
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

29 August 2023

Cabinet

Title: Tree and Woodland Management Policy

Purpose: To seek Cabinet approval on the proposed updated Tree and Woodland Management Policy.

Recommendation: That the Cabinet approves the updated Tree and Woodland Management Policy, attached at Appendix 1.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for over 275 hectares of woodlands within its area. There are a number of legal obligations placed upon the Council in relation to the management of trees and woodlands, for which it is responsible.
- 1.2 The Council receives a high number of enquiries in respect of trees within its area. This formal policy enables the Council to outline how it will discharge its responsibilities and manage its tree and woodland stock in a sustainable way.
- 1.3 Trees and woodland have a significant effect upon the quality of life within the area. They provide environmental, aesthetic and amenity value and support the Council's wider strategic objectives. For example, helping to become carbon net zero by 2030, supporting biodiversity, providing an attractive environment, contributing to regeneration and improving health and wellbeing.
- 1.4 People often live in close proximity to trees which can cause varying degrees of inconvenience. The Tree and Woodland Management Policy aims to capture the Council's position on the most frequent tree related enquiries.

2. Background

- 2.1 The current Tree and Woodland Management Policy was approved by Cabinet in 2013 and has been in use since that time.
- 2.2 The policy has been reviewed by relevant members of the Streetscene Service, with input from the Roads Service, and updated accordingly to consider recent council policies and strategies, such as North Ayrshire's 2030: Tree Planting Strategy. The Tree and Woodland Management Policy is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The main changes to the policy are an acknowledgement of the ambition to reach net zero by 2030 and the Council's actions to support this. The complaints process has also been amended and is now aligned to and will be dealt with through the already established North Ayrshire Council Complaints Procedure.
- 2.4 North Ayrshire Council has set a target to introduce 108,000 new trees by 2030 as part

of 'North Ayrshire's 2030 Woodland' plan which aims to contribute to the Council's wider efforts to reach net-zero carbon emissions. Progress against this initiative has been good with 35,627 new trees planted, as of 19 July 2023. In terms of replacement trees, if trees have to be removed, we aim to replace on a like for like basis where possible, or appropriate, to do so. If it's not possible to do so, we will plant a replacement tree of a suitable species at a suitable location.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 That the Cabinet approves the updated Tree and Woodland Management Policy attached at Appendix 1.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 4.1 None.

Human Resources

- 4.2 None.

Legal

- 4.3 There are a number of legal responsibilities and duties placed on the Council in relation to the management of its tree and woodland stock, which are described in the policy attached at Appendix 1.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 4.4 None.

Environmental and Sustainability

- 4.5 Trees and woodland areas provide a significant contribution to the overall environmental wellbeing of an area.

As trees absorb substantial amounts of carbon from the atmosphere, trees play a vital role in helping to combat climate change and to achieving the Council's target of achieving net zero carbon emissions.

Trees and woodlands are integral to the Council's Environmental Sustainability & Climate Change Strategy (ESCCS) 2021-23 and contribute towards a sustainable environment.

Key Priorities

- 4.6 The network of trees and woodlands positively contributes to the Council Plan 2023-28 of which a key priority is Climate Change. One of the Key Activities of the Council Plan is 'Promoting new woodland creation and protecting our green spaces to provide a natural resource for carbon sequestration.'
The strategy and initiative also play an important role in delivering against Scotland's Public Health Priority 1 of 'A Scotland where we live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities.'

Community Wealth Building

- 4.7 The Tree and Woodland Management Policy aligns with the Council's Community Wealth Building mission of "Enhancing local wealth and the creation of fair jobs and maximising the potential of all our places through working in partnership with our communities and businesses." This includes working with communities on the development of community orchards and 'wee forests.'

Consultation

- 5.1 The Tree and Woodland Management Policy has been reviewed and updated to align with national guidance and reflect recent Council strategies, policies, and priorities.
- 5.2 Consultation has taken place within the Council's Streetscene Service and Roads Service.
- 5.3 The Policy Advisory Panel were consulted and provided feedback on the revised policy on 18 April 2023.

