Worcester City Council attaches great importance to the contribution that trees make to our environment. However, they can also present hazards to the public if they are not managed properly.
When dealing with public enquiries about trees growing in areas owned by the City Council, we adopt a risk based approach to determine if they represent a risk to life or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate.

Tree Inspections

The City Council inspects its trees on a regular basis through a rolling programme that prioritises trees within high risk areas where there is potentially most risk to people and property. Following an initial inspection trees are managed as follows:

**High Risk**
- E.g. close to main public areas, busy parks and public open spaces, work yards, buildings, roads, car parks, major footpaths, picnic areas etc
- Inspect: Every 12-to-18 months

**Medium Risk**
- E.g. footpaths, woodland paths or bridle ways in regular use but not intensive public use; quieter areas of parks and public places
- Inspect: At least every two years

**Low Risk**
- E.g. woodland or farmland away from paths or only lightly used/trafficked
- Inspect: At least every four years or as part of normal routine visits

Highway Trees

These are trees growing in grass verges between the highway and pavement and are the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. Issues relating to County Council trees should be reported to the Worcestershire Hub on 01905 722233.

Tree Protection

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO’s) can be placed on trees by the local authority to protect them for public enjoyment. TPO’s can be placed on individual trees, groups, areas or entire woodlands. Its is against the law to wilfully cut down, lop, top, destroy or damage a tree with a TPO. This offence can carry a fine for up to £20,000 through a magistrates court if convicted. This does not mean that you cannot carry out work to a tree with a TPO - but you must obtain consent from the City Council first.

To check if a tree is covered by a TPO please email planning@worcester.gov.uk and your request will be passed on to the Tree Officer.

More information regarding TPO’s can be found on the Worcester City Council website www.worcester.gov.uk/tree-preservation-orders
Residents’ Requests

The City Council will not carry out an inspection on a City Council tree outside the normal planned inspection regime, unless the tree is considered dangerous or potentially dangerous to the health and safety of an individual or is causing damage to property.

If you are reporting a dangerous tree, you will be asked to substantiate why you believe it is a public danger. There must be a justifiable reason for works to be carried out on a tree such as a recognised defect as specified below.

Evidence of dangerous/potentially dangerous trees

- Tree is snapped or blown over
- Tree is rocking – roots are damaged
- Tree uprooted but held up by another tree or building
- Large branch has broken off or is hanging off the tree
- Major deadwood is present. If it were to fall, the tree could cause injury to people or damage to property
- Tree is considered to be in a dead/dying condition
- Tree is obstructing a public highway or public right of way and no clear sight line is available at traffic junctions, road signs etc.

Falling leaves/fruit/flowers/seasonal debris

Worcester City Council will not fell or prune Council owned trees solely to alleviate problems caused by natural and/or seasonal phenomena.

There are a variety of potential nuisances associated with trees, most of which are minor or seasonal and which may be considered to be social problems associated with living near to trees. However, they are not regarded as a ‘nuisance’ in the legal sense and a tree owner has no obligation to clear them.

Examples of such problems are:

- Falling leaves, sap, fruit, nuts, bird droppings or blossom
- Reduction or increase of moisture to gardens
- Suckers or germinating seedlings in gardens
- Leaves falling into gutters, drains or onto flat roofs
- The build up of algae to fences, paths or other structures.
Overhanging branches

Worcester City Council will not enter private property to prune overhanging branches from Council owned trees, but property owners are able to responsibly cut back to their boundary.

Under English common law there is a general right to cut overhanging branches back to your property boundary (subject to legal restrictions being overcome first such as Tree Preservation Orders or Conservation Areas).

Branches must only be pruned back to the boundary line and no further. You must make arrangements to arrange for the disposal of any resulting branches.

A list of local companies providing tree services who have previously worked with Worcester City Council can be found at the end of this document.

If a tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or is within a conservation area, then that Common Law right is removed and you will need to apply to the council with the owner’s consent to carry out any works.

Lack of light

Worcester City Council cannot fell or prune trees for reasons of light.

A common complaint is that trees block light from properties and shade gardens. Whilst a right to light may exist, there has been no reported decision of any case to date having succeeded in respect of a loss of light caused by trees. Current legal advice is that as the obstruction will only have occurred gradually, any such case would be difficult to prove.

