

Tree Management Principles 2025



Background



- Plymouth City Council manages ~70,000 trees across public land.
- Trees in the city deliver £4.6M annually in ecosystem services (carbon, air quality, flood mitigation).
- Integral to identity and resilience but face urban development and climate pressures.
- Updated in 2025 to align with Environment Act 2021 and best practice.

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Purpose of the document



Ensure public safety via risk-based inspections and maintenance.

Define criteria for tree works (felling, pruning, replacement).

Integrate tree management with planning and infrastructure projects.

Promote community engagement and transparency.

Support urban forestry goals: canopy cover, biodiversity, tree equity.

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Review process



- Driven by Environment Act 2021 and local commitments (Armada Way Review).
- Internal review by council officers across departments.
- External review by Plan for Trees Steering Group (partners: Woodland Trust, National Trust, etc.).
- Final comments from scrutiny committee to be incorporated.
- Ongoing 5-year reviews with partner input and legislative updates.

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Key Changes for 2025–2030



- Risk-Based Management: Expanded QTRA use and proactive surveys.
- Compliance: Full implementation of Environment Act 2021 duties.
- Urban Forestry: 6,000 new trees via Community Forest by 2030.
- Integration: Trees embedded in highways and public realm schemes.
- Community Engagement: Greater involvement and heritage promotion.

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Summary



- Framework prioritises safety, transparency, and sustainability.
- Trees embedded in planning and infrastructure projects.
- More equitable tree distribution and climate resilience.
- Stronger public engagement ensures trees remain vital assets.