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# Trees – the care and maintenance of trees on Hanover land

Hanover is responsible for maintaining all the trees on the land it owns or manages in a safe condition. In order to do this, we must ensure that the trees are regularly inspected by a qualified arboriculturalist or tree consultant for signs that they are unsafe, and take action to deal with any trees or branches that are a cause of concern.

## What is a tree?

There is no legal definition of a tree. Hanover has decided that plants with a trunk that has a diameter greater than 75mm (approx. 3 inches), measured at 1.5 meters (approx. 5 feet) above the ground will be considered as trees.

## Tree Preservation

As a general rule, Hanover will not allow trees to be cut down or over pruned unless there is good reason for doing so. We will not normally cut down trees simply because they are casting shade over a property or garden or causing inconvenience by dropping leaves or blossom.

Where trees are cut down due to safety or other reason, Hanover will try to replace the tree with an suitable substitute, possibly in a better location.

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Tree stumps will not normally be ground out unless they present a clear health and safety hazard or where it has been specifically agreed with residents.

## **Management Plan**

Hanover has now developed a management plan to deal with trees on our estates.

- An initial survey by a qualified arboriculturalist or tree consultant of all trees on the estate to check that they are safe and to identify works required in the future to ensure they remain safe and healthy.
- A tree action plan will be drawn up which might include:
  - Restricting access to areas where a tree is an immediate hazard
  - Urgent work to remove hazards
  - Planned works to resolve less urgent issues
  - More frequent formal checks due to condition or location
- Works to ensure trees of all sizes remain attractive should be discussed and agreed with residents
- A reassessment by a qualified tree surgeon will be required every 5 years

## **Who pays for the arboriculturalist's or tree consultant's survey and tree work?**

In the same way as for other grounds maintenance, all tree works and maintenance including the initial survey are paid from the service charge fund.

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**For rented properties:** In order to spread the cost and prevent large fluctuations in the service charge, programmed works costing over £1000 will be dealt with in the same way as any other asset in the renewals fund.

**For homeownership properties:** works costing over £1000 are normally charged to the reserve fund.

## **Trees on neighbouring properties affecting Hanover sites**

There are no laws or regulations that can force an owner to undertake work on trees on their land, apart from the general duties of any owner to maintain the trees in a safe condition. However, if there are issues with overhanging trees from a neighbouring property, Hanover will approach the owner to see if they are willing to take any action. If they are not willing to undertake the work, in certain circumstances, Hanover may be able to trim the trees back to the property boundary and return the timber to the owner. The cost of this work would be paid for from the service charge fund.