



2. Statement of Principles

2.1

To reflect wider governmental policy, BGCBC has developed the following three Key Principles in relation to The Authority's trees and woodlands in the BGCBC area these are to:

- **Manage our tree stock**

4.7

The system relies on the Green Infrastructure Team being aware of what land we own and where our trees and woodlands are located, it is thus important that all departments within the Council that have land ownership responsibilities keep this information up-to-date and share it with members of the Green Infrastructure Team.

4.8

Reactive tree management work is undertaken in response to an emergency situation such as damage to council trees following a storm event or on verification of a reported dangerous tree - it should be noted that the proactive tree survey is aimed at significantly reducing the instances of dangerous trees occurring within the Borough and the need for urgent works.

5.8 - Shedding of leaves, fruits and debris

Reasonable debris such as leaves, fruits, nuts, flowers, residues, minor deadwood, and naturally occurring by-products of the trees life processes, must be expected where trees occur. BGCBC will therefore not carry out tree works in relation to negating such matters. The excretions of birds and insects, primarily honeydew associated with aphids, are beyond the control of BGCBC and therefore no tree works will be undertaken to prevent this potential problem.

5.9 - Branches overhanging adjoining land

BGCBC has no duty to prune overhanging branches except where they are in direct, or potential conflict with an adjacent built structure. The owner or occupier of adjacent land does have a common law right to cut back overhanging branches to the boundary line. However it should also be noted that owners and occupiers of adjacent land also owe a duty of care to the owners of trees and therefore they should take reasonable precaution when enacting their common law right in order to ensure that the long term health and structural integrity of the trees are not compromised. Anyone wishing to enact their common law right in relation to council owned trees is encouraged to liaise with the local authority. This is so we can ensure that works do not compromise the health of the tree or breach protective designations. Any tree management work should adhere to the following;

- All work is carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Tree Work - Recommendations.
- Work is carried out at a time that does not conflict with leaf burst or leaf fall.
- All work is carried out in accordance with relevant wildlife legislation.
- Any contractor employed is suitably qualified and insured.
- All arising are disposed of in a safe and environmentally friendly manner
- The public should not trespass onto BGCBC land (nor any other land) without permission of the landowner

5.10 - Perceived risk due to 'tall' or 'swaying' trees close to properties

The proactive tree survey programme is designed to pick up on dangerous trees located close to high risk areas such as property or highways. The public should be reassured that the annual survey will establish if a tree is hazardous and works will be undertaken accordingly.



6. Trees In Relation To Highways

6.1

7. Additional Policy Principles

7.1 - Provision of Usable Soil Area

Trees require usable soil area in order to allow water percolation and gaseous diffusion, both vital to the development and maintenance of a healthy and viable rooting system. Within the urban environment the provision of such usable soil area is often heavily compromised and this



7.7

Zero net loss of tree canopy cover will be achieved by an annual increase in tree planting through the following ways:

- **New Planting:** Of appropriate tree species on existing Public Open Spaces, Strategic Corridors and gateway sites across the city, funded through planting contribution and other external grant sources.
- **Development Mitigation:** tree loss through development will continue to be mitigated not only through like for like replacement, but also in seeking additional planting compensation,

7.12

BGCBC will aim to achieve transparency in its actions and all decision making in relation to trees:

When asked, BGCBC will provide comment to any person that asks for information about action taken or decisions made with regard to tree and woodland management. It should be noted that public safety is of key importance when making decisions about trees and woodland within the BGCBC area.

7.13

BGCBC will continue with its cyclical management of pruning works:

Several types of continued tree management such as pollarding and pruning to clear bus routes / highways require repeated works at set intervals. Such works will be included within any management plans for the BGCBC area to ensure the correct allocation of resources at the correct time.

