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Hedges on the highway

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Hedges on private property

Hedge owners' responsibilities

It is important that owners of land next to the highway ensure their hedges are regularly cut back to the boundary and that trees do not overhang, causing an obstruction of roads and pavements. This is to protect the safety of pedestrians and vehicle users.

Reporting a nuisance hedge on the highway

Report a problem or overgrown hedge on the highway

If you report an overgrown or an overhanging tree or hedge on private land, we will carry out an inspection.

If it endangers or obstructs road and pavement users, we will contact the owner requesting that they cut it back.

If the overgrown tree or hedge is not cut back by the owner within our timescales, we may also serve them with a notice to do the work under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980. If this is not done and we have to do the work then the cost of this will be recharged to the owner.

In some rare cases, if cutting back private hedges would disturb wild birds, we may allow the owners to delay the work until the bird nesting season is over. This is because there are laws against disturbing wild bird nests.

Hedge cutting on the highway

We are responsible for cutting hedges next to roads and pavements in Blackpool that are not on private land to ensure the highway is passable for pedestrians and vehicles and that sightlines are not obstructed.

When we cut hedges

We usually cut our hedges between August and October.

We never cut during the bird nesting season (from mid-March to the end of July).

How often we cut hedges

Ideally, hedges should be cut on a two or even three years. For environmental reasons, it is not recommended to cut the same hedge every year except where necessary for road safety or if the hedges contain fast growing species. The reason for this is that most trees and shrubs that form hedges only produce flowers, nuts and berries on year-old twigs, cutting hedges every year would mean that they would provide less food for insects, birds and mammals.

Trees, shrubs and hedge issues

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