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Executive Director (Place)

For further information please contact **Thomas Reaney, Head of Service (Neighbourhood Services)**, on **01294 324570**.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Tree & Woodland Policy

North Ayrshire Council

Tree and Woodland Management Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Trees are an essential asset and yet at the same time can be seen as being highly emotive, both in terms of perceived nuisance and of the benefit they provide. They can form important local landmarks and landscape features whilst making a tremendous impact on visitors and residents alike, providing significant aesthetic, amenity, economic and ecological benefits and help contribute to a healthier environment.
- 1.2 The Council is responsible for many thousands of trees and over 275 hectares of woodland within the area. A programme of assessment and inspection has commenced although given the number and extent of trees within the area it is anticipated that this will take many years to complete. The Council also has an obligation to survey trees within their portfolio, in line with Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.
- 1.3 There are a number of legal obligations placed upon the Council in the management of trees and woodlands for which it is responsible.
- 1.4 The aim of this policy to set out how the Council will effectively manage trees and woodlands for which it is responsible ensuring that they positively contribute to the area and achievement of the corporate priorities of the Council whilst meeting legal obligations. The policy does not consider trees within private ownership unless the Council has a legislative responsibility or power in respect of their management.

2. Effective Tree and Woodland Management

- 2.1 The Council seeks to manage its trees and woodland in an effective manner in the following ways:-
 - Providing and maintaining healthy and safe trees.
 - Maintaining and encouraging biodiversity.
 - Maintaining and improving landscape quality via the care of existing trees and the inclusion of future plantings.
 - Compliance with legal responsibilities in both Common Law and through Statute.
 - Effectively communicating, educating and engaging with the public and local communities.
 - Providing clear channels of advice and information to the public and other Council services regarding arboriculture and obligations relating to the inspection and surveying of trees within their ownership.
 - Managing its woodlands in appreciation of the Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy.

3. The Importance of Trees

3.1 Trees are of vital importance to the landscape. They are living and dynamic structures that, dependent up on species and location, can live for generations. They are widely appreciated for enhancing rural and urban environments and make a positive contribution to the scenic character and diversity of the landscape. However, the benefits they attach to the environment greatly extend beyond perceived visual amenity and include:-

- Social, educational, and communal benefits through connecting people with nature.
- Embellish and reduce the impact of building development and hard landscaping.
- Environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, improved air quality, screening from sun, wind, and rain, filtering noise and attracting wildlife.
- Providing economic benefits, e.g. adding value to property and reduced energy costs (windbreaks).
- Reduce surface water run-off and the effects of soil erosion.
- Green and leafy industrial sites, retail and/or shopping areas may attract more inward investment than similar areas and sites devoid of trees.
- Contribute to human physical and mental health and relaxation.
- Provide a sustainable resource.

4. Tree Related Issues

4.1 People often live in close proximity to trees, particularly in urban areas, which can create varying degrees of inconvenience. These trees are either their own, their neighbours' or quite commonly belong to the Council. Conflict or disputes can arise where a tree or group of trees make an important contribution to the local environment yet create inconvenience to residents. There are a number of common sources of complaint including:-

- Size and spread of tree canopy.
- Branches overhanging into gardens and the road.
- Low branches over footpaths.
- Trees blocking natural light, streetlights and road signs.
- Leaf and fruit fall.
- Sticky deposits.
- Physical damage to structures.
- Interference with utilities.
- Affecting TV and satellite reception.
- Affecting CCTV and security systems.
- Obscuring a view.
- Road safety issues.
- Fear of tree safety.
- Birds and wildlife.

- 4.2 Complaints often arise as a result of inappropriate species selection in the past where trees increase in size until they reach maturity. In these situations, it may be difficult or impossible to resolve in all parties' favour.

5. Trees on Council Land

5.1 Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries

Trees are fundamental aspects of parks and open spaces as they can provide high levels of visual amenity and are valuable in encouraging use of these sites by residents and visitors alike. Parks are ideal for tree planting as there are relatively few conflicts and species that would be unsuitable elsewhere can be grown here.

Cemeteries and churchyards often contain large specimen trees that were planted out when these sites were first developed and can offer a sense of calm for visitors.

These areas are sanctuaries for wildlife and the existing trees are often of historic or of great personal value to local communities. The many decorative mature trees are characteristics of many sites providing excellent flora and fauna values.

