



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

TREE POLICY

Adopted: 2021/09/30

Updated: 2024

Box parish council recognises the risks and benefits from trees and will manage them in a balanced way to maximise those benefits whilst taking reasonable and practicable precautions to protect the safety of its members, contractors and members of the public. The council will manage the risks in a prioritised way whilst seeking to maintain or enhance the overall asset value. Remedial works must aim to be reasonable and practicable in relation to the risks posed.

Box parish council has a proactive approach to tree maintenance. However, only essential/minimal works will be undertaken to manage a tree because the Council supports a policy of tree preservation. The type of works undertaken will depend on the tree's location, the species of tree and its state of health at that time.

Tree work will be prioritised and carried out according to identified hazard and risk. After investigation and inspection, the council will produce a programme of works within the available budgets. The emphasis will be on planned, rather than reactive, tree maintenance. Tree maintenance will be conducted by trained council staff or by contractors subject to the nature of the work.

Trees add enormous value to the environment and to human experience. Box parish council will aim to abide by The NTSG (National tree safety group's) five key principles and taking account of the Health and Safety Executive's Section Information Note 01/2007/05:

- trees provide a wide variety of benefits to society
- trees are living organisms that naturally lose branches or fall
- the overall risk to human safety is extremely low
- tree owners have a legal duty of care
- tree owners should take a balanced and proportionate approach to tree safety management.

This policy covers all areas that contain trees for which Box Parish Council is responsible:

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| ● The Recreation ground (inc the Lovar Garden) | managed by the Playing fields committee |
| ● Box Hill Common and Thoday Wood | managed by Box Hill & Rudloe committee |
| ● Lacy Woods | managed by Box Hill & Rudloe committee |
| ● The Cemetery grounds | managed by Cemetery committee |

Although there is public access to all these areas all of the time Box Parish council will consider 'zoning' splitting sites up into areas depending on volume of use, focusing the most resources on the highest risk areas.

The Council will carry out surveys every three to five years via a qualified arboriculturalist and following current industry best practice. The details of the inspections and any significant defects identified will be recorded along with recommendations for further action.

3 quotes for the tree survey and subsequent work (in line with the procurement policy) will be obtained and a preferred contractor chosen to ensure oversight and continuity.

In addition to the tree survey the council ground staff will conduct ongoing visual inspections (passive assessments) of the parish trees particularly after storms or in response to any concerns reported by members of the public, councillors, contractors or The Clerk. If there are any defects or concerns beyond the scope of the ground staff, the Clerk will get a suitably qualified arboriculturist to assess the tree and provide a written report as to its condition. If any remedial works are required the clerk will ~~obtain 3 quotes for the work (in line with the procurement policy)~~ and bring the issue forward with updated costs from the preferred contractor to the relevant committee or full council as appropriate for review and timely actioning of appropriate remedial tree work.

In emergency situations the Clerk will inform the council and instruct the preferred contractor ~~a suitably qualified contractor~~ to complete the work required and make the tree(s) safe.

Box parish council will keep records of when inspections are carried out, who has completed the inspection, their qualifications and experience, the recommendations for work to trees and any actions taken and when tree work has been carried out. Records, including maps, will provide the basis for safety management reviews and, in the extremely rare event of an accident, can support evidence of reasonable tree management. Records of trees presenting a serious risk and requiring treatment are useful, as is a record of how they have been treated.

Managing trees in line with our Environment strategy

The Council will avoid felling trees on parish council land unless it is necessary eg keeping footpaths on council land clear and accessible, the thinning of saplings, coppicing, pollarding and other such essential woodland management practices or if it is carried out as part of an environmentally positive habitat management as may be the case on Box common.

Where it is necessary to fell a tree, the council will aim to replant one or more trees.

Subject to a safety assessment and if appropriate to the specific site, large woody debris will be left in situ for the creation of wildlife habitats. Where possible, the trunks will be left standing, or lying on the ground in habitat piles. Tree stumps will also be left in situ where it is safe to do so as they provide a valuable wildlife habitat whilst they rot down. Extra care must be taken if it is suspected a tree contains roosting bats (it is a criminal offence to recklessly or intentionally disturb bats, or to damage or destroy a roost). If work is required for health and safety reasons, the advice of Natural England will be sought. Where necessary regrowth to stumps will be managed by manual cutting back, chemical treatment and plugging will only be used on cut stumps to prevent physical damage eg to walls and buildings.

