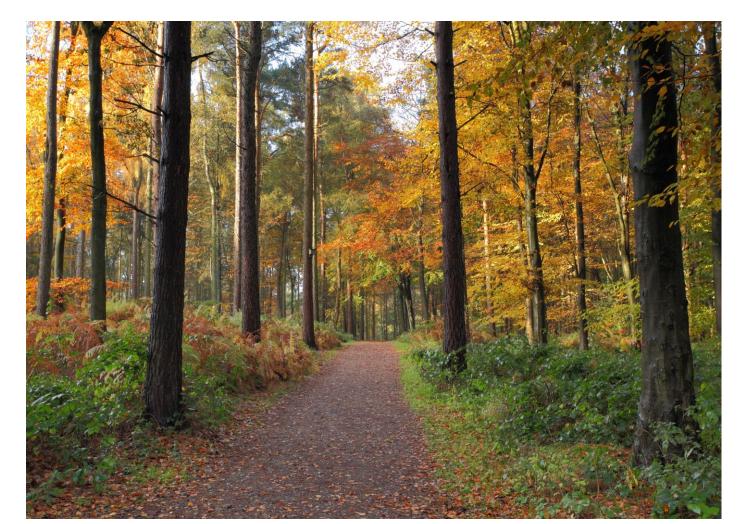# TREE MANAGEMENT AND PLANTING PLAN

2019- 2021

Introduction

Leicestershire's trees and woodlands provide multiple benefits, including producing oxygen and storing carbon, absorbing pollutants, mitigating climate change, flood water control, assisting pollination, promoting health and well-being, producing fuel and timber.

The Tree Management Action Plan focuses on the policies identified in the County Council's Tree Management Strategy. It identifies key actions and timescale required for the County Council to manage and enhance tree and woodland assets under its stewardship..

290

Biodiversity and Climate Change

The County Council's Environment Strategy addresses the council's response to climate change and biodiversity loss.

The pivotal role that trees have in stabilising and mitigating climate change is widely recognised by government, the scientific community and industry advisory groups. HM Government's 25 Year Environmental Plan draws this to our attention

"By using our land more sustainably and creating new habitats for wildlife, including by planting more trees, we can arrest the decline in native species and improve our biodiversity" (Prime Minister, 2017,).

In all of the work that we do we will ensure that we :-

✓ Sustainably manage the County Council's tree resource

✓ Maximise the multiple benefits that trees provide

✓ Work to increase our tree cover across Leicestershire

✓ Follow all industry recommendations to maintain bio- security

✓ Increase biodiversity and tree resilience

Service delivery - roles and responsibilities

❑ The strategic management of the County Council's tree resource is the responsibility of the Forestry Group in the Corporate Resources Dept. The Forestry Group undertake tree safety inspections, deal with customer enquiries and specify the programme of maintenance and remedial work.

❑ The Forestry team in Operational Highways include tree surgery and tree maintenance operatives and undertake the specified tree maintenance contracting works on the highway network.

❑ Tree maintenance on other County Council sites is undertaken by an external tree work contractor.

❑ The County Council's tree preservation orders are managed by the Environmental Policy and Strategy Team

292

"Fit for Purpose"
Forestry Service
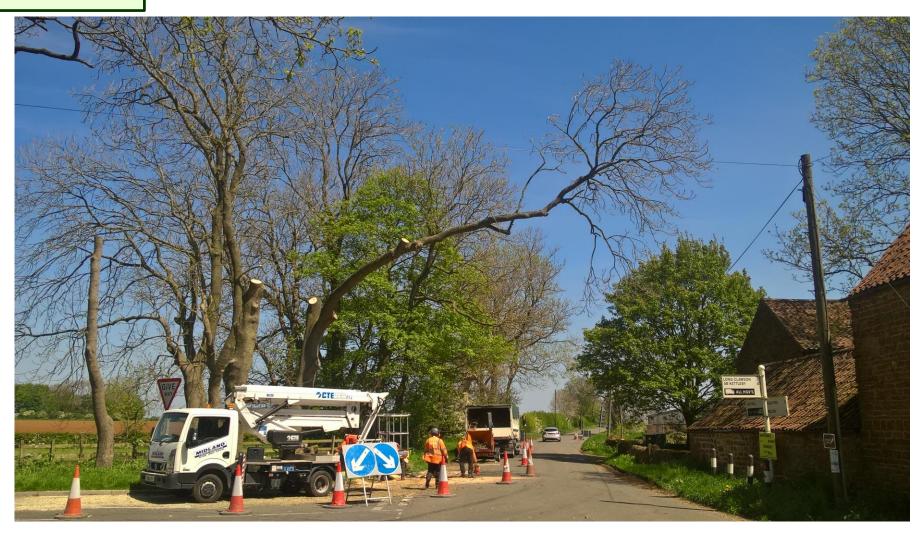Development

