

## Arboriculture management and works

We understand how important trees are in providing valuable habitats for wildlife and improving the biodiversity of the land we manage. This makes your neighbourhood a nicer place to live.

### How do we manage trees on our estates?

We have a commitment to good arboriculture management and adhere to industry best practise when surveying and carrying out works to our trees.

- We split each region (Wiltshire, Hampshire, Somerset and Dorset, Devon and Cornwall) into three lots and carry out detailed surveys on all our trees every three years. We ensure they are safe and identify any works that may be required
- Each year, any trees requiring emergency works will be prioritised and made safe.
- All surveys are carried out by qualified professional tree inspectors.
- All identified works are then carried out by qualified subcontractors who are required to reach a national standard set out by the Arboricultural Association and the British Standards Institute.
- All trees are managed with a primary focus on risk.
- We check to make sure trees don't have nesting birds or roosting bats in them before we do any work.
- Before we carry out any work, we check all trees to see if they are in a conservation area or protected by a tree preservation order. If they are, we have to submit a planning application to get permission to do the work. This can take up to 12 weeks. This is a legal requirement and failure to do this could lead to prosecution and a substantial fine.

### What if I have a tree in my garden?

Trees within gardens are the customer's responsibility, as set out in their tenancy agreement. This is because we don't specify what customers are allowed to plant in their gardens.

### What are the criteria for carrying out tree works?

- If a tree is in a dangerous condition due to disease, or is dying
- If a tree has been identified as causing damage to a built structure
- In line with good practice such as re-pollarding (pruning)
- If a tree is obstructing a highway
- To carry out a repair
- We may remove trees to achieve a management objective. For example if we'd like to replant with a more suitable species
- If a tree has been damaged in severe storms or has become unstable
- Removing dead branches that may fall.

### What is not considered reason for tree work?

It is nationally recognised that the following are not reasons for carrying out tree works:

- Blocking of light
- Bird mess. Solution: use bird scarers or spikes to prevent birds perching on areas they aren't wanted
- Dropped leaves. Solution: collect leaves and use them for compost or put them in your green recycling bag
- Blocked television reception. Solution: relocate the television aerial onto a taller mast or a different area of the building
- Blocked satellite reception. Solution: speak to your service provider as they are obliged to ensure you receive the product you pay for, and can raise the satellite dish onto a mast.