

Southwell Town Council

Open Spaces strategy Nov 2020 - draft 201019

Tree management and arisings

This paper examines the management of the Town's woods, copses and trees including the removal of trees and branches.

Key principles

The Town wishes to

- maintain trees in a safe condition so as not endanger residents and visitors
- plant new trees in areas identified for new plantations and edges to open spaces
- leave some open spaces completely and plant or allow self set deciduous trees and native shrubs to grow
- support and develop community orchards

The treatment of felled and pruned tree trunks and branches was identified in the strategy for the management of our open spaces and is the subject of this policy.

In our woods and orchards residents should be engaged with to ensure the understanding of the benefits of the process and signs will be erected to inform residents and visitors of the trees, their species and their contributions to the local and national environment etc..

In a limited number of instances, the Town Council will encourage residents to support this policy as volunteers, but cannot provide powered equipment to do so, or permit working at height. Some of the land will be split into different categories identified below, but this will be explicit, albeit not always signposted at the location.

Categories of locations

Some of the trees in the town, on town council land, are areas where there is considerable residents' use. Trees in these locations will be pruned regularly and/or assessed on a three year cycle to identify where branches may have to be lopped. If branches [or the tree] is in danger of falling [or has fallen after storm or similar damage] trees will be subject to surgery.

The western Burgage

Footpaths across the War Memorial Recreation Ground

Other trees are in locations where they pose less of a danger. These trees will be subject to a three year visual appraisal at ground level. Any identified immediate dangers will be addressed in the following six months, but fallen trees and branches not causing an obstruction will normally be left. Some of the larger trunks and branches and all other branches and brush will be left in situ to provide rotting vegetation for insects. Some - depending on species - will be made available to local residents for carving or burning and some will be stacked to provide 'bug houses' at the margins of land around the town in a list of possible locations. These opportunities will be announced on the council's website and a notice placed in the location indicating this opportunity

Riverside Park

Cedar Green

Greet river side

Wakeling Close

Humberstone Road, Adams Row and Dudley Dow open spaces

Squires Pond

edges to all other open space land

New planting

The Council will identify areas for new planting of trees in the winter period. There are two different elements to this. The policy will be subject to a biennial review. Memorial trees will normally be paid for by the proposing organisation but their location will be subject to agreement by the Town Environment Committee

Area planting

areas such as
southwestern area of the Norwood Gardens
southeastern edge of Minster Field
creation of an avenue at Beaumont Avenue

Memorial trees

The Council has/had a policy for the one off planting of memorial trees to commemorate national and local events of significance and commemoration of local personalities

Tree species will be local, native species unless specific agreement is given for 'monumental' trees. Orchard trees are identified by a separate policy - and usually locally developed. Details of the nurseries that can provide these are shown there. The long term implications for the Town Council will be considered before permissions are given.

Working with the staff

There will be six monthly reviews by the Chair, Vice-Chair of Town Environment Committee and Chair of Climate Change Working Group with the Clerk and ground staff. These will be part of the normal day time Town Environment Open Space management meetings . The Clerk and the Chair of the Committee will meet at least fortnightly to monitor and review progress and agree prioritisation of work, including review of any emergency work that has had to be done. These will be noted and circulated to all councillors.

Staff training will be identified [eg chain saw, working at height, tree assessment, tree surgery etc.]. If possible, we will support and encourage staff to undertake tree work, and purchase or hire equipment to do so. However, the Council will balance the cost and benefits of staff being trained to do the work and equipment hire compared with the use of contracted tree surgeons. If there are any issues or suggestions to be raised at the meetings, councillors will be asked to send these to the Chair and Clerk in advance. Councillors will be reminded that all allocation of staffing must be through the Clerk who is the line manager of the groundstaff.