



SERVICE PROCEDURE

TREE MANAGEMENT

NUMBER: 08/038

SHEET NO: 1 of 8

ISSUE NO: 1A

EFFECTIVE DATE FROM:
23rd March 2016

ORIGINATOR:AW/EC

APPROVED: AB

AMENDMENT

No.	DATE	REASON FOR CHANGE	MADE BY
A	OCT 17	AMEND TO HIMMS AND DELETE AREA MAPS	AW/EC

INTRODUCTION

Trees are a significant and important landscape feature in Cumbria. They provide a range of environmental benefits such as releasing oxygen, locking in carbon, filtering out air pollutants and creating wildlife habitats.

However trees can be a risk to both people and property in the event of failure, and should be managed and maintained.

The Cumbria County Council will adopt a risk-based approach to tree risk management applying the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment methodology to prioritised programme of regular inspections.

The aims of the inspection process are to:

- Identify risks from potentially hazardous trees
- Identify tree stock located in urban areas
- Specify measures to address such hazards
- Maintain records of inspections and works
- Identify appropriate periods for (re)inspection cycles
- Allocate resources appropriately

INSPECTION

The highway trees/property trees will be inspected by a suitably qualified person. This could be a Cumbria County Council employee, or Contractor; this competent person will be referred to in this document as a Tree Officer. The inspections are carried out as and when requested by the Highway Network Teams/Property team or as part of cyclical inspections. Initially all requests from the public regarding Highway issues should be logged through **HIMs** and be investigated by the Highway Officer / Steward, and where the tree requires further inspection, a request for an inspection should be sent to the Tree Officer via HIMs, and any further information sent to trees@cumbria.gov.uk.

All requests from Head Teachers / Asset Management Officers (Property) should be emailed to trees@cumbria.gov.uk where they will be picked up by the Tree Officer.

Where the Tree Officer recommends that an external surveying contractor is to be used this will be subject to Senior Managerial approval.

The tree is assessed on site and information collated using a tablet computer device. The information collected should include location, species, surrounding surface, maturity, vigour, defects and risk (this list is not exhaustive) plus any comments to assist in facilitating maintenance work. Where areas are found with no trees or trees that have been removed this should also be noted to ensure information retained on the tree inventory is accurate. The information is then to be downloaded on to HIMMS Data base and information is exported to ATRIUM data base for Property trees. If a tablet is not available then the information will be collected as Street Tree Safety Assessment – Visual Ground Inspection Hazard Survey Form – Appendix 1 (for highways trees), and past site Tree Survey reports (Property Trees). A photograph is taken for each tree or group of trees (and major defects), the tree is plotted on GIS and a 12 figure map reference is calculated.



SERVICE PROCEDURE

TREE MANAGEMENT

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SHEET NO: 2 of 8

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A report is produced for each road inspected or property site and an overall report produced for each area and all information forwarded to the appropriate Highways Officer who requested the survey, or Site User (Property).

DEFECTS

Defects identified from the inspections carried out by the Tree Officer will be categorised as follows:

- **Emergency Priority (E)** – This indicates that the tree or part of a tree presents immediate risk to site users. Work must be carried out without delay using either a trained employee or an approved contractor. It may be necessary in extreme situations that the Tree Officer should stay on site until support arrives to either divert traffic away from the danger or close the road to deal with the situation. This falls in line with other service procedures dealing with “2 hour dangerous defects”. If necessary after the situation is made safe further inspection by the Tree Officer may be required to determine additional actions.
- **High Priority (P1)** – This indicates that there is a safety issue with a tree or part of a tree, but the tree does not present an immediate risk to the site user. Work needs to be carried out as soon as reasonably practical.
- **Medium Priority (P2)** – This indicates that there is a minor safety issue with a tree or part of a tree, but the tree does not present a risk to the site user. Work needs to be carried out for aesthetic reasons and good tree management. The completion of the works will reduce future costs and safety issues as well as potentially improving the trees longevity.
- **Low Priority (P3)** - This indicates that there is an issue with a tree or part of a tree, but the tree does not present a risk to the site user. Work needs to be carried out for aesthetic reasons and good tree management. The completion of the works will further reduce future costs and safety issues as well as potentially improving the trees longevity.
- **Monitor** – This indicates that part of the tree has sustained some damage and as such may decline over time. Monitoring for signs of decline may help prevent the tree or part of the tree becoming a risk to site users.
- **No Works Required (NWR)** – This is a comment about a tree, but not a defect and as such requires no remedial works to rectify the issue.