"Fit for Purpose" service

In 2018 the Transformation Unit undertook a service review of the authority's Forestry function. This included the Forestry Group in Corporate Resources and Operational Highway Forestry Team in Environment & Transport.

The review concluded that the current arrangements should be retained but recommended a number of service improvements.

Priorities	Key Actions/ Performance indicators		Lead	Timescale	Cost £
Service Review	**Identify service level requirements to meet future service demands (i.e. BAU)** **Establish a "fit for purpose "Inspection and advisory function**		**Head of Service**		
Review contracting arrangements	**Review the process and procedures for contracting works**		**Forestry Group**	2019-2020	TBC
Inspection and works Programme	**Implement a programme of tree inspections to eliminate the backlog** **Eliminate back log of highways tree work programme**	**Reduction in backlog of inspections** **No of inspections completed** **Reduction in backlog of highways tree work** **Oldest work request outstanding**	**Forestry Group** **Operational Highways Forestry Team**	2020	£77K allocated

294

Tree Management (BAU)

Tree Management

The Tree Management Strategy sets out the actions required to manage and increase the County Council's tree resource, and outlines the authority's approach relating to the various activities of tree management.

Tree management				
Priorities	Key actions	Key performance indicators		Lead
Inspection	Implement a comprehensive programme of tree inspections across the County	Routine Inspections Specialist Inspections Low Risk Trees High Risk Trees	Annual Every 3 years Every 6 years Every 18 months	Site Officers Forestry Group Forestry Group Forestry Group
Maintenance	Ensure all tree maintenance is prioritised appropriately to maintain the safety of the public; highways and buildings	Hazard posing imminent danger (Category 1a) Urgent Works (Category 1b) High Priority Works (Category 2) Routine Works (Category 3) Annually Programmed Works (Category 4)	Same Day 24 -48 hours 28 Days 3 Months 12 Months	LHO Forestry team
Tree related subsidence	Respond appropriately to all enquiries /claims relating to tree subsidence and deal with all claims in accordance with the Civil Procedure rules	Initial inspection within x days ? No and cost of insurance claims ?		Forestry Group
Emergency response	Implement an emergency call out procedure for tree surgery	Develop a clear emergency call-out procedure to ensure a timely response to emergencies in extreme weather. Provide and train staff to be able to receive incoming enquiries and reports and prioritise tasks to ensure resources are deployed effectively Undertake follow-up inspections where there has been personal injury or damage to property	2019-2020 2019-2020 Within 7days	LHO Forestry team Forestry Group/Ops control room Forestry Group

Tree Management

Priorities	Key actions	Key performance indicators		Lead
Standards of work	Ensure all operations meet the requirements of appropriate industry codes of practice work	Ensure all staff are appropriately trained to carry out activities in compliance with:- • All relevant B.S.I. recommendations • NTSG 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees' • LCC specifications • Standards/codes of practice relating to Bio-Security	100% of work compliant with relevant standards	Operational Highways Forestry team/Forestry Group

Biodiversity and climate change

Ash dieback

Ash die-back has been identified across much of Leicestershire and the effects of the disease are likely to have a significant and detrimental impact on the county's rural landscapes. The County Council has produced an Ash Die-back Action Plan, identifying the procedures and resources which need to be put in place to manage the effects of the disease.

