



# PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Tree safety management policy

Pucklechurch Parish Council (PPC) as a tree owner has a direct responsibility to ensure that trees on PPC owned land do not pose a danger to the public or property. To address this risk the PPC has produced this Tree Safety Management Policy.

The Policy will ensure:

- An overall assessment of risk is completed to identify high, medium and low risk trees;
- A system of tree inspections is in operation in relation to risk;
- A record of trees and inspections is retained;
- Staff who carry out inspections are competent to do so;
- Work identified through the inspection programme to be undertaken by suitably qualified contractors.

Pucklechurch Parish Council recognises that trees are an important conservation and amenity resource to the area, but that they can present risk to the public if they are not managed properly. Operation of this policy will enable the PPC to mitigate tree risks to as low a level as is reasonably practicable. This policy seeks to manage the risks associated with trees using a risk-based approach which requires the inspection of trees belonging to the PPC to assess whether they represent a risk to life or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate.

Owners of trees have a legal duty of care and are obliged to take all reasonable care to ensure that any foreseeable hazards can be identified and made safe. Although it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of a tree failing, there are often indications that a tree may be in decline, have structural faults or be suffering from decay or pests and diseases. Many of these signs can be recognised by trained inspectors who can then instigate further investigations by a qualified arboriculturist.

The safe and appropriate management of its trees is important to the PPC who want to ensure that a balance is maintained between public safety, whilst sustaining a healthy tree population with the benefits it provides. Like all living organisms, trees are subject to decline and collapse and they can be damaged physically or invaded by pathogenic organisms. As trees deteriorate they are increasingly likely to shed limbs or fall in strong winds and the potential to cause harm increases.

Ancient and decaying trees are often beautiful and uniquely valuable as habitat for wildlife and, however poor the physical condition of a tree, remedial action is only necessary where there is a clearly perceptible risk to life or property. This might mean removing part of the tree or



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reducing the level of public access in the vicinity. Trees are integral to most natural land-based ecosystems, providing a wide range of ecosystem services to humankind, including mitigating the harmful effects of climate change as well as assisting with climate adaption. Trees are an important part of the economy. They bring communities together, playing a part in their cultural and spiritual values and aesthetic appreciation. Their importance is recognised in international, national and local government policies, and many non-governmental organisations have policies dedicated to conserving trees and their biodiversity.

### **Level 1 Tree Inspection Course**

The PPC will ensure a Councillor, employee or contractor who holds a level 1 Tree Inspection Course qualification based on the Lantra Basic Tree Inspection Course where individuals are trained to look for obvious defects, record them and provide a report of their findings. The types of defects that an inspector is trained to look for are detailed below:

- Fungal fruiting bodies (at the base or on the trunk and branches)
- Dieback of the crown – i.e. foliage not dense, foliage not the right colour or size
- Dieback and dead branches (especially on species that are not oaks)
- Dead trees
- Detached branches, hanging branches or branches lodged within the canopy
- Compression forks or cracks and splits
- Major or numerous cavities
- Dead bark
- Significant bulges
- Evidence of root damage or severance



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## Inspection period

The physical inspection of each risk area will identify trees that have defects that need to be monitored further in accordance with the individual tree inspection programme noted below.

<b>Risk Zone</b>	<b>Inspection Period</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
High	Professional inspection to be undertaken every 2 years or annually if agreed on professional advice.	A mature/ veteran tree where there is public access on PPC owned land i.e. Recreation Field, Community Centre and St Aldams
Medium	Professional inspection to be undertaken every 3 years or more frequently if agreed on professional advice.	A semi-mature tree where there is public access on PPC owned land i.e. Recreation Field, Community Centre and St Aldams
Low	Professional inspection to be undertaken every 4 years or more frequently if agreed on professional advice.	A young tree where there is public access on PPC owned land i.e. Recreation Field, Community Centre and St Aldams

In addition the appointed person will undertake an annual tree inspection of all trees on PPC owned land.



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## Individual Tree Inspection Programme

Sites will be inspected according to the frequency determined by the risk zones table shown above by a professional arboriculturist who will be required to provide a written report to the PPC.

In addition annual checks by the appointed person will be recorded on a site tree inspection form and forwarded to the Parish Clerk. Where a tree with significant defects is identified as being potentially hazardous, immediately action will be taken using a professional arboriculturist.

The inspection should be recorded providing a means of monitoring changing tree condition.

