

North East Lincolnshire Tree Strategy

Part Four - Tree Planting Guidelines

June 2023



Working in partnership



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1.0 Introduction

These guidelines are intended as a supplementary note to accompany the Tree Strategy. They outline the council's approach to tree planting and describe in broad terms the best practice for planting their own trees. They also describe the various planting situations that may arise and what planting techniques would normally be accepted as good practice. The planting of new tree stock will normally be carried out by the council's own grounds maintenance teams and will be in accordance with current legislation, guidance, British Standards and codes of practice.

1.1 Biosecurity

Biosecurity can be defined as a series of precautions designed to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms. These include non-native tree pests and diseases. The importing of live plant and tree products is the most significant pathway for the introduction of tree pests and diseases: bacteria, fungi, spores, eggs, larvae and adults can be carried on the plants themselves or in the soil. The council will prioritise the sourcing of plants propagated and grown in the UK to reduce the risk of introducing tree pests and diseases into the local area. If, in exceptional circumstances, plants need to be sourced from outside the UK, then checks will be made to ensure that the supplier is fully responsible and effects the necessary quarantine period on arrival. Vigilance to the signs of plant and tree pests and diseases within the local area will be upheld and on delivery of new tree stock from suppliers.

1.2 On delivery of new tree stock

The council will prioritise the sourcing of new tree stock propagated and grown in the UK from a reputable supplier. At the point of delivery, trees are expected to be healthy and in good form. New trees, including tree roots where possible, will be checked at the point of delivery by an appropriately qualified and experienced member of staff to ensure quality and form are to an acceptable standard. If a tree is deemed unsatisfactory due to substandard quality or form then delivery should be rejected and the tree will be left on the lorry for return to the supplier, with an instruction for a replacement, alternative or refund. If, following delivery, the council is still not completely satisfied with the health of the nursery tree stock, then the supplier will be notified (via email) within 3 days of receipt of the trees. No tree will be planted until the council is satisfied the quality and form of the tree fits the expected standards set by the supplier.



1.3 Right tree, right place

The council will follow a 'Right Tree, Right Place' policy by considering the constraints and opportunities of planting sites, the features of proposed trees and their habitat needs. Large trees in a town bring more benefits than smaller trees and these will be used wherever possible. The 'Right Tree, Right Place' approach is intended to allow any trees planted to reach full height and maturity without the need for regular pruning programmes. Having a diverse mix of species is important to safeguard against the risk of tree pests, diseases, or effects of climate change. When planting trees, the council will select species based on the principles of 'Right Tree, Right Place'. Where space permits, there will be a presumption in favour of large, long-lived, shade-producing trees with maximum opportunities to mitigate the effects of climate change.

1.4 Planting programmes

The council will follow a programme of works to increase the diversity of tree species and age class to give a net increase in canopy cover and tree numbers in line with the aims and objectives set within the Tree Strategy. When a council owned tree is removed, planting its replacement will be prioritised after consideration of whether it is appropriate to replant in the same place. Wherever possible the site will be considered as a whole, reflecting its history, character, available space, use and local interests. In some situations, replacement in the same place is significantly more expensive or difficult, therefore an alternative position will be found.

The council will endeavour to maintain its existing tree stock and increase current tree numbers by planting. The council will look to increase and improve its tree cover and species diversity with available resource as part of an annual tree planting programme, paying particular attention to street tree planting.

For replacing felled trees, subject to funding availability, available locations, and consultation, the following guidance in Table 1 will be used.

Table 1. Recommended guidance for number of replacement trees per tree felled by size

Trunk diameter of tree felled (cm)	No. of replacement trees
<15	1
15 - 19.9	2
20 - 29.9	3
30 - 39.9	4
40 - 49.9	5
50 - 59.9	6
60 - 69.9	7
70 - 79.9	8
80+	9



1.5 Woodland management plans

Woodland Management Plans are essential to ensure local woodlands are well managed and provide the wider benefits extensive areas of canopy cover give. North East Lincolnshire Council is committed to managing its woodland sustainably and will prepare woodland management plans for these sites and its areas of significant woodland.

1.6 Tree planting

It is essential to consider existing site conditions to ensure a newly planted tree reaches its full potential. The provision of enough quality soil for the tree roots is a critical factor in tree health and longevity. It is crucial that the target soil volume can be established to maximise a return on green investments and to ensure trees grow quickly into large healthy specimens. The council will seek to ensure trees are planted within an environment that has appropriate amounts of loose, moist, well aerated and uncompacted soil. These conditions enable the tree roots to obtain nutrients, oxygen and water – all essential for healthy tree growth. The council will explore opportunities for tree planting solutions within its built urban environment to secure the optimum conditions for healthy tree growth.

Planting methods and techniques are dependent on existing site conditions. The council will adopt proven tree planting methods and best practice techniques to ensure the successful establishment of its urban tree populations. The council will comply with the recommendations and guidance as set out within the current version of BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and any subsequent updates. This standard will assist in making balanced and informed tree planting decisions, providing recommendations for transplanting young trees successfully from the nursery, through to achieving their eventual independence in the landscape. When the council has decided on a planting location and tree species, the following fundamental principles shall be considered when designing the exact profile of tree pit:

- Available rooting area.
- Engineered requirements.
- Root management.
- Irrigation.
- Drainage.
- Aeration.
- Root-ball support.
- Above-ground protection.

The above factors account for over 90% of the reasons that urban trees fail. Considering and providing for these measures ensures that tree planting programmes are well on their way to successful and efficient establishment.



1.7 Establishment and aftercare

Post planting maintenance and management is essential to ensure trees reach their full potential and longevity within the landscape. A budgetary provision for post planting maintenance and management should be in place for all new tree planting and should be in place for at least 5 years. If woodland is to be planted, then there should be a budgetary provision for maintenance and management specific to woodland planting. For the establishment and aftercare of newly planted trees the council will comply with the recommendations and guidance as set out within the BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and any subsequent updates. To successfully achieve independence within the landscape the following fundamental principles of BS 8545 need to be applied:

- Irrigation.
- Formative pruning.
- Routine assessment and ongoing maintenance.

1.8 Trees and biodiversity

Urban trees provide benefits in terms of biodiversity that give wildlife shelter, food and movement corridors. They are unique in their ability to support a variety of wildlife in many of the most hostile environments within an urban setting. As such, the following principles will be applied:

- Where possible, and subject to public safety assessments, the council will retain standing dead trees in tree belts, local nature reserves and woodlands, preferring to prune rather than fell.
- Where possible, and subject to public safety assessments, the council will retain exposed root balls in tree belts, local nature reserves and woodlands.
- Where possible, and subject to public safety assessments, dead timber and felled trees will be left in situ to benefit habitat creation.
- Where possible, the council will retain mature ivy on trees. It will only be removed to aid tree safety inspections, reduce damage to the tree through windthrow or reduce shade to more valuable habitats beneath.
- The council will seek to create new woodland and look for opportunities to establish movement corridors between new woodland and sites that are considered to be ecologically important.
- The council will adhere to the requirements of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in relation to the protection of wildlife during all of its tree-related activities.
- The council will consider the implications of its tree maintenance and management on biodiversity.

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