

Draft

Introduction

The City & County of Swansea highly values its tree stock. The Council recognises the diverse and far reaching positive effects that trees have on the landscape and character of the city. The Council also recognises both the human and environmental benefits that a healthy, sustainable tree stock provides

Approximately 18.8% of the County is covered by tree canopy compared to a national average of 16.8%. Tree canopy cover in the urban areas of Swansea is 19.8%. (Based on Natural Resources Wales figures). In the outlying towns and villages, trees form important local landmarks and landscape features and add greatly to the setting of important buildings and in the creation of a sense of place.

At the time of writing the council has 750 woodlands and woodland groups that contain an estimated 250'000 trees and 28'000 individual trees mapped and surveyed in Parks, Schools, Cemeteries, Housing land and Highways.

The aim of this tree policy is to ensure the safety, maintenance, care, protection and longevity of the authority's tree stock.

- This policy will describe how the authority proactively surveys and inspects its trees and will provide detail on the cycles and timings of surveys and inspections.
- This policy will describe all aspects of how the authority will manage trees on its land and detail its response to tree related enquiries including timescales wherever possible. The aim is for effectively communicating, educating and engaging with the general public with regard to trees and tree issues.
- This policy will provide detail on what types of tree work the authority will carry out and what types of tree work the authority will not carry out and provides detail and reasons for these decisions. This will both inform the public and help to manage the public's expectations
- This policy will help maintain and encourage biodiversity by recognising the importance of trees as valued habitat for wildlife. It will recognise the value of the tree stock and encourage the conservation, positive management and appropriate planting of new trees and woodlands including donated and memorial trees. This will help maintain and improve upon the percentage of tree cover within the authority creating the social benefits that accompany these improvements such as well-being and quality of life.

- This policy will help mitigate the effects of climate change. It can do this by being a catalyst for future tree and woodland planting programmes and tree replacement programmes. It can also recognise the importance of trees in relation to filtering air of harmful particulates, providing shelter from the elements, producing oxygen, lessening flood risks and locking up carbon.
- This policy can help maintain and improve the landscape across the county and improve the quality of life for both residents and visitors to the city by promoting the importance, selection, planting and good maintenance of trees, softening the hard landscape and promoting a pleasant, green setting in which to live and work.