In the case of trees on land owned by other parties, the land owner is contacted and requested to remedy the situation.

Responsibility for initiating actions rests with the relevant Highways Network Manager for highway trees, the Head Teacher for School trees and the Asset Management Officer (Property) for trees on other County Council owned properties The Tree Officer will assist with advice on request and must be informed of the actions taken in respect of the recommendations made.



SERVICE PROCEDURE

TREE MANAGEMENT

NUMBER: 08/038

SHEET NO: 3 of 8

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No.	DATE	REASON FOR CHANGE	MADE BY
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Council owned trees will not be pruned or felled as a result of complaints that they are causing interference with television or satellite reception, interfering with performance of solar panels, shading, obstructing of views, causing root invasion, depositing leaves, honeydew, flowers etc., containing birds' nests or harbouring insects. Further information will be published on the Cumbria County Council website on dealing with complaints about trees.

TREES ADJACENT TO ROADS AND COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Branches causing an obstruction to the passage of vehicles, streetlights, road signs and other street furniture will be managed to maintain vehicular and pedestrian safety on the highway.

Where trees on private land adjacent to the highway are identified as posing an unacceptable risk on users of the highway, the Highway Network Team will contact the landowners to inform them of the danger and the landowner's responsibilities to remove the danger. Where necessary, a notice will be issued under section 154 of the Highways Act (Appendix 2) to require works to be undertaken with a reasonable timescale for the completion of works stated. If the landowner fails to act within the timescale requested then work will be undertaken in default by Cumbria County Council and costs recovery sought.

ORDERING WORKS

In the case of Highway trees where defect works are at ground level and/or low risk this work can be carried out the Council's Highway Operatives with relevant skills and training. In other cases where specialist knowledge is required or the work is to be carried out at height the works should be ordered from the Contractors on the Framework. The decision of what work is ordered is the responsibility of the Highway Network Managers/Head Teachers / Asset Management Officer (Property).

Where trees are sited within Conservation Areas or are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, before commencing any work, a letter of intent must be submitted to the local District or Borough Council and National Park Authorities (a section 211 notice) and work can commence once consent is gained.

It should also be noted the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for protecting birds, their nests and their eggs, and Bats and their Roosts be taken into account; when carrying out the tree works it is essential that reasonable steps are taken to avoid destroying the nest of any wild bird or bat roosts which is in use or being built.

Forestry Commission should be informed with a courtesy call if a tree is going to be felled, this is to comply with The Forestry (Felling of Trees) (Amendment) Regulation 1987 (Felling Licences).

In any calendar quarter a maximum of 5 cubic meters can be felled without a licence on land managed by Cumbria County Council, after this, a Felling Licence will need to be obtained.

There are exceptions where certain types of felling do not need permission and these can be found on the Forestry Commission website.



SERVICE PROCEDURE

TREE MANAGEMENT

NUMBER: 08/038

SHEET NO: 4 of 8

ISSUE NO: 1A

EFFECTIVE DATE FROM:
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CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

Surveys are carried out to improve those areas where information is incomplete regarding the condition and location of highway and property trees. When this information is comprehensive cyclical maintenance can be planned.

Risk Zone	Inspection Frequency	Inspected by	Method
High Roads in urban areas, grounds to buildings, car parks.	2 years Facilities and 3 years Highway.	Tree Officer	Street tree survey in urban areas. QTRA methodology. Arborist, walked survey, Individual tree data recorded where appropriate.
Medium Planned priority winter gritting routes (P1/P2/P3) outside urban areas	5 years on a rolling programme	Tree Officer	Drive-by survey following strategic gritting routes. QTRA methodology. Drive-by survey, High risk trees recorded only.
Low All other areas / roads	Ad Hoc and reactive	Highways Operatives and local site managers.	Drive-by survey/ walked survey - dangerous trees recorded.

