

City Trees

There are over 86,000 trees in the city



9.8% of the city benefits from canopy cover

Looking after our trees

25,000



We manage & maintain more than 25,000 trees with the help of external contractors.

Our highways contractor Colas maintains over 8,000 trees that fall within highway land because their highway location means that they have slightly different management requirements than trees elsewhere.



Tree maintenance varies with species, age of tree and location.

Trees close to highways need regular trimming and attention in order to ensure that they maintain good canopy shape and to keep the highway area safe.

Nesting season

If tree works are required in nesting season (February – August) and the tree has evidence of nesting, work will be delayed until the end of the nesting season.

Newly planted trees need more frequent watering in the summer during their first few years.

No tree work will be undertaken on trees where there is potential to impact upon any protected species (for example bats or badgers) until consultation has been undertaken.

Street trees have shorter life spans than those in green spaces.

Any work that is subsequently undertaken will be in accordance with current legislation, policy and best practice guidance.

Removing Trees

We encourage good tree management wherever possible to maintain trees to make sure they remain safe and healthy.

Trees would not be removed unless there is a demonstrable arboricultural, safety or legal reason for the removal.

There can be a few situations where it may become necessary for a tree to be felled:



The tree has become dangerous



As a response to an instance of pest or disease



The tree has died



The tree is causing damage

Where a tree falls within private land, such as the garden of a residential property, then the responsibility for appropriate maintenance of the tree falls to the owner of that land.

Benefits of Trees

Economic



Improving the environment with trees encourages people to spend time out and about in their area with benefits for the local businesses they visit and the wider economy.

Health and wellbeing



Trees can have a wide variety of physical and mental health benefits. Just being able to see trees and other natural features can help reduce stress and anxiety. They can also help with air quality.

Biodiversity



Trees can provide space for a variety of species which is especially important in an urban environment.

Environment and climate change



Trees cool the environment and reduce urban heat through various processes, making spaces more comfortable for people particularly at times when it is especially warm.



Trees and other 'green infrastructure' play a vital role in building Portsmouth's resilience to climate change.



Trees can reduce rates of surface run off at times of heavy rainfall reducing risks of flash flooding and easing pressure on sewers.

Protecting our trees

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

The Council can make a Tree Preservation Order if it would be in the interests of amenity to make provision for the preservation of trees or woodlands in an area of the city. Particular factors include visibility; individual, collective and wider impact; as well as other factors including importance to nature conservation or response to climate change.

A TPO prohibits the undertaking of certain activities on trees including: cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage, wilful destruction, without the Council's written consent.

Where planning permission is needed including works to those protected under TPOs our dedicated arboricultural officer is responsible for assessing applications, providing guidance and administering TPOs.

If a tree is subject to a TPO you would need to contact the Council before undertaking any work to it. The council's arboricultural officer can provide further advice.

Conservation areas

If a tree is located within one of the city's conservation areas it is afforded certain protections even if it is not subject to a TPO.

You may need to contact the Council at least 6 weeks prior to commencing any works on such trees. Again it is advisable to contact us in advance to determine what may be required of you before undertaking any work on a tree in a conservation area.



Planting across the city



Our parks team have an annual programme of tree planting, maintenance and management. Beyond this the Council is actively looking for opportunities to increase tree cover in the city:

- The new Country Park at Horsea Island will involve the planting of more than 50,000 new trees and shrubs.

- The Council is pursuing localised tree planting in a range of locations to enhance existing green spaces and deliver new greening within the street.

We've recently undertaken a city wide tree cover study which will help inform planting in the future. It has highlighted some clear areas of the city that would benefit from new planting efforts.

In the long term green infrastructure including trees will be promoted through the Local Plan. This includes ensuring that new development happening in the city considers green infrastructure as a priority