

Harwell Parish Council

Policy for Trees and the Maintenance of Public Open Spaces

Trees

1. Harwell Parish Council (the Council) wishes to protect and enhance the Parish's environment and with this in mind will maintain the trees for which it is responsible and encourage tree planting in suitable locations.
2. For the trees on Council owned land:-
 - i) The Clerk will obtain the Council's approval for all significant work, either at Council or Committee meeting.
 - ii) The Clerk will:-
 - a) Where applicable take advice from the Vale WHDC's Arboricultural Officer;
 - b) Ensure that the proposed work conforms to any relevant legislation, in particular that applying to the Conservation Area;
 - c) Ensure that the work is carried out by suitably qualified and equipped persons.
3. Proposals to plant trees on Council-owned land should be brought before the Council with information regarding the eventual height and spread, and the suitability of the species on the particular site.
4. Council staff will not carry out any work on trees not located within Council-owned land, except with the landowner's permission.

Maintenance of Public Open Spaces

5. For work on land not owned by the Council, the Clerk will liaise with the landowner, and request that the work is done. This includes liaising with Oxford County Council as the Highways Authority and owner of the roads and most of the roadside verges and pavements. Within the parish, the Council has a contract with OCC to cut the grass on the verges. In certain areas such as North Drive and the new housing such as The Willows, Greenwood Meadows etc, the public open space is the responsibility of a management company. If needed the Parish Council will liaise with the management companies, but will not do any work on their land, unless specifically contracted to do so. The PC does not currently maintain any POS within the Great Western Park development.
6. Landowners are responsible for making sure their hedges and other plants do not overhang or partially block a footpath. The Council will notify landowners of overhanging branches requiring attention, if no action is taken the Council will notify the owner of the footpath (typically, but not always, the OCC). The Council will only cut overhanging branches with the explicit permission of the owner of the land from which the branches are growing, and with the permission of the owner of the land, e.g. the footpath over which the branches are hanging.

Note:

The Vale WHDC has a document on its website covering its Tree Policy. This gives the main restriction applying to the Conservation Area, and lists legislation that may be relevant, such as BS 3998 and The Town & Country Planning Act 1990.