

Appendix 1

Approach for New Tree Policy for Southend-on-Sea

To ensure Southend-on Sea has a tree policy that continues to be in line best arboriculture practice, maintains and improves the canopy cover of the town and helps deliver the Southend 2050 aspirations, the following approach will be followed when updating the towns tree policy:

1. Commission a canopy assessment of Southend-on-Sea to give a baseline to help assess the current canopy cover and set aspirations for the duration of the life of the tree policy.

A tree canopy assessment is a tool to help analyse the current canopy cover and helps plan for future tree canopy cover. Urban trees can be considered part of the green infrastructure that complements our grey infrastructure and should be managed with equal importance. Tree canopy assessments can help a determine how much of the area is covered by trees, identify the location of those trees and where there may be opportunities to plant new trees.

A canopy assessment will also help gain a better understanding of the effective percentage of tree cover per head of population

2. Review new DEFRA guidance and requirements on tree strategies and consultation on tree removals. This information from DEFRA is anticipated. However, it is not confirmed, and the date that this will be released has not yet been confirmed.
3. Review guidance issued by other government bodies.
4. Review policies and legislation associated with the management of trees and ensure these are fully considered.
5. Review best arboricultural practices and ensure these form the bases of the tree policy.
6. Review and assess recognised tree inspection and risk assessment techniques to ascertain if these should be included in the tree policy.
7. Draft a new tree policy for Southend-on-Sea that includes the following:
 - The benefits of trees to the urban environment and the part they play in a joined-up approach to green infrastructure.
 - The benefits of trees to health and wellbeing.
 - The challenges faced by trees in an urban environment, including our changing climate.

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- The benefits of trees to the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.
- How trees can help with the Southend 2050 ambitions.
- The canopy cover of Southend-on-Sea.
- The council's responsibility with regards to managing its trees.
- The approach to inspections and the frequencies these occur.
- The approach to managing and maintaining established trees.
- Tree removals and the situations this may be required.
- How the towns tree canopy will be maintained and enhanced through tree planting
- The consultation process to be used when trees are to be removed (new DEFRA guidance may dictate this).

It is anticipated that the new tree policy will also consider other areas which impact on trees including development, the council's Vehicle Crossing Policy and Application Guidance (currently under review), insurance claims for damage to property and requests to remove trees for non-arboriculture reasons such as fruit, light and leaves.

8. Publish draft tree policy to give interested individuals, groups and businesses an opportunity to comment on the policy before adoption.
 - The draft policy made available on the council's website.
 - People invited to submit feedback on the draft policy. (Six weeks).
 - Results of feedback collated (Three weeks).
 - Review feedback and consideration given to if the policy should be amended. (Two weeks).
 - Results published on the council website. (one week).
 - New tree policy adopted and published on the council website.
 - If DEFRA guidance has not been released the policy will be updated when guidance is available.

9. Program for development of new tree policy:

Task	Start Date	Finish date	Notes
Review policies and legislation associated with the management of trees	19 th August 2019	1 st October 2019	Release of guidance from DEFRA during the drafting of the policy may impact on the program.

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Tree canopy assessment is undertaken.	1 st September 2019	11 th October 2109	
Consider the outcome of Cabinet meeting.	18 th September 2019	25 th September 2109	
Review and assess findings of canopy assessment.	14 th October 2019	25 th October 2019	
Draft policy published on the council website for comment. Comments reviewed, and policy reviewed.	31 st January 2020	13 th March 2020	
New tree policy adopted and published on the council website.	18 th March 2020	20 th march 2020	