthy examples for others to follow.

CTWG 4: The removal of trees and woods shall be resisted unless there are sound arboricultural or pressing social reasons such as serious safety concerns to indicate otherwise.

CTWG5 The Council will encourage a better understanding of tree and wood management and in so doing, promote community involvement.

CTWG6 The Council will encourage new and replacement planting, placing great emphasis on use of appropriate tree species.

**Street tree policy (ST)**

ST1: To endeavour to protect street trees from threats such as loss of verges and damage to same.

ST 2: To place a priority on the replacement of ageing street trees, particularly where these adjoin major traffic routes. To ensure selection of the largest growing varieties up to the limitations of the available space.

## Appendix 2: Policies for Privately owned trees and woods

### General policies (PT) applicable to ALL Private trees and woods

- PT 1 The Council will ensure that the trees and woodlands are protected, developed and where circumstances permit through partnership working, expanded.
- PT 2 The Council will respond to tree issues within planning applications in such a way that ensures the retention of good quality tree and woodland coverage, or its creation.
- PT 3 The outright removal of trees and woods shall be resisted unless there are sound arboricultural or technical reasons such as irrefutable identification of subsidence.
- PT 4 The Council will promote awareness and better understanding of tree and woodland management through use of community consultation and involvement.
- PT 5 The Council will encourage new and replacement tree and wood planting, using appropriate tree species.

### Tree and Development policies (TD)

- TD 1 The Council will reject development proposals with inadequate provision for the retention of trees and woods.

### Protecting Private trees policies (PP)

- PP 1 There will be a presumption against the cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of any protected tree. The Council will not give consent to fell a protected tree or woodland unless it is satisfied that this is necessary and justified. Any such consent will be conditional upon appropriate replacement.

### Woodland policy (CW)

CW 1: The Council will aim at sustainability in the management of its woodlands as determined by guidance within a revised Woodland Management Plan.

### Urban Woods (UW)

UW 1: The Council will manage the urban woods towards sustainability, in accordance with the objectives and guidance set out in a revised Urban Woodland Management Plan.

UW 2: The Council will encourage community involvement, endeavouring to consult with residents when work is proposed and will seek to address the problems of anti-social behaviour in urban woods.

### Village and rural tree policy (VT):

VR 1: The Council will preserve and enhance the distinctiveness of village and rural trees.

### Landmark tree policy and priorities (LT):

LT 1: The Council will preserve and protect the trees on the landmark register.

## Appendix 3: Service Request Responses

### Daylight Loss

Action will normally only be considered where the separation between the tree and the window of the nearest habitable room is less than 6m for trees with a height of over 12m, or less than half the height of the tree for smaller trees, or where the separation between the edge of the canopy and a vertical line through that window is less than 2m.

A 'habitable room' means a dining room, lounge, kitchen, study or bedroom but specifically excludes WCs, bathrooms, utility rooms, landings and hallways.

Where a situation falls within these guidelines cases will be prioritised according to proximity and account will also be taken of the orientation of the affected window. Further consultation may modify initial decisions. Opinions expressed by the community will be taken into account and hence will influence operational instructions.

### Direct Root Damage

As with subsidence, cases of direct root damage will be considered on an individual basis. A balance will be struck between the nuisance experienced by individuals and the benefits offered by the tree to the wider community.

### Drain Blockage

Trees do not have the capacity to break into a sound drain, but they will ruthlessly exploit any existing fault. The removal of one tree will not prevent other vegetation from exploiting the same opportunity.

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. Accordingly, the Council will not normally take action in response to complaints that Council managed trees are blocking drains

### Honeydew

As with leaves, honeydew is not readily controllable by pruning. Certain trees such as Lime are more prone to producing this than others and in many respects it may be best to tackle honeydew with a routine cleansing response. Pruning will not normally be regarded as correct response to honeydew and will certainly not be the sole way of alleviating such problems.

### Leaves, Seeds and Fruit

Leaves and seeds are carried freely on the wind and are beyond the control of the Council. The presumption is that residents will be prepared to remove saplings, clear leaves from pathways and gutters and remove small twigs that have landed within their gardens. Pruning will not normally be undertaken to attempt to reduce the fall of leaves, seeds or fruit.