5.2 Council Housing Areas

A large proportion of the Council's Housing stock was built in line with the new town concept, particularly within the Irvine area. Extensive planting of both trees and shrubs was undertaken both in garden areas and in the surrounding open space using a wide range of species. These were often quick growing to provide rapid greening including shrub beds and group planting. Many trees were planted close to houses without full consideration of future growth potential. The maturing of these trees has given rise to a number of complaints from residents who live in close proximity.

Complaints or enquiries from tenants regarding trees within the housing portfolio, including trees within tenant's gardens and open space, will be dealt with by the Housing Service with appropriate reference to the Arboriculture Officer (upon request).

5.3 Road Trees

Road trees are those growing in pavements and verges along the Council's road network and are the responsibility of the Council as Roads Authority. The Council is not responsible for trees alongside major trunk roads or private roads and footpaths.

Road trees are extremely important as they help to filter traffic pollution and help to provide shade to car-parking and pedestrian passage. A tree-lined street will improve the aesthetic and amenity appearance of a street

itself. The Council values road planting as it presents a real opportunity to improve environmental quality and image. However, consideration should be given to the location of trees in relation to roads, windows to the front of properties, overhead telephone wires, underground services, sight lines, lighting, traffic controls and signs. The roots of trees can also potentially cause problems with the surface of roads including pavements and verges. Where a tree (or trees) on Council owned or adopted land is deemed to be a danger to road users or pedestrians, or is causing an obstruction, the Council as Roads Authority will take steps to make the tree(s) safe or remove the obstruction.

Where a tree on privately owned land is considered to be a danger to road users or pedestrians the Council as Roads Authority will attempt to contact the owner in order to remove the risk or obstruction. If there is no immediate danger the Council as Roads Authority can serve notice on the owner requiring them to undertake the necessary works within 28 days. Where the owner fails to comply with the notice the Council as Roads Authority are empowered to carry out the necessary works and recover expenses reasonably incurred from the owner. Where in the Council's opinion the danger from the tree is imminent then there is no requirement to serve a notice and the Council as Roads Authority can carry out the necessary works and recover expenses reasonably incurred from the owner.

5.4 Woodlands

The Council is responsible for over 275 hectares of woodland. They provide significant biodiversity and wildlife value, as the ground flora, lower plant, fungi and invertebrate populations within them have developed over many years and are specialised to that environment. The long-established nature of these woodlands is reflected by the large amount of self-seeded trees that are often densely located leading to poor quality or weak specimens.

The Ayrshire and Arran Woodland Strategy was published in 2014 as a collaboration between North Ayrshire Council, East Ayrshire Council, South Ayrshire Council, Ayrshire Green Network and Forestry Commission Scotland. It seeks to develop the woodland of Ayrshire and Arran as a model of integrated and sustainable use of land that supports the local economy and contributes to the community wellbeing and that also promotes environmental excellence.

Whilst being mindful of this Strategy the Council's primary objective is to ensure that all its woodlands are enhanced and sustained on a long-term basis with the involvement and support of local communities and schools co-ordinated through the Countryside Ranger Service.

Amongst other improvement works and where resources allow the Council will seek to undertake appropriate thinning works to encourage improved tree growth and the quality of specimens. Effective

maintenance works will support the development of a range of woodlands that can be used for public recreational use, wildlife habitat and for educational purposes and the Council's Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

The creation of woodland paths has been utilised to encourage the public to visit woodlands improving access to nature and the outdoors.

6. Trees on Private Land

- 6.1 Other than where the Council has a specific legislative responsibility such as the administration of Tree Preservation Orders, the Roads (Scotland) Act and within Conservation Areas, maintenance and management rests entirely with the landowner who has a duty of care under Common Law.
- 6.2 The Council will not undertake any works to privately owned trees unless it has a legislative responsibility or power, or in emergency situations where the owner cannot be identified and located. In these situations, the Council will seek to recover any costs incurred from the owner.

7. The Council's Planning Responsibilities

- 7.1 The responsibilities of the Council as the Local Planning Authority are set out in the Town and Country (Scotland) Planning Act 1997 (as amended) and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (Scotland) Act 1997.
- 7.2 In granting planning permission for any development, the Council must ensure that appropriate provision is made, usually by the imposition of conditions, for the preservation or planting of trees. Such conditions can be the subject of appeal or an application to vary the condition. Non-compliance with any condition imposed can be the subject of enforcement action.
- 7.3 There are numerous Tree Preservation Orders in force at present within the area of the Council. The Council's Planning Service has a duty to review existing [tree preservation orders](#). A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) may be made if it appears to the Council to be:
 - expedient in the interest of amenity and/or,
 - that the trees, groups of trees or woodlands are of cultural or historical significance.

