

How to...

Protect and preserve your local trees and woods



Who is this guide for?

This is for people who want to know how to protect and preserve trees as well as pockets of local woodland.

What will this guide help you to do?

It will help you to understand the legal background to the protection of trees and woods and who best to approach to raise your concerns and next steps.

Why are trees and woods felled?

Individual trees can be felled for many legitimate reasons e.g. health and safety issues and damage to property. Within woodlands, trees may also be felled to sustainably provide timber or forest products; to make space for new or existing trees or to maintain other important habitats. If there is an up to date woodland management plan in place then the rationale for the felling should be explained in there.

If you have concerns about particular tree felling then you can...

1 Find out who owns the land the trees/woods sit on

The first step is to find out who owns the land – for example are the trees in a private garden or in a public park or greenspace?

2 Know your legal protections

Next step is to understand what legal protections apply:

- **TPOs** – Some trees are protected by TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders) – these are usually made by a local planning authority to protect specific trees or particular woodland from inappropriate management, deliberate damage or destruction. This could include felling, lopping, topping, uprooting or other wilful damage. More information on TPO's can be found at – [/woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/in-your-community/tree-preservation-orders/](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/in-your-community/tree-preservation-orders/)

• **Conservation Areas** –

Some trees are potentially protected by right of being in a designated Conservation Area, and private residents or others would need to notify the council in advance before any work on the trees can go ahead. This notification time is to allow the council to consider whether a TPO should be placed on the tree(s) in question.

• **Other Legal Constraints** –

Include a felling license, a system operated by the Forestry Commission which means that there are limits on the volume of timber that can be felled in woodlands without prior permission from the Forestry Commission. There are also wildlife considerations – bats and their roosts are legally protected and nesting birds are also safeguarded.



3 Understand who to raise your concerns with

- If the tree/woodland is on public land, you need to approach the Council as the first port of call and see who the best point of contact is; this may be a Tree or other Officer, depending on your local authority. They can explain the reasons behind the removal
- If the land is owned by another organisation, you can contact them directly to understand what is going on
- If the tree/woodland is on private land, unless the tree has a TPO or in a Conservation Area (you can check this with the Council) or has other legal constraints, there is no obligation for any official intervention
- If the land forms part of a new, planned development, then you can comment or raise an objection as part of the planning process. More information on how to do that can be found here: [/woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/in-your-community/write-an-objection/](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/in-your-community/write-an-objection/)

4 Taking it further

If you are not happy with the response you received, you could approach your local Councillor and see what action can be taken, and how they can support you.

You could also set up a community campaign group. More information on how to do this can be found at – [/woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/in-your-community/](http://woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/in-your-community/)



An asset - not a liability

City of Trees is passionate about bringing underused, underloved woodland back into use for the community. By transforming pockets of urban woodland from flytipped liability into a space for local people and schools – it shows the landowners the true value of these amazing green assets. Woodlands that are cared for by the community can be less likely to be built upon as they have the support of residents.

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