### Obstruction of the Highway

The Council will seek to maintain adequate clearance of the highway relative to the type of traffic using that route. Complaints about low branches over the highway will be investigated and dealt with promptly.

### Obstruction of street lights and road signs

The Council will endeavour to ensure that trees under their management do not obscure road signs or prevent street lamps from illuminating the highway.

The purpose of street lamps is to illuminate the public highway and where adequate illumination of the highway is present, the Council will not normally take action to improve the levels of illumination of private property.

### Safety

Where there is a clear and foreseeable threat to the personal safety of residents or to property emanating directly from the condition of a tree, action will be taken to minimise that risk.

Indirect risk such as slippery leaves on pavements will only be dealt with through pruning in unusual circumstances and where no other options are available.

The presentation of unfounded fear of a tree to an informed judgement will not normally result in action to prune the tree.

### **Subsidence**

Tree related subsidence damage is a complex issue and each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Where damage has occurred the Council will require that adequate assessment and monitoring is undertaken to demonstrate that the tree is involved and that such evidence be submitted in support of any request for action.

Requests for action based on an unquantifiable possibility of damage occurring at an unspecified time in the future will not be considered unless there other overriding reasons to take action.

### **Television and other radio equipment**

There is no right to good reception and in many cases it is possible to resolve issues of tree related poor reception by finding an engineering solution. The Council will only consider requests to prune trees to improve reception after all the following conditions have been met:

- Efforts have been made to find an engineering solution to the problem and have not been successful.
- The work required is consistent with good arboricultural practice and will not unduly affect the amenity or health of the tree.
- The work required can be executed within current financial constraints.

## **Appendix 4: Right Tree in the Right Place Framework.**

### **Landscape Impact**

- Consider the existing use of the space and question whether the presence of trees would be a positive addition?
- Identify the landscape type and what constraints this will place on the selection of species.
- Examine existing habitats so as to assess their compatibility with additional trees and woodlands and therefore the latter's ability to add value.
- Establish the history of tree cover to determine whether new additions would be appropriate.

### **Site Constraint**

- Maintain local distinctiveness.
- Consider the presence of underground and overhead services.
- Meet the statutory safety requirements of access for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Assess impact on the nearest buildings to be sure that future potential problems can be minimised, particularly subsidence.
- Prioritise sites to where greatest public benefit can be realised.

### **Species Consideration**

- Select species known to thrive on the soil type, its compaction, nutrients and available water.
- Consider space available relative to size of tree at maturity unless the tree is destined for controlled management such as coppicing or pollarding.
- Select the largest growing species the site will reasonably accommodate.
- Consider use of natural regeneration where appropriate.
- Where possible use native species.
- Maintain diversity within the tree population.
- Consider the species tolerance to disease and wind damage.
- Consider potential nuisance of fruit fall in the autumn, slippery paths and associated requests for service to deal with problems.

### **Community Consideration**

- Consider potential impact on neighbours.
- Consult with local community prior to introducing new large scale planting.



## Appendix 5: References

Arboricultural Association 2005, "Tree Surveys: Guide to Good practice"  
British Standard 3998 "Tree Work"  
British Standard 5837 "Trees in Relation to Construction"  
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000  
DEFRA 2007, "A Strategy for England's Trees, Woods and Forests"  
Department of Environment 1973, "Circular 90/73 Inspection, Maintenance and Planting of Roadside Trees on Rural Roads"  
Department of Environment 1975 "Circular 52/75 Inspection of Highway Trees"  
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DETR 2000, "Tree Preservation Orders, Guide to the Law and Good Practice"  
Health and Safety at Work Act 1974  
Health and Safety Executive 2007, "Management of Risk from Falling Trees"  
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999  
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006  
Peterborough City Council 1998, "Tree and Woodland Strategy"  
Peterborough City Council 2005, "Growing the Right Way"  
Peterborough City Council 2006, "Climate Change Strategy"  
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Peterborough City Council 2006, "Peterborough Open Space Strategy"  
Peterborough City Council 2007, "A Place for People to Grow"  
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Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999  
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