Owners, lessees, and occupiers of land affected by a proposed TPO have the right to make objections prior to confirmation.

- 7.4 Prior to the commencement of any works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order application must be made to the Council. Where a tree is not protected by TPO but is within a Conservation Area notice must be given to the Council at least 6 weeks prior to the commencement

of any work. Where protected trees have been removed the Council will normally require the planting of replacements.

- 7.5 The High Hedges (Scotland) Act 2013 is a stand-alone legislation and not a direct responsibility of the planning authority, but in the North Ayrshire Council area it is administered by Planning Services. The Act relates to any hedge which is (i) over 2 metres in height, (ii) formed by a row of two or more trees or shrubs and (iii) forms a barrier to light.

It allows any owner or occupier of a domestic property, who feels that the height of a high hedge adversely affects their reasonable enjoyment of their property, as a “last resort” to pay a fee and apply to the Council for a High Hedge Notice to be issued requiring the owner of the hedge to remedy the adverse effect, usually by reducing the height of the hedge. An appeal against the terms of the Notice can be made to the Scottish Government by either the applicant or the owner. The Act refers to all trees whether otherwise protected or not and if a Notice is served then the works must be carried out.

The Scottish Government Guidance on the Act specifies that there are no special procedures laid down for applications where the local authority is directly involved, either as applicant or owner, and that these should be processed as normal. The guidance states “it is hoped that in such cases, attempts made to resolve the problem amicably would result in a solution before the applicant felt the need make a formal application”.

8. Inspection of Trees

- 8.1 Assessment of tree enquiries is currently undertaken in response to service requests or complaints as and when required. It is not practicable to formally inspect all trees where service requests or complaints are received. As a general rule, site inspections will not be undertaken in response to enquiries relating to nuisance value. In these instances, advice will be provided to enquirers in line with this policy from the land portfolio holder concerned.
- 8.2 The minimum standards for managing the risk from trees, including risk assessment by a competent person is outlined under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The Council has a duty and responsibility for ensuring they have systems in place to control risks from trees to members of the public in the community, their employees and to contractors.
- 8.3 A pro-active programme of inspection is being developed utilising a risk-based approach to identify priority. The criteria utilised to establish priority includes tree location in relation to roads, footpaths, built structures, high or frequently used areas etc. Tree inspections are primarily concerned with health and safety, identifying foreseeable risks and hazards commonly associated with trees, rather than aesthetic or amenity value,

although these can be considered. Inspection will consider the presence of the following factors, including, but not restricted to:-

- Tree canopy die-back
- Deadwood
- Fungal and/or fruiting body associations
- Root-plate heave
- Stem cavities or decay
- Included bark unions
- Previous branch failure points
- Tree canopy touching adjoining buildings, obscuring signage/streetlights/CCTV
- Low branches or tree canopy obstruction over roads and footpaths
- Tree diseases

9. Felling and Pruning of Trees

9.1 Where inspection either re-active or planned identifies that a tree constitutes a hazard or is unsafe action will be taken as soon as practicably possible to minimise risks within a pre-determined time, by the relevant portfolio / duty holders. Examples of circumstances that require immediate action include:-

- The tree is unstable, uprooted and is leaning in the direction of property or areas of public access. The level of risk and the degree of urgency required to address the problem will be dependent on the target type (the public, vehicles, buildings, footpaths and roads, as examples) and frequency of use, size of the tree, extent of root-lift and current and forecasted weather conditions.
- The tree has hung up limbs that if were to become detached would cause harm or damage to public or property.
- The tree is blocking a part of the Council's roads network.
- The tree has fallen from council or adopted land and is blocking access to property.
- The tree has fallen onto property or vehicles from council or adopted land.

9.2 Other than where a tree presents a hazard or forms part of a woodland management plan there is a general presumption against the removal or pruning of trees which are healthy, except for exceptional circumstances where the Council's Arboriculture Officer will advise.

9.3 Where it has been decided that works are required to trees consideration will be given to maintain the value and health of the tree.

