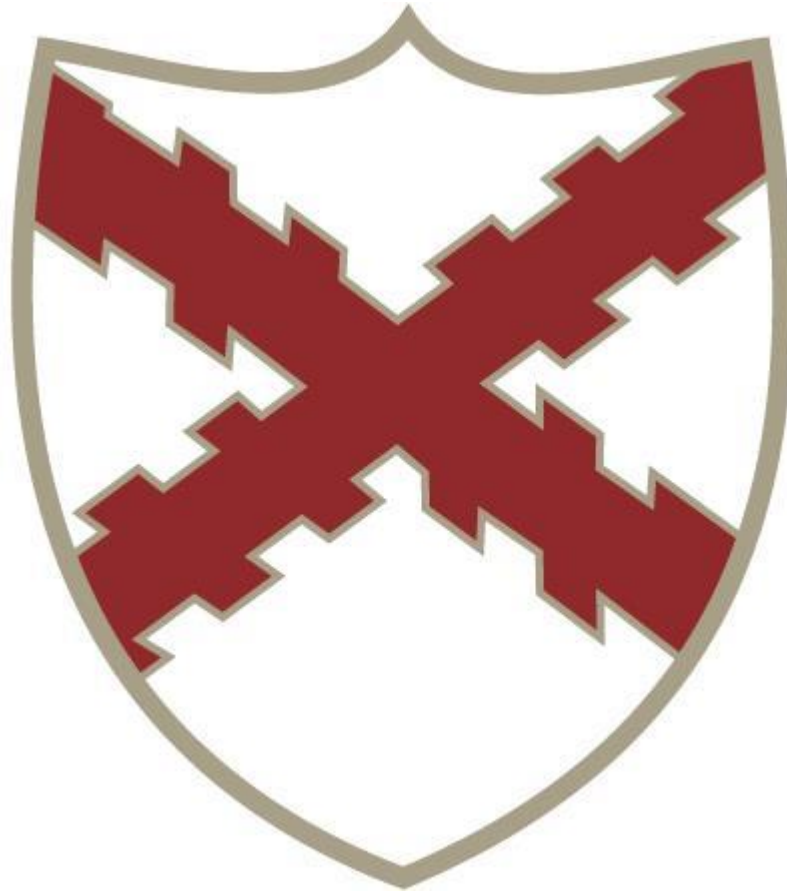


# ST. AUSTELL TOWN COUNCIL



## Tree Management Policy

Responsible Officer:	Town Clerk
Date approved:	16 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Date of review:	March 2029

## **1. Introduction**

St Austell Town Council recognises the significant environmental, aesthetic, and social value that trees contribute to the town. Trees enhance the landscape, support biodiversity, and contribute to a healthy environment. The Town Council is committed to maintaining and improving a sustainable tree population throughout the parks and open spaces within its control.

## **2. Policy Objectives**

The aims of this Tree Management Policy are to:

1. Increase the quality and quantity of tree stock through appropriate planting in the town's parks and open spaces
2. Maintain a safe and healthy tree population through routine inspections and responsive management.
3. Mitigate the impact of tree diseases, including Ash Dieback, through proactive monitoring and action planning.
4. Promote the planting of native, climate-resilient species while allowing suitable non-native species where beneficial.
5. Improve long-term tree resilience by ensuring species diversity across sites.
6. Ensure responsible replacement planting, especially regarding mature and veteran trees.

## **3. Tree Surveys and Safety Management**

The Town Council will:

- Conduct Annual Tree Safety Surveys on all Town Council-owned and maintained trees. These surveys will be undertaken by an approved arboricultural contractor.
- Follow all professional recommendations arising from survey reports to ensure public safety and tree health.
- Implement and maintain an Ash Dieback Action Plan (ADAP) that identifies trees requiring felling or monitoring, as well as necessary bio-security precautions to limit spread of the disease.

## **4. Tree Planting Principles**

The Town Council adopts the principle of the "right tree in the right place" to ensure long-term sustainability of new planting schemes.

Tree planting will:

- Prioritise UK-native deciduous species with strong autumn colour, except where non-native species provide horticultural or visual benefits.

- Include increased use of semi-mature trees in urban or vulnerable areas, due to their resilience to drought, vandalism, disease, and mechanical damage.
- Consider climate change resilience, selecting species capable of tolerating hotter summers, drier conditions, and milder winters.
- Aim to maintain species diversity to prevent large-scale loss from pests or disease.

#### **4.1 Replacement Planting**

Where mature or veteran trees must be removed (due to disease, storm damage, safety, or arboricultural assessment), the Town Council will aim to plant three replacement trees for every one felled, subject to site suitability.

#### **4.2 Planting Schedule**

Each summer, the Town Council will prepare a winter planting schedule for implementation in the next planting season.

#### **4.3 Utilities and Infrastructure Checks**

Before planting, the Town Council will consult with relevant utility companies and authorities to prevent damage to above- or below-ground services.

### **5. Trees Adjacent to Residential or Commercial Properties**

The Town Council will not usually prune or remove trees in response to natural and seasonal issues such as:

- Falling leaves, twigs, fruits, nuts, or seeds
- Overhanging branches
- Bird droppings
- Blossom
- Tree sap
- Moisture changes in gardens
- Moss or algae accumulation
- Blockages caused by natural tree debris

The above points are considered minor inconveniences, although individual cases may be assessed if circumstances warrant it.

#### **5.1 Issues Not Justifying Tree Works**

Additionally, the Town Council will not carry out pruning or removal solely due to:

- General shading

- Reduced television signal
- Shading of solar panels

## **6. Rights and Responsibilities of Adjacent Landowners**

Residents/landowners may cut back overhanging branches to their legal boundary, provided:

- Removed material is offered back to the tree owner
- Work is carried out safely
- No Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Area restrictions, or planning conditions are breached

Where a tree is located on a shared boundary, each party is responsible for managing growth on their own side.

## **7. Private land adjacent to public areas**

Private landowners and tenants responsible for trees and hedges adjacent to public spaces, pavements and highways will be encouraged to maintain their trees and hedges in a manner which does not adversely affect users of those areas.