



BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL TREE & HEDGE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This is a policy for the management of trees and hedges that are managed by Barton-le-Clay Parish Council. It is intended to act as a point of reference for the public, Councillors and Council employees to ensure a clear, consistent and structured approach to the management of trees and hedges.

1.2 A principle of English Common and Statute Law is that land/tree owners have a duty of care to visitors, residents, passers-by and indeed trespassers when on their land.

1.3 This means that the Parish Council has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of death or injury to those on Parish Council land.

1.4 Any queries on trees or hedges belonging to Barton-le-Clay Parish Council should be made to the Parish Clerk at the Parish Council Office, telephone 01582 883990 or email theparishclerk@bartonleclay-pc.gov.uk.

1.5 Trees and hedges on other open spaces or situated within the public highway, adjacent to the road or on roadside verges, are generally the responsibility of Central Bedfordshire Council and can be reported by visiting their website or via the FixMyStreet app/ www.fixmystreet.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or by calling 0300 300 8049.

1.6 Trees and hedges help to add variety to our landscape and provide valuable habitats for many species while providing us with cleaner, filtered air. The Parish Council aims to preserve Barton-le-Clay's trees and hedgerows for future generations to enjoy.

2.0 Work that Barton-le-Clay Parish Council will carry out on Council Owned Trees

2.1 The Parish Council will ensure that inspections of trees are carried out by a qualified tree surgeon on all land owned by the Council. These inspections will be carried out on a 3 yearly basis, unless the need arises for more frequent inspections as advised by the tree surgeon.

2.2 The last full tree survey was carried out in **June 2023** by Treefusion Ltd. A prioritised programme of tree works is maintained based on the inspection.

2.3 The Parish Council will allocate sufficient resources to ensure that it is able to manage the trees that it owns.

2.4 The Parish Council will request that any tree surgeon or contractor carrying out work on trees and hedges on Parish Council owned land should provide the Parish Council with a copy of their public liability insurance certificate and risk assessment and that they adhere to the appropriate standards.

2.5 Whilst maintaining our trees and hedges, consideration will be given to the impact of tree pruning or felling on local wildlife and work will be scheduled to take place in periods where the impact on wildlife will be minimal.

2.6 Whilst maintaining our trees and hedges we will:

- Remove dead, dying, diseased and dangerous trees and hedges
- Remove dangerous and damaged limbs

3.0 Work that Barton-le-Clay Parish Council will not carry out to Council Owned Trees

3.1 We have no obligation to carry out the following tree or hedge works:

- Cut back branches overhanging private property.
- 'Top' trees or remove branches to increase daylight or decrease height in relation to property.
- Remove branches or trees affecting views or interfering with TV reception.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent falling leaves, honeydew from aphids or other minor debris.
- Remove roots from drains or repair root damage to structures, where the tree has not been clearly demonstrated to be the principal cause.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent potential root damage to structures.
- Remove branches nearly touching buildings, walls, roofs, fences, etc.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent access to squirrels, birds, etc.
- Remove branches or trees in other situations not considered necessary by a qualified tree surgeon.

3.2 The Parish Council will give consideration to any complaints regarding trees or hedges on Parish Council owned property, taking into account its tree & hedge management policy and/or advice from a qualified tree surgeon.

3.3 If members of the public would like tree or hedge works carried out as per this section, they should make their own arrangements as described below.

4.0 Carrying out tree works yourself and Pruning Guidance

4.1 In common law, a property owner can cut back overhanging branches to the boundary of their property. The Parish Council would usually have no objection to property owners carrying out tree or hedge work or engaging a contractor at their own expense, provided that:

- Access is not gained onto the neighbouring land or to a tree or hedge within that land; if access to our land or to a tree or hedge on that land is required, our permission must be sought.
- The tree is not situated in a Conservation Area or protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- Any work done to a tree or hedge is not detrimental to its health or stability; for their own protection members of the public are advised to obtain advice from a qualified tree surgeon.
- For tree pruning work, whoever does the work, it is carried out to an acceptable standard, in accordance with the British Standard Recommendations for Tree Works 3998:1989.
- The property owner notifies us (before the work begins) of the proposed work and commencement date.

The Council does not carry out works to privately owned trees and hedges.