

West End Village Society – Tree Group Monday 11 March 2013

1. Can we be provided with a map of TPOs within West End Parish (with exact location) or access to electronic version? [PW has printed a number of A3 plans showing the locations of TPO's within West End Parish. Basic details of TPOs can be found on the "My Protected Trees" search option of the Council website (sample copies available)]
2. Who is responsible for replacing trees? [If protected trees are removed by way of Consent and a tree replacement Condition is issued, the tree owner is responsible. The same applies if a tree is removed without consent and a Tree Replacement Notice is served. In both cases the Council will seek to have that Condition discharged].
3. Who makes the decision re: pruning, removal? [The Arboricultural Officer with regards to protected trees by way of delegated power]
4. What criteria are used for decisions re: trees? E.g. scenario: somebody living in "Blossom Row" is confronted with the loss of all/some cherry trees (concrete example is Jenner Drive), and whom is responsible for arranging and paying for the replacement of valued trees? [In that example, the trees are within land managed by SCC Highways as adopted highway. The Streetview image, dated Sept. 2008, showed that they were old cultivars and many appeared to be base and top worked grafts coming to the end of their safe useful life expectancy. SCC will have their own criteria for tree management, but replacement planting is likely to be low on their priorities with restricted budgets.
5. If any tree work is planned to be carried out, who are the various parties informed in advance? Can we from now on be included? How much advance notice is given? How can this be challenged? [With regards to agreed works on privately owned protected trees – it would be a courtesy for the tree owner to advise adjacent neighbours. It is not a requirement]
6. Are you (Mr Watts) informed by Surrey County Council on the recent vegetation works on Red Road, Brentmoor Road, Guildford Rd. Beldam Bridge Road, etc.? What is your opinion of the workmanship that has been carried out? [SCC is not obliged to consult with third parties with regards to tree management in relation to safe operational use of highways and footways within their control. However, they will liaise with the Borough on occasions, but this is a courtesy as opposed to a requirement, unless the tree is protected and even then, the Highways Act overrides the Town & Country Planning Act. With very limited budgets, the County do not have the resources to carry out works other than absolutely necessary. The Borough cannot comment on the extent or quality of the tree works County choose to exercise]

7. How accurate is the council's tree location/identification? Aerial/ GPS/ GIS [Very]
8. Would it be possible to utilise the Borough mapping system? [No]
9. What are the criteria for establishing TPOs and Landmark trees? [Powers to protect trees started in 1947 and are usually made by local planning authorities to protect selected trees and woodlands in the interests of amenity. The current legislation is the **Town & Country Planning [Tree Preservation] [England] Regulations 2012**. TPO's prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping or wilful destruction of protected trees without the consent of the LPA. Selection criteria exercised by the Arboricultural Officer include reasonable life expectancy, outwardly sound and healthy, visual amenity [visible to the general public], possibly uncommon or rarity value, historic importance. Additionally, there has to be a perceived threat to the tree.]
10. What is the procedure for establishing trees as TPOs? [Visual inspection / use of Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders – TEMPO (copies provided) – which is a very basic points based evaluation system. If suitable, there is a very strict procedure to ensure the Order is in accordance with the model set out by government. It is then formally served on the tree owner, properties abutting the land and often the tree itself, especially if the owner of the land is unknown. There is then a period of 28 days in which objections can be made. The Council must confirm the Order within 6 months.
11. Who is responsible for protecting trees with TPOs? [The Local Planning Authority – in this instance, Surrey Heath Borough Council.]

Tree Preservation Orders in Surrey Heath

Surrey Heath Borough Council covers an administrative area of almost 37 square miles. The Borough acquired its name because it includes extensive areas of heath and woodland including Chobham Common and Lightwater Country Park. The general character of the area is therefore one with a high density of tree cover which is an important landscape characteristic and one which needs to be maintained and protected.

The Borough Council has for many years protected trees using Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas and the current Statutory Instrument which provides for such is The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012. TPOs are usually made by local planning authorities to protect selected trees and woodlands in the interests of amenity. TPOs prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful destruction or wilful damage of protected trees without the consent of the local planning authority.

Local planning authorities have been using TPOs to protect trees and woodlands since the modern planning system was set up in 1947. The current legislation draws together all previous instruments into a streamlined process that is easier and therefore more efficient to manage.

The Borough Council TPO's comprise the following:

- There is a total of 3.4Sq km of area TPO designations which equates to a massive 3.5% of the total land coverage in Surrey Heath or put more realistically, 14.5% of the populated space in the borough.
- There are 629 TPO's [as of March 2013]
- 141 area designations were made prior to 1980, the earliest of these dating to 1965. These are problematic and difficult to manage and consideration given to resurvey, revocation of existing Orders and new, up to date Orders made.