9.4 Consideration will be given to pruning. However, excessive pruning or reducing a tree's size can adversely affect the health, appearance and amenity value of the tree, as well as resulting in weakly attached re-growth. Examples of where pruning is appropriate include:-

- Minor works.
- To improve the growth and establishment of adjacent trees.
- To prevent or rectify direct or indirect physical damage to buildings, structures and public utilities where practical and accessible.
- Formative pruning of any newly planted trees.
- To improve the health and condition of existing trees, e.g. crown cleaning.
- As part of woodland or screen thinning operations.

9.5 Felling/Removal will be considered, generally, but not restricted to the following instances:

- The tree is dead, dying or diseased and presents an unacceptable degree of risk to persons or property.
- The tree is uprooted or wind-thrown and presents an unacceptable degree of risk to persons or property.
- The tree is causing damage to buildings, structures or public amenities.
- Regeneration of woodland (clear felling) and landscaped areas.
- To improve the growth and establishment of adjacent trees, e.g. woodland thinning.
- To facilitate works by statutory undertakers.
- Where pruning or alternative options are not practical.
- To control / limit / treat the spread of notifiable diseases.

10. Subsidence and Drains

10.1 Where trees are believed to be causing subsidence to a property, including damage to drains, the claimant will be required to provide supporting expert evidence, usually through their property insurers. All enquiries and any subsequent claims will be passed to the Council's Finance and Risk Management Service.

11. Trees, Overhanging Branches and Root Encroachments

11.1 Under **Common Law** in Scotland there is no legal duty on the owner of a tree to cut or prune trees within their land or property other than ensuring the trees present no risk of damage to life or property.

11.2 Trees, especially when growing near to property can cause concern to people who live near or in close proximity to them. The size of a tree alone is not reason enough to prune or fell a tree. Such measures could adversely affect the amenity value of the site, over-expose adjacent trees to prevailing wind or cause irreversible damage to the tree where pruning has occurred. Accordingly, trees will not be pruned or felled unless they present a safety issue or a hazard to the public or property.

11.3 The Council will not undertake works to trees that overhang adjacent land unless the tree or overhanging branches present a safety issue or part of

the tree is in contact with any building or boundary within that land. Under Common Law affected landowners can prune any overhanging growth providing the cuts are made on their side of the boundary. The arisings legally belong to the owner of the tree and should be offered back to them unless they have given permission to keep or dispose of them.

12. Light, TV and Satellite Reception, Views and General Nuisance.

12.1 As a general rule the Council will not carry out tree pruning or removal works on trees within council ownership or adopted land directly attributable to:

- Loss or interference with TV or satellite signal reception
- Restriction of sunlight or artificial lighting, unless adjudged to excessive, in which case the Council's Arboriculture Officer will advise on this.
- Blocking or obstructing a view from a residence
- Medical ailments unless supported by expert medical opinion. The Council reserves the right to challenge such opinion.

12.2 As a general rule the Council will not carry out tree pruning or removal works on trees within council ownership or adopted land in direct response to, or relating to enquiries regarding natural or seasonal events, for example:

- Falling leaves
- Sap exudation (honeydew)
- Falling fruits/nuts
- Bird droppings
- Blossom
- Reduction or increased moisture within gardens
- Basal stem sucker growth
- Germinating seeds from trees
- Blockages or obstructions from tree deposits and leaves
- Presence of algae and/or build up of moss.

12.3 Only when required, and when all other potential solutions have been exhausted, will tree pruning or removal be considered. Examples of potential alternative solutions include:-

- Slippery road and path surfaces arising from leaf or fruit fall should be reported to the Streetscene operations who will arrange for those areas that are formally owned or adopted by the Council to be swept.
- Leaf and/or fruit fall within private gardens can be deposited within the 'brown' garden waste bin collected by the Waste Management service. The council are not responsible for the removal of leaf fall from properties.

- Re-location or use of extension poles for aerials and satellite receivers or contacting suppliers to discuss alternatives.

12.4 Landowners are able to exercise their rights under common law in respect of any over hanging branches or encroachments and will be advised of these.

13. Poisonous Trees

13.1 Any works undertaken in respect of poisonous trees will be based on the level of risk relating to each individual case. Factors for consideration will include the level, nature and frequency of site usage, level of toxicity, position of berries and seeds, etc on the tree and any alternative means of addressing/managing the problem, such as regular uplift of fruit fall.