## Tree Replacements

Any tree that is felled as result of the tree inspection programme should be replaced with a tree of an appropriate species. The priority for tree replacement programmes is as follows:

- Trees with Tree Preservation Orders;
- Trees in conservation areas;

## Monitoring

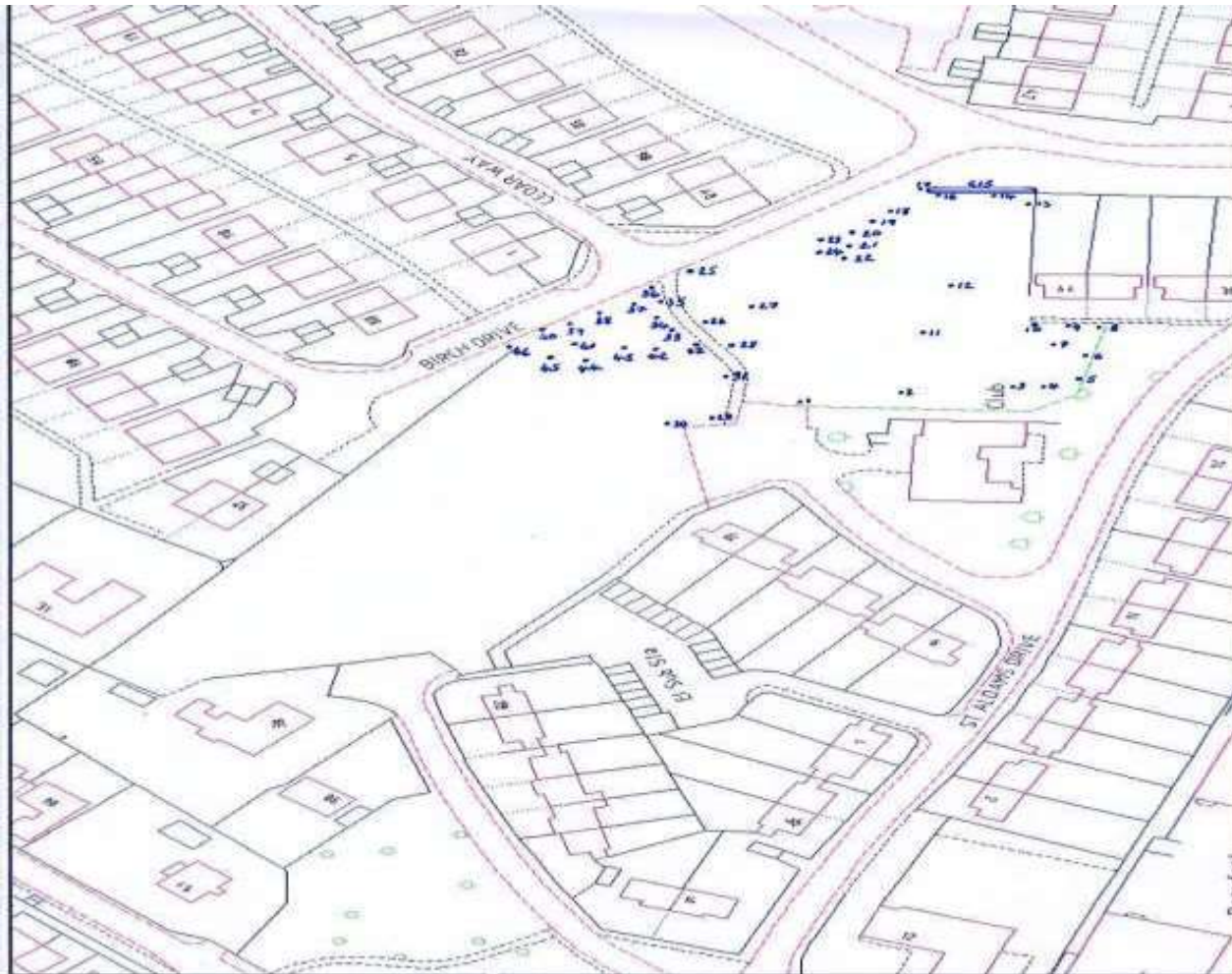
In order to ensure adherence to the Tree Safety Management policy, adequate tree inspection records must be kept for 10 years.

The PPC will ensure that the Tree Safety Management Policy is kept under constant review and is formally reviewed at least every 5 years.

**This Tress Safety Management Policy was adopted by the Parish Council at a meeting of the Council held on 4th February 2015**