Priorities	Key actions	Key performance indicators/ Timescales	Lead	Budget £'s
Ash Dieback (ADB)	Provide an annual ADB inspection report	Annual – March 2020 onwards	Forestry Group	£400k (19/20)
	Implement a programme of inspections	% of inspections completed to plan	Forestry Group	
	Ensure all tree wardens and highway inspectors are appropriately trained to identify the disease and report as appropriate	2019-2020	Forestry Group/E&T	
	Develop and implement a tree replacements scheme to mitigate against the effects of ADB	By March 2020	Forestry Group/E&T	

Woodland Management

The County Council owns some 400 hectares of woodland on its country park and county farm land holdings. Appropriate areas of woodland could be put into active management under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, administered by the Forestry Commission . There is currently a potential to generate up to £25K per annum

Priorities	Key actions	Timescales	Lead
Woodland Management	Identify and map all areas of woodland under LCC ownership	2020	Forestry Group
	Identify and carry out appropriate prescriptions of woodland management works	2020	Forestry Group
	Develop a the woodland management plan and obtain approval from the FC/NE for implementation	Plan approval 2020 Implementation - 2021-2026	Forestry Group
	Apply to the Forestry Commission to obtain Countryside Stewardship funding	2020-2021	Forestry Group

300

Tree Planting

Leicestershire today is one of least wooded counties in the country. The potential effects of Ash Die-back will further contribute to the decline of trees in the county. The need for increased tree cover, both globally and locally is well document as a major action to mitigate climate change.

We need to plant more trees !

The County Council has actively planted trees for many years and has been a major supporter of the National Forest converting over 200 hectares of farmland and derelict land within Leicestershire into new woodland. The county council has also supported tree planting on private land through a variety of planting initiatives. The current initiatives which support planting on private land include : -

Free Trees Scheme – providing up to 400 specimen trees per annum for planting as new individuals within the landscape

MoreHedges – for planting a new native hedgerow with hedgerow trees. Applicants are required to contribute 20% of the costs.

MoreWoods – for planting a new native woodland of 0.5ha (1.25acres) in size. Applicants are required to contribute 20% of the costs.

Targeting Tree Disease packs – offer landowners and farmers free tree packs to help renew and restore existing woodland and hedges under threat from tree diseases such as Ash Dieback.

The above schemes are funded from service budgets and are supported by the Woodland Trust and from landowner contributions

Tree Planting – Target Programme

SITE TYPE	SITE	AREA	PROJECT	PLANTING	TREE NOS	LCC CONTRIBUTION	GRANTS AND FUNDING	TOTAL COSTS
PRIVATE LAND (Current Programme)	Various	n/a	Free Tree Scheme	2019/20	400	£5K	£3K	£8K
		n/a	More Hedges	2019/20	1K new hedges + 250 trees		}	
		n/a	More Woods	2019/20		£7K	} £15,700	£22,880
		n/a	Disease Tree Packs	2019/20			}	
PRIVATE LAND (Expanded Programme)	Various	n/a	Free Tree Scheme	2020/21	4000	£70K	To be negotiated	£80K
		n/a	More Hedges	2020/21	2K new hedges + 1000 trees		}	
		n/a	More Woods	2020/21		£10K	} To be negotiated	£25K
		n/a	Disease Tree Packs	2020/21			}	
HIGHWAY VERGES	Various	n/a	On-going planting programme	2019/20	100	£20K	n/a	£20K
COUNTRY PARKS	Market Bosworth	3.5 ha	Celebration Wood	2020/21	40	NIL	Donations	£8K
COUNTY FARMS	Within NF	10 ha	e.g. Scamhazel Farm	2020/21	12,000	NIL	£150K (CLS)	£100K
COUNTY FARMS	Outside NF	5 ha	e.g. Another farm	2020/21	8,000	NIL	£30K (FC WCG)	£30K

We will monitor our progress by reporting each quarter on : -

"Fit for purpose service"	
Reduction in backlog of inspections	No of inspections completed
Reduction in backlog of highways tree work	No of works completed Oldest date of outstanding work request
Tree Management	
Routine Inspections Specialist Inspections Low Risk Trees High Risk Trees	Annual - %/number completed on time Every 3 years- %/number completed on time Every 6 years - %/number completed on time Every 18 months- %/number completed on time
Hazard posing imminent danger (Category 1a) Urgent Works (Category 1b) High Priority Works (Category 2) Routine Works (Category 3) Annually Programmed Works (Category 4)	Same Day - %/number completed on time 24 -48 hours - %/number completed on time 28 Days - %/number completed on time 3 Months - %/number completed on time 12 Months - %/number completed on time
Tree related subsidence	Initial inspection within x days completed
Emergency response	No. of incidents responded to
Standards of work (target 100% compliance)	% compliance
Tree Planting	Number of new trees planted annually

15

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