

Tree Management Policy

Policy Statement & Purpose

Bromford is committed to providing a safe and healthy living environment for all customers so far as reasonably practicable. This Tree Management Policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities for trees assets within our housing community.

This policy explains:

- (a) the importance of the policy and what it identifies
 - (b) the process for adhering to the policy
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Scope

This policy outlines how Bromford manages its tree assets, establishing clear procedures for maintenance, safety inspections, and the implementation of both planned and emergency works.

Principles

Compliance – Bromford is responsible for the monitoring and management of all its tree assets, ensuring strict adherence to the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Bromford will ensure all colleagues are aware of the relevant legislation and take steps accordingly.

Best practice – Bromford will ensure all colleagues and contractors are vigilant and alert to any signs of disease or damage to our tree assets and will know how to act upon any concerns they may have.

Partnership Working – Bromford actively collaborates with local authorities to manage protected trees effectively. We ensure all necessary permissions are obtained before undertaking any work on trees with preservation orders or those within conservation areas, while maintaining our ability to respond swiftly to emergencies.

Responsibilities

Customers:

- Customers are responsible for maintaining trees located in their gardens.
 - Where a customer is concerned that a tree poses a health and safety risk to people or property surrounding the tree, Bromford will undertake an inspection to assess the risk and to carry out any 'make safe' works necessary.
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- If customers have concerns about a tree, they should report this by calling the Customer Contact Centre, submitting a request via the online reporting channels or by contacting their local Neighbourhood Coach.
 - Trees planted by the customer are the customer's responsibility to maintain and customers are expected to keep the trees below a height of 3 meters. Where it is necessary for Bromford to undertake 'make safe' works to trees planted by the customer to ensure the safety of people and property around it, the costs of works will be rechargeable to the customer.

Bromford:

- All Bromford employees and contractors have duty of care to report any tree issues that could pose potential risk.
- We will maintain trees in our communal areas.
- We will intervene in cases where the trees pose significant risk to life or property.
- We will carry out the works necessary to support vulnerable customers with reasonable adjustments.

Neighbourhood Coaches:

- As part of their annual reviews, Neighbourhood Coaches will identify potential risk relating to tree issues that they feel could cause significant injury or damage to either life or asset.
- Neighbourhood Coaches need to ensure that all tree related cases are logged on the Customer Experience Portal (CE) and reported as a new tree enquiry.

Contact Centre:

- In the event of a tree related incident requiring 'immediate action' due to a risk to life or property, the Contact Centre will promptly notify the Programme Support Planner or tree manager with the details. Examples of emergency tree concerns include a large branch or tree obstructing a roadway, a tree leaning dangerously, or a fallen tree that has damaged a structure or vehicle. The Contact Centre will provide the customer's contact details and address along with the description of the concern via phone or email as a first line of support. Following the initial report the Contact Centre will need to raise a CE case reporting as a new tree enquiry.
- All non-emergency tree related issues reported to the Contact Centre have to be logged on CE as a new tree enquiry. Any trees that are not logged on CE will not be dealt with.

Programme Support Planner (Planned Team):

- Upon receipt of the call or CE Case from Neighbourhood coach or Contact Centre, the Programme Support Planner will record the request and plan for the tree to be inspected by a qualified inspector/arborist or surveyor.
- Following the inspection, the tree surveyor will make a detailed report of the tree's health and condition and record:
 - Name of inspector,
 - Date and time of inspection,
 - Tree type/species,
 - Condition at the time of inspection,
 - The current risk level the tree poses at the time of inspection.
 - Any remedial action required.

- Following the inspection, any identified remedial work will be programmed in based on its risk factor detailed in the table below:

Emergency	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
48 hours	3 months	6 months	12 months

- Where possible all tree work will be undertaken by inhouse trained arborists. Where risk is identified as beyond our expertise, the programme support planner will instruct an approved specialist contractor to attend in our absence.