Hedges are attractive and provide an important habitat for a wide range of species, offering food, shelter, protection from predators, wintering and nesting sites, and act as transit corridors. It is recognised that trimming hedges too severely can have a detrimental impact on their wildlife value. Where there is no negative impact on health and safety (e.g., visibility for motorists), the Council aims to have taller, bushier hedges. However, the Council will ensure that hedge growth does not impair the safety of highway users nor impede their access. It is an offence to intentionally damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; therefore, unless for urgent health and safety reasons, hedge cutting and tree works will not be conducted during the nesting season between March and August.

TPO and conservation area addendum

Information from Lisa Price Arboricultural Officer Economic Development & Planning department Wiltshire council 7/9/21

The felling and pruning of trees in Conservation Areas is controlled under the provision of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, ("the Act"). This means that anyone proposing to cut down or carry out work to a tree in a Conservation Area is required to give the Local Planning Authority **six weeks notice** under Section 211 of the Act (a "Section 211 Notice"). The purpose of this requirement is to give the Council an opportunity to consider whether a Tree Preservation Order should be made in respect of the tree. Any work allowed must be carried out within **two years** from the date of the notice.

There are a number of exemptions from these controls. The need to serve six weeks' notice on the Council **shall not** apply:-

- For work to trees which are **dead or dangerous**. **Five days notice** should be given to the Council prior to removing the tree, except in an emergency. It is the owner's responsibility to provide proof that the tree is indeed dead or dangerous should this exemption be challenged; hence, it is always advisable to request an inspection by the Council prior to carrying out such felling work.
- For felling trees in accordance with a plan of operations approved by the Forestry Commission.
- For work on a tree with a **stem diameter not exceeding 75mm (3 inches) or 100mm (4 inches)** if the **felling is to be carried out to improve the growth of other trees**. The **diameter** is measured over the bark at **1.5 metres (5 feet) above ground level**.
- For work carried out by, or on behalf of, the Council.
- The Council's Consent is not required for pruning any tree cultivated for the production of fruit, as long as the work is carried out in accordance with good horticultural practice. **However consent is required for cutting down any fruit tree unless it is cultivated on a commercial basis**.
- For felling a tree where immediately required for the purpose of carrying out development authorised by a **full** planning permission.
- For the purpose of preventing or abating a nuisance as determined under Common Law, (you may find it helpful to gain advice from a solicitor or citizens advice bureau).
- For work carried out by a **statutory undertaker** which is necessary to ensure the proper provision or maintenance of services by the appropriate body ie. **Electricity Board**.

A formal notice is required for trees within conservation areas. This notice runs for six weeks from the date the council deems to be valid. Unlike a TPO application, if a conservation area tree works notification passes its deadline without a decision, then the work may proceed.

Under the Tree Preservation Order Regulations that have been replaced, there were several circumstances where consent from the local planning authority was not required to carry out work to protected trees. This included trees that were dead or had become dangerous. The broad scope of this exemption presented some uncertainty for those looking to carry out what they believed to be exempt.

The new Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 omit dying from the exceptions. They also introduce an exemption for removing dead branches from a living tree.

A five-day notice can be applied for works on dead or dangerous trees. This gives the Arboricultural Officer time to assess the need for works while allowing urgent works to be carried out without the need for a formal application. A five-day notice can be requested in the form of an email with details of the location, species and the reason for the works. Photographs are also recommended to assist in determining the request.

