

Tree Policy - Harston Recreation Ground

Historical background

Formal Agreement Regarding Trees

Planning permission (S/0105/84/F) was obtained by Harston Parish Council in 1984 to use the land to the rear of the Limes as a recreation ground with a number of conditions relating to the trees.

A landscaping scheme was submitted for approval and a 'screen belt' of trees was planted on the west boundary of the site. A ransom strip of clear land 3m wide should be left between the fence and the first row of trees. The landscaping (87/622) scheme was approved in 1988.

In 2016 the Parish Council applied for a Discharge of Condition on Condition 7 (*no tree shall be topped lopped or cut down and no shrubs or hedges shall be cut down without the approval of the local planning authority*) of the original planning application. This application S/1941/16DC was granted and Condition 7 removed.

Informal Agreement Regarding Trees

HPC agreed, and minuted, in 1987 that all trees planted in the 'screen belt' should not be 'in excess of 25/30ft in height'.

Essential Tree Work

HPC has a 'duty of care' with regard to trees on the recreation ground so trees should be inspected informally by the parish council regularly and annually. Any concerns should be referred to SCDC tree inspector. In case of emergency the parish council can invoke Standing Order 18.1 to ensure tree work is carried out immediately - *any emergency business will be handled by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and one other Councillor. Actions will be reported promptly to the Council.*

Maintenance

Regular maintenance is needed on the trees from a safety point of view, as well as to keep to the agreements, formal and informal. The parish council has accepted the advice of the SCDC tree inspector that the trees be monitored and annually inspected. The trees should be independently inspected every three years by SCDC tree inspector or a tree surgeon and work undertaken as advised.

The next independent inspection should be carried out in 2019.

Any tree surgeons employed should have the necessary certificates and public liability up to £5M.

Requests for tree surgery from residents

If the tree identified meets the requirements of the planning application and the formal and informal agreements noted above, and is NOT a safety issue, then there is no requirement for the parish council to carry out the work. However, the parish council would consider requests for tree surgery on a case by case basis. However, in such cases, the resident themselves would be responsible for arranging the work, paying for the work and obtaining final clearance from the parish council, with evidence of safety and risk assessment policies in place, to allow the work.

Agreed at HPC meeting -