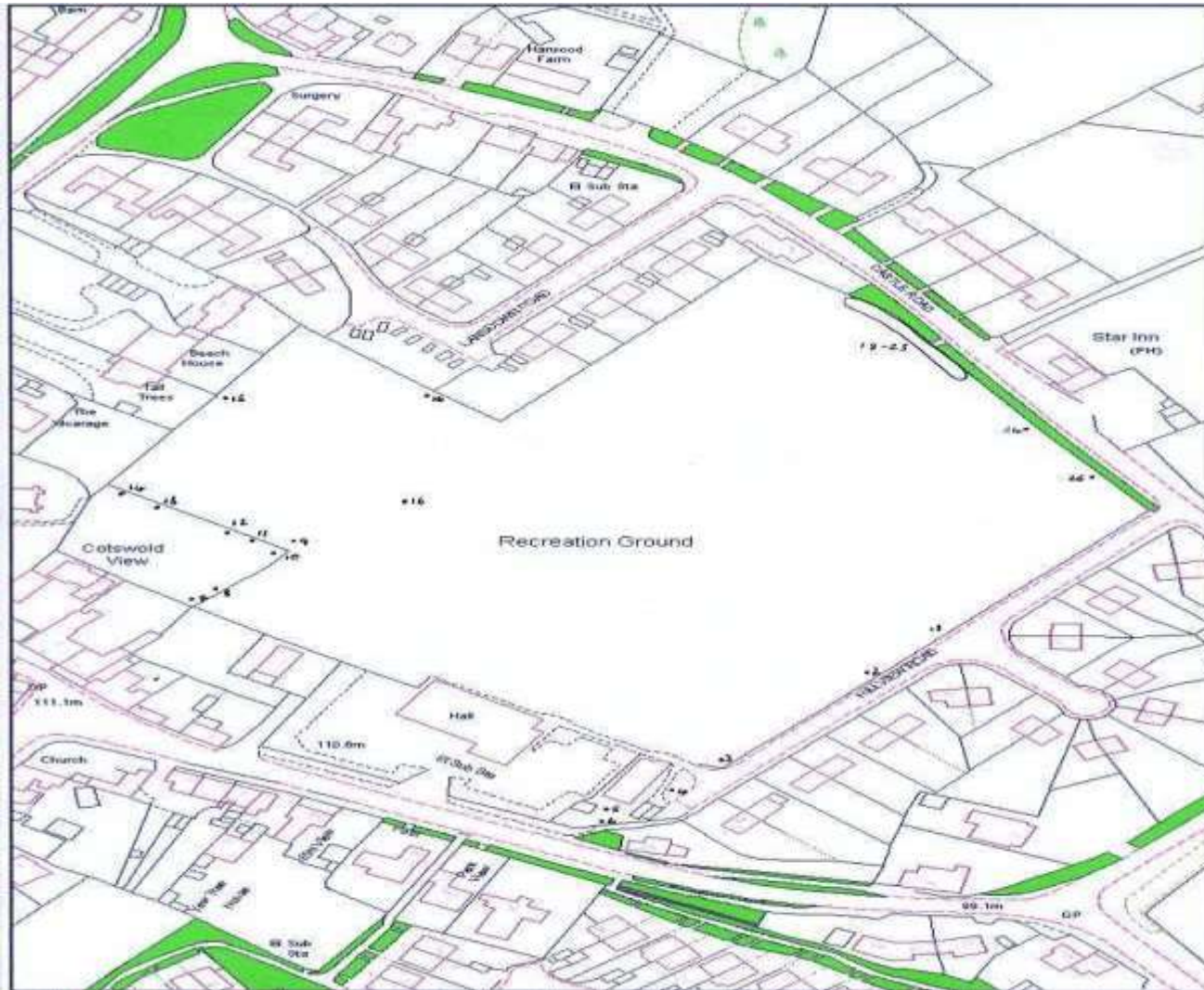
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**APPENDIX MAP OF PUCKLECHURCH PARISH COUNCIL TREES.**



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## BASIC TREE SURVEY PRO- FORMA

<b>Surveyor:</b>		<b>Location:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>			

Tree no	Species	Height (m)	Trunk diam (cm) measured at 1.5m	Crown radius (m)	Vigour low / normal	Age	Surrounding features	Condition	Recommendations / Priority	
									Action?	Notes



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### Key to Basic Tree Survey Pro-forma

**Tree no:** Refer to plan or sketch

**Species:** Botanical name, common name or description (e.g. 'conifer', 'broadleaf')

**Height:** Tree height approximately measured in metres to top of crown

**Age:**

NP	Newly planted
Y	Young
MA	Mid-aged
M	Mature
OM	Over mature

**Condition**

:	Good	Healthy, full crown, long life expectancy, no significant defects
	Fair	Generally healthy, some thinning of crown, some defects of low significance, limited life expectancy
	Poor	Lacking vigour, short life expectancy, sparse leaf cover, significant defects
	Dangerous/dead	Urgent removal required

Include observations of relevant information e.g. leaning over road, branch habit, tree defects etc.



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**Action required:** This allows you to record whether further action is required, Complete 'Yes' or 'No'

**Priority:** If 'Action required' column states 'Yes', specify level of urgency for professional arboricultural inspection:

- A Urgent action required: If necessary, phone line manager / arboriculturist for immediate action
- B Further inspection required within one month
- C Further inspection required within six months

If action column states 'No' provide comments to justify leaving the tree for a specified period before inspection (only trees in 'Good; condition will automatically justify 'No' in the Action column

Taken from Lantra Work book Basic tree  
Survey and Inspection

Adopted	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2015
Reviewed	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2016 Agenda item 10c