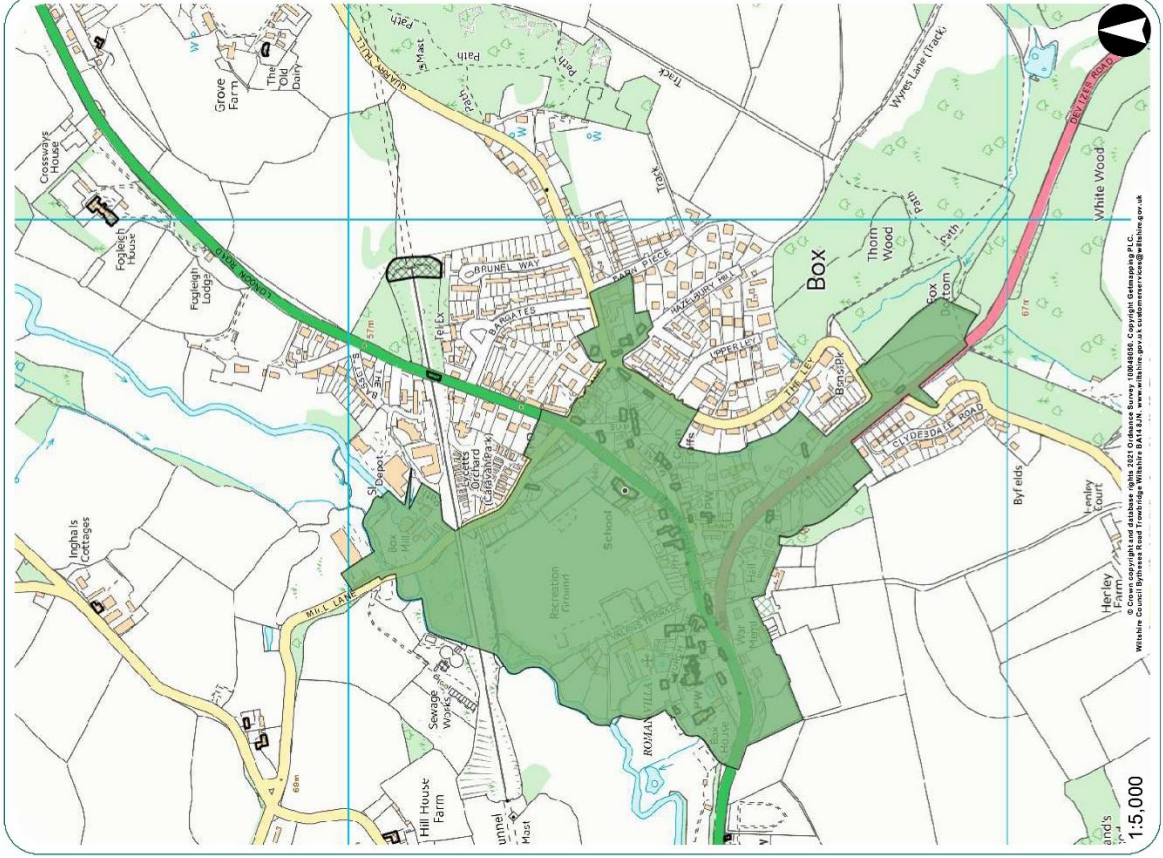
Further information regarding TPO applications and five-day notices can be found on [GOV.UK - Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas](#) .

A list of TPOs in the parish of Box

Box	Shockerwick	18.10.2000	NWDC	18.5.2000	204	ST 80246769
Box	Kingsdown House	20.9.74	C&C RDC		44	ST 8067
Box	Ashley	4.6.73	C&C RDC		4	ST 8067/8
Box	The Northey Arms	11.4.91	NWDC	29.11.90	154	ST 81506864
Box	Prospect Kingsdown	6.4.93	NWDC	27.11.92	162	ST 81956764
Box	Box House	8.8.96	NWDC	13.6.96	178	ST 822684
Box	The Brownings	19.2.92	NWDC	22.7.91	155	ST 82616842
Box	Pew Mead	9.1.98	NWDC	14.4.97	182	ST 82656836
Box	Centre	16.2.73	C&C RDC		3	ST 8268
Box	The Ley (supercedes No. 38)	23.2.84	NWDC	18.10.83	90	ST 8268
Box	Land adjacent to Public Bridleway 44, Barn Piece	10.10.08	NWDC	9.10.08	255	ST 8302 6850
Box	Beech Road	16.7.99	NWDC	25.6.98	188	ST 839698
Box	Leafy Lane, Rudloe	16.10.95	NWDC	28.3.95	171	ST 843698
Box	Highlands Close, Rudloe	8.8.96	NWDC	22.9.95	172	ST 844697
Box	Trenchard Avenue	13.07.06	NWDC	13.02.06	240	ST 84577001
Box	Wadswick Farm	19.7.79	Sec. State	29.9.78 NWDC	68	ST 8467/8
Box	Springfield Close (Rudloe)	28.6.71	WCC		46	ST 8469

Wiltshire Council ArcGIS Web Map

Centre Coordinate: 382,689 189,645 Date: 07 Sep 2021



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