14. Trees with Thorns

14.1 Where trees bear thorns or spines that pose a hazard to the public, action will be taken to remove the part of the tree most likely to cause harm. Influencing factors on the action taken will include the level, nature and frequency of site usage, the setting of the site, the effect of pruning on the tree and, alternative means of managing the problem, e.g. replanting the tree in a more suitable location.

15. Wildlife/Insects

15.1 Trees will not be pruned or felled to remove any animal protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), other appropriate Protected Species legislation, or to remove insects such as wasps, bees, or midges. In the case of pests, advice can be sought from Protective Services.

15.2 Where birds are found to be nesting, tree work will be postponed until the end of the nesting season, other than where there is an immediate risk to safety.

15.3 Where trees have been identified as a roosting site for bats, work will not be carried out until an assessment has been undertaken by an appropriately qualified practitioner or Scottish Natural Heritage, other than where there is an immediate risk to safety.

15.4 Where possible, safe to do so and in appropriate areas arboriculture practices will be used to create wildlife habitats. This may include practices such as:-

- Retaining dead standing trees as natural habitats, preferring to prune rather than fell.
- Leave in situ and dead or felled trees in order to create wildlife habitats when safe to do so.

16. Public Utilities and Close Circuit Television (CCTV) and streetlighting

- 16.1 CCTV systems and streetlighting should be erected clear of any trees to enable a clear view of the areas covered. Where subsequent tree growth obscures all or part of public CCTV systems and street lighting appropriate works will be undertaken by the premise/land portfolio holder / duty holder to maintain the original level of coverage.
- 16.2 Where trees are in contact with or threaten public utilities appropriate pruning, or where necessary removal, works will be undertaken after an assessment of the site. In all cases works will seek to retain the value of the tree.

17. Vandalism and Antisocial Behaviour

- 17.1 Where it is claimed that trees are contributing to antisocial behaviour or crime the enquirer will be passed to the Police or the Council's Community Safety Team. Only in exceptional cases and where the written support of either the Police or the Council's Antisocial Behaviour Investigation Team is provided will appropriate works be undertaken.
- 17.2 Any work undertaken to a Council owned tree, unless it is overhanging or encroaching upon a private property, and in accordance with Common Law, will be considered as vandalism and will be reported to the Police as a criminal act. Members of the public who witness acts of vandalism to trees should report the matter directly to Police Scotland.

18. Tree Planting

- 18.1 The Council aims to create a wide, varied and sustainable tree stock. New tree planting can create opportunities to increase age and species diversity and improve the local landscape. To achieve this the Council or in partnership with the community will endeavour to plant new and replacement trees, where appropriate opportunity arises, to ensure continuous tree cover, with priority being given to appropriate species. Where trees are removed, we aim to replace them on a like for like basis. However, if this is not possible or appropriate to do so, we will replace with a suitable species at a suitable location.
- 18.2 *North Ayrshire's 2030 Woodland Plan: A Tree Planting Strategy: By 2030*, the Council aims to plant 108,000 trees in recognition of the importance of trees in carbon absorption as part of our overall approach to becoming carbon net-zero by 2030.

This will be delivered as part of a large-scale woodland tree planting programme to provide the anticipated level of carbon sequestration required to meet the net-zero ambition.

18.3 Before reaching a decision as to whether new or replacement tree(s) are to be planted, the Council will consider the Tree Planting Strategy objectives and take into account the following considerations:

- Will the new or replacement tree/s be of public benefit?
- Is there sufficient room for a new tree(s) to grow and develop without causing future problems?
- Is there a deficit of trees in the area?
- Was the removed tree part of a local feature or of historical significance?
- What species is appropriate for the site?
- Sources of planting stock.
- Relevant legislation.
- The Council's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

All new tree planting will be carried out during the winter months.

18.4 When planning a planting programme for open spaces within community areas, local Elected Members and community groups will be consulted wherever possible, with other council services being consulted where appropriate.

19. Review of Decisions

19.1 Where anyone disagrees and wishes to contend with the decisions taken in implementing this policy, North Ayrshire Council's Complaints Procedure should be used.

20. Review of Policy

The implementation of this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and the policy will be reviewed September 2026.