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Trees, shrubs and hedge issues

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Privately owned trees and hedges

It is a tree/hedge owner's legal responsibility to make sure that trees and hedges on their land are safe and well-maintained.

If a neighbour's tree or hedge is crossing into your property, you should contact the owner.

Blackpool Council **do not deal** with trees on private land, unless it is causing an issue on council-owned land.

You can trim branches and roots that cross into your property, but if you do more than this, your neighbour can take you to court for damaging their property. Before you do any work, you should look for a professional arboriculturist. It's also recommended that you speak to your neighbour first. You should also check to make sure there isn't a [Tree Preservation Order](#) in place or you are in a [conservation area](#).

You can always [check with the Land Registry if you are unsure who owns land or property](#)

Tree Preservation Orders

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be placed on single trees, groups of trees and even whole woodlands. If a TPO is in force you must apply for consent from planning before carrying out any work to the trees. If you are not sure if there is a TPO in place, you need to check.

[More information on Tree Preservation Orders](#)

Pruning trees in a conservation area

Conservation area status gives trees within the area special protection. If your property/land is [within a conservation area](#) then you will normally need to get planning permission **before doing any work on a tree**.

[More information on the pruning of trees in a conservations area](#).

High hedges

We are only able to deal with complaints by owners of domestic propert affected by evergreen hedges that are over 2 m high. A non-returnable fee is charged for this service set at £450. Please speak with our [planning enforcement team for more help and advice](#).

[Further information relating to high hedges](#).

Hedges on the highway

For [more information on how we deal with hedges on the highway and problems from overhanging bushes](#) please visit the hedges on the highways page.

Council owned trees

It is our legal responsibility to reduce and remove tree related risks on council owned land, this can include:

- Parks and green spaces
- Cemeteries
- Council buildings
- Roads and highways

[Blackpool Coastal Hosuing](#) are responsible for the trees and hedges on their land

All council-owned trees are inspected regularly for structural weakness/defects, pests and disease, obstructive branches and wildlife habitat.

If you are worried about a tree on council-owned land please contact our Customer First team.

What we do and don't maintain

Trees causing shade or overhanging

We will not prune or fell a council-owned tree to improve natural light in a property.

There is no legal requirement for tree owners to remove or prune their trees to improve the amount of natural light that reaches a neighbouring property.

If natural light is being blocked by the growth of a council-owned hedge then action may be taken to reduce the problem.

Trees causing an obstruction or interference

If a council-owned tree or hedge is causing an obstruction on the highway then we will take appropriate action to ensure the safety of road users and pedestrian.

Solar panels

We will not fell or prune council-owned trees to allow for the installation of solar panels. The provider's survey before installation should highlight these issues and provide recommendations.

TV/Satellite signal

We wil not fell or prune a council-owned tree to prevent interference with TV or satellite signals.

Street lights

We will undertake work to council-owned trees to maintain street light visibility and clear sight lines at junctions and access points.

Trees causing seasonal problems

Fallen leaves

We will not fell or prune a council-owned tree to reduce falling leaves. Clearance of leaves from gardens and gutters are considered part of normal property maintenance and the property owner or tenant's responsibility.

Footpaths and parks and greenspaces are cleared as part of our normal street cleaning or grounds maintenance work.

Bird droppings

We will not fell or prune a council-owned tree in order to reduce or remove the risk of bird droppings.

Bird droppings may be a nuisance, but they are not considered a sufficient reason to prune or remove a tree. Nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (and other related wildlife law). Bird droppings can usually be removed with warm soapy water.

Sap falling on surfaces

We will not fell or prune a council-owned tree in order to reduce or remove the risk of honeydew or other sticky substances falling from trees. Honeydew is caused by aphids feeding on the tree which then excrete a sugary sap. This is a natural seasonal event. There is little that can be done to remove the aphid, so pruning will have little long-term effect and may only increase the problem. Warm soapy water will remove the substance, particularly if you clean your vehicle as soon as possible.

Trees causing problems to building and construction

Views from your property

We will not fell or prune a council-owned tree to improve the view from a private property. There is no right in law to a view and we have no obligation to improve a view obstructed by a tree.

Trees causing damage to property (including drains)

Without sufficient conclusive evidence we will not fell or prune a council-owned tree that is suspected of causing damage to property or services.

Examples of this evidence includes:

- Structural engineers report
- Arboricultural subsidence report
- Soil analysis and trial pit/borehole sampling

We will not fell or prune a council-owned tree to prevent roots entering a drain that is already broken or damaged.

Tree roots typically only invade drains that are already broken or damaged. Trees themselves rarely break or damage a drain in the first place.

Drives

No council-owned trees will be removed to accommodate a driveway or property that already has an existing sufficient driveway.

Additional information

Tree preservation orders

Hedges on the highway

Blackpool Council

Municipal Buildings
Corporation Street
Blackpool
FY1 1NF

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