Overgrown trees

Worcester City Council cannot fell or prune trees considered too big/too tall for this reason alone.

A tree is not dangerous just because it may be considered too big for its surroundings.

- A tree taller than a house or a broad spreading tree does not in itself make it a dangerous tree.
- A tree swaying in the wind does not in itself make it a dangerous tree. Trees will naturally sway in the wind; the pliability in the branches is a natural mechanism that helps prevent fracture.
- A tree that has grown with a lean does not in itself make it dangerous; a tree will develop fatter growth rings on one side to make it more stable.

Television and satellite reception

Worcester City Council will not fell or prune trees solely for the reason that they are considered to be causing interference with television and satellite reception.

Pruning trees often fails to improve reception and once pruned, re-growth occurs quite quickly. Interference can often be reduced by relocation of aerials/dishes.
### Useful Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enquiry</th>
<th>Department/Service</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Tree Enquiries</td>
<td>Customer Service Centre</td>
<td>Tel: 01905 722233</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worcestershire County Council Trees</td>
<td>Customer Service Centre</td>
<td>Tel: 01905 722233</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reporting a dangerous or potentially dangerous tree</td>
<td>Customer Service Centre</td>
<td>Tel: 01905 722233</td>
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<td>To check if a tree has a Preservation Order</td>
<td>Planning Department</td>
<td>Worcester City Council</td>
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<td>planning @worcester.gov.uk</td>
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<td>To apply for works to be carried out to a tree with</td>
<td>Planning Department</td>
<td>Complete an application form from our website:</td>
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<td>a Preservation Order</td>
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<td>and submit via the Planning Portal</td>
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Local companies providing tree services:

**N P Denley**  
Arborist and Tree Surgeon  
Lilac Cottage  
Skinner Street  
Worcester  
WR2 4JD

- Phone: 01905 423454
- Mobile: 07971 432201
- Email: denleytreesurgery@hotmail.com
- Website: [http://www.denleytreesurgery.co.uk/](http://www.denleytreesurgery.co.uk/)

**Adrian Hope Tree Services**  
Ribston Lawn  
Much Marcle  
Ledbury  
Herefordshire  
HR8 2ND

- Phone: 01531 660557
- Fax: 01531 660741
- Email: ahopetrees@supanet.com
- Website: [http://www.adrianhopetreeservices.co.uk/](http://www.adrianhopetreeservices.co.uk/)

**K W Boulton Tree Care Specialists Ltd**  
The Park  
Wyre Hill  
Wyre Piddle  
Pershore  
WR10 2HS

- Phone: 01386 556679
- Mobile: 07745 721524
- Email: enquiries@kwboulton.co.uk
- Website: [http://www.kwboulontreecare.co.uk/](http://www.kwboulontreecare.co.uk/)
If you need help communicating in English please contact the Customer Service Centre on 01905 722 233 or at customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Bengali
যদি ইংরেজি ভাষায় সহায়তা প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে অনূর্ধ্ব করে 01905 722 233 এই নম্বরে অভ্যন্তর

customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk এখানে প্রশ্ন করুন এবং মানুষের সাহায্য পেতে চান।

Chinese
如果你需要帮助用英语沟通，请与顾客服务中心联系。电话：01905 722 233；网址：customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Polish
Jeżeli potrzebują Państwo pomocy w porozumiewaniu się w języku angielskim, prosimy o kontakt z Centrum Obsługi Klienta pod numerem 01905 722 233 lub na adres customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Punjabi
اگر انگریزی میں گفتگو کرنے کی ضرورت ہے تو 01905 722 233 اور customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk پر متعلقہ کسٹمنس سروس سے رابطہ کریں।

Portuguese
Se necessitar de ajuda para comunicar em Inglês por favor contacte o Serviço de Apoio a Clientes através do 01905 722 233 ou através do e-mail customerservicecentre@worcester.gov.uk

Service Standards
for the management
of trees in the city

Worcester City Council
The Guildhall
High Street
Worcester
WR1 2EY
01905 722233

www.worcester.gov.uk