Arboriculture Contractor:

- Bromford use approved contractors for specialised tree work, all have been assessed and conform to the standards and legislation as recorded under the section heading Legislative Requirements.
- Contractor upon receipt of requests will contact the customer to arrange a site visit to assess and price required remedial work. They will also contact the local tree officer to ensure tree preservation orders (TPO) and conservation areas are identified and managed prior to any works taking place. Following this, where appropriate, the programme support planner will instruct the contractor to commence work at an agreed time and date.

Processes

Tree Work Requests:

- Substantial pruning of a tree can often weaken its structure and should therefore be avoided for reasons other than reducing risk of harm to people or property. Pruning for any other reasons would be exceptional and at the discretion of the arboriculture contracts manager or the landscaping and trees programme manager.

Trees Blocking Natural Light:

- Bromford will not prune or fell a tree owned or managed by the group to improve natural light to a property unless it is required by a court order to do so, or under extreme circumstances which have been identified as such through a tree assessment by a qualified inspector/arborist or surveyor.

Leaf Fall from Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell a tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce leaf fall or remove fallen leaves. The loss of leaves from trees in the autumn is part of the natural cycle and cannot be avoided by pruning. The falling of leaves onto a neighbouring property is not regarded in law as a statutory nuisance.

Sap from Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell a tree owned or managed by the group to prevent or reduce honeydew or other sticky residue falling onto private property. Sap is a vital element of a trees structure providing suppleness to its trunk and limbs. Sap is what gives trees the ability to flex and move during windy/stormy weather conditions. Honeydew is caused by greenfly (aphids) feeding on the sap from the leaves and

excreting their sugary, sticky waste. Pruning the tree may only offer temporary relief and any re-growth is often more likely to be colonised by greenfly thereby potentially increasing the problem. Trees also release overproduced sap during hot conditions known as a sap pressure release.

Blossom from Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce blossom fall from trees or remove fallen blossom. Blossom is a natural occurrence, which cannot be avoided by pruning and is not regarded in law as a statutory nuisance.

Bird Droppings from Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce bird droppings from the tree or remove bird droppings from private land or property. Bird droppings may be a seasonal nuisance, but the problem is not considered to be a sufficient reason to prune or remove a tree. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and other related wildlife law).

Fruit, Berries & Nuts from Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce the occurrence of fruit, berries or nuts falling onto footways or private land. Fruit trees such as apple, cherry and pear are welcomed in many locations with the added benefit of providing free food.

Wildlife and Insects in Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to remove or reduce incidence of Bees, Wasps and other insects or wild animals. Bees are a protected species, and advice should be taken before considering their removal.

Satellite, Television and Other Communications Reception Blocked by Trees:

- Bromford will not prune or fell any tree owned or managed by the group to enable or ease installation or improve reception of satellite or television receivers. It may be that the satellite or TV provider will be able to suggest an alternative solution to the problem, for example relocating the aerial/dish or means to boost the signal.

Legislative or Regulatory Requirements

Bromford seeks to comply with all current and relevant statutory obligations, including the following where applicable:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986
- Control of Pollution Act 1989
- Control of Waste Regulations 1991
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Habitat Regulations 1994

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- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
 - Environmental Protection Act 1990
 - Occupiers Liability Act 1957
 - Housing Act 2004 - Housing Health and Safety Rating System
 - Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
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Assurance Framework

Bromford has adopted the ‘three lines of assurance’ model. It is built upon Bromford’s strong control culture and organisational delegation of responsibility. It is the responsibility of managerial and supervisory colleagues within business units who use the policy to ensure that the policy is communicated and effectively implemented, and to ensure colleagues are aware of their responsibilities. Adhering to policy and underpinning procedures ensures we continue to operate within our overall risk appetite as a business. We will monitor compliance with this policy as a part of weekly tree team performance meetings and will provide regular feedback to our Neighbourhoods and Communities and Customer Contact Centre teams to ensure consistent and transparent approach.

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Author: Nora Ragze
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