7.14

BGCBC will seek to ensure that where possible CCTV cameras are sited in locations where their line of sight is not, or will not be obstructed by trees:

Repeated harmful pruning of trees can be avoided by the correct and considered placement of CCTV cameras. CCTV operators will be encouraged to work closely with the Police and BGCBC to ensure the best use of this increasingly important requirement. The Green Infrastructure Department will be consulted on the locations of all proposed new CCTV camera locations. Trees will not be retrospectively pruned if the locations of new cameras have not been through a consultation process.

7.15

BGCBC will seek to encourage and take advantage of opportunities to create, expand and link established woodland and treed areas:

In order to develop and maintain the green infrastructure and urban forest of the BGCBC area, BGCBC will endeavour to plant trees so as to join with existing features to develop biodiversity, ecological features such as wildlife corridors and other such landscape features.

7.16

BGCBC will seek to involve community and local interest groups when practicably possible:

Tree planting and management is often an evocative subject in many urban and rural areas. With this in mind BGCBC will seek to consult appropriate groups when undertaking significant works within the BGCBC area.

7.17

BGCBC will seek to manage suitable areas of trees and woodland as a fiscal asset rather than liability:

When a lateral approach is taken to certain areas of tree management, what may have been regarded as a pure liability can be turned into a cost free operation or potentially a source of revenue. Timber, logs and woodchip all have value and may be used by a wide variety of local groups such as forest schools initiatives within junior and infant schools, allotments may use woodchip for mulch or path surfacing. Occasionally trees that have to be removed have timber value that may be used to recover some or all of the cost of felling.



7.18

BGCBC will undertake tree management in response to government guidance notes:

On occasion local authorities will be tasked with tree removal to effect disease control or spread. This will follow guidance provided in the DEFRA publication Protecting Plant Health – A Plant Biosecurity Strategy for Great Britain. BGCBC's role may form part of a wider outbreak management strategy involving government agencies, non-government organisations, landowners and the public. Where such management may adversely affect domestic dwellings and public open space we will inform the public as to when and why the works are being carried out. In addition BGCBC will provide advice in relation to relevant biosecurity measures in order to seek to prevent disease spread.

7.19

BGCBC will undertake tree management taking into account all of the social, economic and environmental benefits that trees provide:

Trees are amongst the most versatile natural assets that planners, policy makers, businesses and communities can employ to cost-effectively raise the quality of the built environment. Notwithstanding the significant contribution that trees, woodland and hedgerows make to the aesthetics and biodiversity within the BGCBC area, a list of benefits that may not be obvious are provided below. BGCBC will endeavour to raise awareness of these additional benefits and take them into account when proposing management of our tree stock:

- Carbon capture and absorption / filtration of particulates
- Trees provide shade, cooling dense urban areas and making outdoor environments more pleasant.
- Trees intercept and store rainfall, reducing the burden on drainage systems and reducing runoff and localises flooding.
- Trees are financial assets to local authorities, their value, often significant, can be calculated using a system called CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees) that has been developed by the London Tree Officers Association.
- Areas with a mature healthy tree population have been found to have lower levels of crime.
- Retail areas have found that they can generate 15% more revenue if the area has more trees.
- Trees can reduce heating bills by shielding the property from extremes of foul weather.
- Recovery rates of patients in hospitals are improved when the patient has a view of trees or woodland.
- House prices in Tree lined streets are often higher than similar streets with no trees.
- Trees are often the last remnants of previous land use.
- Trees have significant cultural and social value.

7.20

BGCBC will undertake tree management taking into account the growing pressures on our urban tree populations;

There is growing pressure on urban tree populations and the reasons for their removal or lack of replacement are varied;

- There is an ageing population, leading to growing numbers of dying or dangerous trees.
- Increased threats from pests and diseases, often relating to specific tree species.
- Lack of understanding of solutions to aid better integration of trees into the urban infrastructure in relation to issues such as loss of light, deposition of leaves and fruits, blocked drains, footway surface heave, and subsidence.
- Increasing demand for new building development.
- Installation and maintenance of utilities infrastructure.
- 'Right tree in right place' approach to tree planting not being adhered to, compromising the trees' ability to reach their full potential.
- Lack of understanding of the benefits that trees bring to society.

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