A number of TPO's affect trees within land administered and managed by Surrey County Council Highways and the Highways Act over rides the Town and Country Planning Act. SCC technically does not require the consent of the Borough to manage these trees. However, we do have a very good working relationship with the County and liaise with them on many aspects of their management and have been able to agree on replacement planting at certain high profile locations. One particular instance recently involved the removal of one of the avenue of Wellingtonia at Yockley Close. The County agreed through discussion, to provide a replacement to assist with the continuity of the Avenue and this was a Condition of the consent.

Additionally, the Borough, usually through the Greenspace Team and the Rangers, are involved in aspects of tree management and mitigation, often on land not within Council ownership or responsibility. This is potentially problematic and has legal implications. These matters are currently being looked at.

Clearly, with a large and increasing number of TPO's, public interest and concern together with development pressure, the benefit from having a Borough Tree Strategy cannot be dismissed.

One of the many initiatives open to local residents who have an interest or indeed a passion for trees within their area, is the National Tree Warden Scheme. Tree Wardens can assist the long term management of trees and their contribution to the local landscape in many different ways, from organising local surveys of trees, identifying potential planting locations, advising the Borough Council of potential threats to trees etc.

There is a very active Surrey based scheme operating throughout the County offering support, training and encouragement to interested individuals. Further details can be found at www.surreytreewardens.org.uk/

The following is a list of useful organisations provided courtesy of the Surrey Tree Wardens Scheme.

Organisation	Description	Website
Agroforestry Research Trust	Researches into temperate agroforestry and into all aspects of plant cropping and uses	www.agroforestry.co.uk
Allotment Forestry	Promotes the use of local woodland products in the garden and allotment	http://www.allotmentforestry.com/index.htm
Ancient Tree Forum	Researches into and promotes good practice in conserving old trees	www.woodland-trust.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/
Arboricultural Association	Trade body for British Arboriculturists and tree consultants	www.trees.org.uk
Arboricultural Information Exchange	Online noticeboard for sharing information and news about tree care	www.aie.org.uk

Bedgebury Pinetum	Large and varied collection of conifers in Kent	www.bedgeburypinetum.org.uk
British Trees	An enthusiast's site on native trees and their characteristics	http://www.british-trees.com/index.htm
Brogdale	Home to the National Fruit Collections, in Kent	www.brogdale.org
Click-forestry-directory	An extensive listing of suppliers and organizations concerned with wood, trees and forestry	www.click-forestry-directory.co.uk
Coppice Products	A site about coppicing and coppicers	www.coppice-products.co.uk
Eco-Lots	Free online advertising for rural products and services, including timber and wood fuel	www.ecolots.co.uk
English Woodlands (Burrow Nursery)	Supplier of native and other trees, in Heathfield, East Sussex	www.ewburrownursery.co.uk
Forestry Commission	Research and advice on national woods and forests	www.forestry.gov.uk
National Hedgelaying Society	Encourages the art of hedgelaying and keeps local styles in existence	www.hedgelaying.org.uk
National Urban Forestry Unit	Charity aimed at making people aware of the contribution trees make to the quality of life in towns	www.nufu.org.uk

Pope's Trees	Dave Pope is a Tree Warden in Surrey and this website is his record of interesting trees from around the world. Take time to scroll through some of the pictures and enjoy reading some interesting facts.	http://www.popestrees.com/
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew	World-famous gardens, based in south-west London and at Wakehurst Place, West Sussex	griffin.rbgkew.org.uk
Royal Forestry Society	Exists to further the appreciation, understanding and knowledge of trees, woods and forests	http://www.rfs.org.uk/
Sir Harold Hillier Gardens	In Hampshire. Said to hold the greatest collection of hardy trees and shrubs in the world	www.hillier.hants.gov.uk
Small Woods Association	Supports and promotes the owners and carers of small woodlands	http://www.smallwoods.org.uk/
Sussex & Surrey Coppice Group	Promotes the local coppice industry and the regeneration of coppice woodlands	www.woodnet.org.uk/sscg
Tree Council, The	Parent body for all Tree Warden groups	http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/
Tree Matters	Web site for The Dendrologist magazine	http://www.treematters.freeserve.co.uk/

Tree Register of the British Isles	Collects data on notable trees in Britain and Ireland	http://www.tree-register.org/
Trees for Cities	Trees for Cities is an independent charity working with local communities on tree-planting and landscaping projects.	www.treesforcities.org
Trees for London	Charity promoting the planting and care of trees in the capital	http://www.treesforlondon.org.uk/
Woodland Investment Management	Helps people find small woodlands to buy	http://www.woodlands.co.uk/
Woodland Trust	Research and action-based charity for Britain's woods	http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/
WoodNet	Online services for wood producers and users	http://www.woodnet.org.uk/