Monitored trees and high usage roads with mature /declining stock will be inspected once a year via a drive`-by inspection by the Tree Officer and comments made where needed about the condition of the trees.

Any works resulting from defects found in the cyclical inspections shall be ordered the same as above.

REFERENCES

- Health and Safety Procedure Number 33 Tree Safety Management
- BS 3998:2010 Tree Work. Recommendations. British Standards Institute <http://shop.bsigroup.com/en/ProductDetail/?pid=000000000030089960>
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.



**SERVICE
PROCEDURE**

TREE MANAGEMENT

NUMBER: 08/038

SHEET NO: 5 of 8

ISSUE NO: 1A

EFFECTIVE DATE FROM:
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ORIGINATOR:AW/EC

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AMENDMENT

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- Forestry Commission – Felling Licences -
[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/treefellingaugust.pdf/\\$FILE/treefellingaugust.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/treefellingaugust.pdf/$FILE/treefellingaugust.pdf)



**SERVICE
PROCEDURE**

TREE MANAGEMENT

NUMBER: 08/038

SHEET NO: 6 of 8

ISSUE NO: 1A

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APPENDIX 1

**Cumbria County Council
Highway Tree Safety Assessment – Visual Ground Inspection
Hazard Survey Form**

Date:		Weather:		Plan No:		Ref No:	
Tag No:		Location:		Surrounding Surface			
Species:		DBH:		Height:			
Maturity:	Juvenile	Early Mature	Semi Mature	Mature	Over Mature		
Vigour:	High	Moderate	Low	Dead			

Defects

[Empty box for Defects]

Notes

[Empty box for Notes]



SERVICE PROCEDURE

TREE MANAGEMENT

NUMBER: 08/038

SHEET NO: 7 of 8

ISSUE NO: 1A

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APPENDIX 2

Date
 Your reference:
 Our reference:

The Owner/Occupier
 Address

Dear Sir/Madam,

HAZARDOUS TREES ADJACENT TO THE HIGHWAY

HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 SECTION 154 (1)

(CUT ADJACENT TO ADDRESS)

I understand that you are the owner or occupier of the land on which the above hedge(s), tree(s), or shrub(s) is growing in such a way so as:

(to endanger or obstruct the passage of pedestrians and/or vehicles)

Arboricultural staff have identified a/hazardous tree/s which is/are believed to be in your ownership. The location of the tree/s is/are shown on the attached plan and a brief description of the defect and remedial work required to rectify the hazard is given in the attached information.

Please ensure that the recommended tree work is completed within the next month of receiving this letter.

When the work has been completed please inform us by using the information in the letter head. This will prevent us from having to contact you again.
 If the tree/s is/are not in your ownership please inform us.

Failure to carry out the required work or informing us when the work has been completed will result in a statutory notice under **section 154** of the **Highways Act 1980** being served on you, requiring you to complete the work within (the next 14 days.)

Please note that the County Council survey is limited to inspect from the roadside and as such is not a comprehensive survey. Therefore you may wish to have the tree/s fully inspected by a qualified arboriculturalist to determine its/their overall health and condition prior to completing the required work.



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We can provide details of the tree surgeons that are approved to work on County Council sites, upon request.

For your information, a minimum clearance of at least 2 meters (6'6") from the carriageway edge and 5 meters (16'6") above any carriageway and 2.440 meters (8'0") above any footway or highway verge is required.

Before commencing any work it is advisable to contact your local District or Borough Council or National Park Authority to establish if the tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or is situated in a Conservation Area and follow the appropriate procedures.

Your attention is also drawn to the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for protecting birds, their nests and their eggs. When carrying out the necessary work to make your hedge(s), tree(s) or shrub(s) safe you must ensure that you take reasonable steps to avoid destroying the nest of any wild bird which is in use or being built.

Your co-operation in dealing promptly with this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Better Highways (Area)