TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

Bembridge Parish Council recognises its responsibilities as an owner of public land and hedgerows to exercise at all times proper and appropriate management to maintain their value as a public resource and uphold the legal duty of care for public safety that is pertinent to such ownership.

2. Inspections

It is not possible to eliminate all risks from trees. However, all trees and, where appropriate, hedgerows owned by the Parish Council will be inspected tri-annually by a suitably qualified tree specialist, and a written report submitted to a Full Council Meeting listing any defects or concerns regarding the health or condition of trees and hedgerows. Any major works will be carried out by qualified tree surgeons.

The Council will also consider requests to conduct tree work on the Council's land from members of the public. If the request concerns a potentially dangerous tree, the tree will be inspected on the same or next day. If the request is of a non‐urgent nature, an inspection will be undertaken within 30 days. In all cases, the member of the public will be informed of this inspection policy and will be informed of any action to be taken resulting from the inspection.

3. Works

The Council have no obligation to carry out the following tree works:

- Cut back branches overhanging private property.
- 'Top' trees or remove branches to increase daylight or decrease height in relation to property.
- Remove branches or trees affecting views or interfering with TV reception.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent falling leaves, honeydew from aphids or other minor debris.
- Remove roots from drains or repair root damage to structures, where the tree has not been clearly demonstrated to be the principal cause.
- Remove branches nearly touching buildings, walls, roofs, fences etc.
- Remove branches or trees to prevent access to squirrels or birds.

If members of the public would like tree works carried out as per this Section, they should make their own arrangements as described below.

In common law, a property owner can cut back overhanging branches to the boundary of his / her property. The Parish Council would usually have no objection to property owners carrying out tree work or engaging a contractor at their own expense, provided that:

- if access to our land or to a tree on that land is required, our permission must be sought.
- the tree is not situated in a Conservation area or protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- any work done to a tree is not detrimental to its health or stability; for their own protection members of the public are advised to obtain advice from a qualified tree surgeon.
- for tree pruning work, whoever does the work, it is carried out to an acceptable standard, in accordance with the British Standard Recommendations for Tree Work 3998:1989.
- The property owner notifies us (before the work begins) of the proposed work and commencement date.

The Council does not carry out works to privately owned trees

The annual revenue budget of Bembridge Parish Council shall include reasonable provision for the exercise of this policy throughout the year and be identified in a separate heading within Maintenance and Gardening Costs.

4. Buying a Memorial Tree

The Parish Council are happy to accommodate residents who wish to buy a memorial tree. However, we have only a limited land supply and so this will only be possible if a space becomes available. You may need to go on a waiting list and there is no guarantee that a space will become available within a short period of time.

A resident who wishes to buy a memorial tree must first contact the clerk or RFO. The Parish Council will purchase the tree and plant the tree on behalf of the resident and bill accordingly for the cost of the tree and the cost of planting it. All costs to be agreed in advance.

Trees will be of a type and size specified by the Parish Council.

The resident may provide their own plaque which should be a maximum size of 175mm wide x 75mm high. Maintenance of the plaque rests with the resident.

Should the tree die or become diseased the Parish Council reserves the right to remove it. The purchaser will be given first opportunity to replace the tree before someone on the waiting list is contacted.

In the event of the tree being removed the plaque will be returned to the purchaser if they do not want a replacement tree or destroyed if the purchaser or a family member cannot be contacted.

The Parish Council accepts no liability for damage to the tree from vandals, third parties or whilst the Parish Council carries out routine maintenance work in the vicinity of the tree.