



Looking after Hertfordshire's Highway Trees in the District of St Albans

How Hertfordshire manage trees on the Highway Network

In the District of St Albans, we are working in partnership with St Albans City & District Council (SADC) to manage highways trees on residential roads.

Our day to day maintenance service is designed to ensure the highway is maintained to a safe standard for the assets that we are responsible for.

Priority goes to dealing with matters that pose an imminent danger to people or property, with all other faults then being dealt with on a priority basis depending on what budget we have.

Our Tree Service

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) is the Highway Authority for Hertfordshire and is responsible for over 230,000 trees County wide with more than 50,000 highway trees within the District of St Albans that form part of the public highway (highway trees). Specialist tree surgeons carry out:

- routine and reactive tree health and safety inspections
- tree maintenance work, such as pruning
- removal and replacement, when required

We manage the Tree Service through planned and reactive works

The planned works are identified and prioritised by a rolling three-year tree condition inspection programme; this means every tree we manage is visually checked by a qualified person once every three years. Work identified following that inspection is prioritised for action using a risk zoning method in relation to the danger posed to people and/or

property and the overall health of the tree. Our District and Borough council colleagues who manage trees on our behalf follow, as a minimum, the same inspection and works programme specification although it is delivered and managed through their own specialist teams.

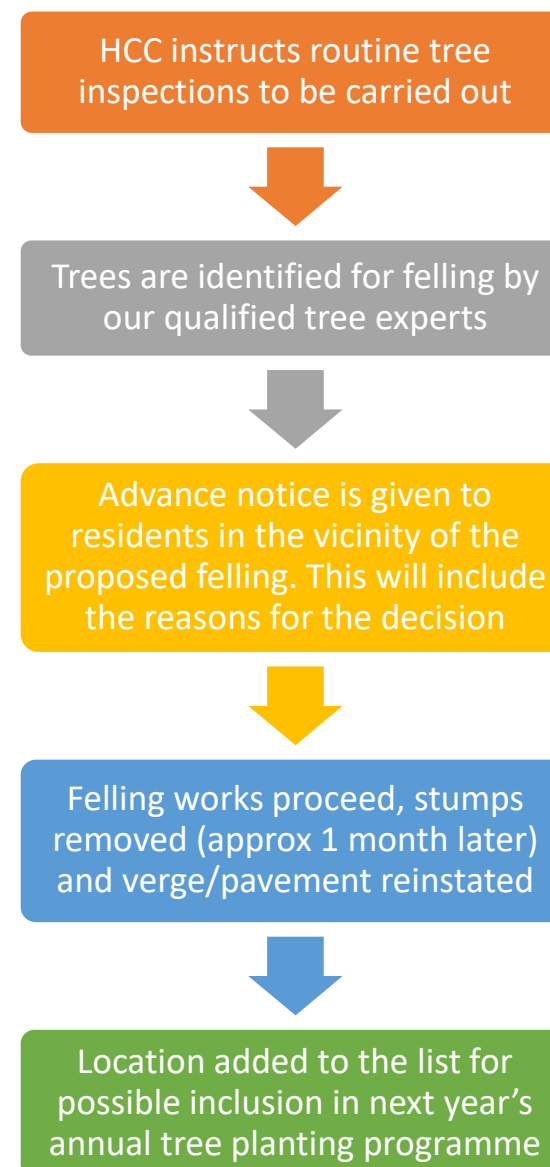
Planned tree works

The aim of our annual highway tree maintenance programme is to look after trees so they can remain healthy and not pose a danger to people or property.

The programme will include tree surgery (pruning) and removal of trees that cannot be saved because they are either dead, dying or diseased. We will give advance notice to nearby properties for trees which are planned to be removed.

Our annual programme also includes a tree replacement programme, aimed at replacing highways trees that were felled in the previous year's operation. The planting season is between November and March.

Process for cutting down (felling) trees during our annual programme

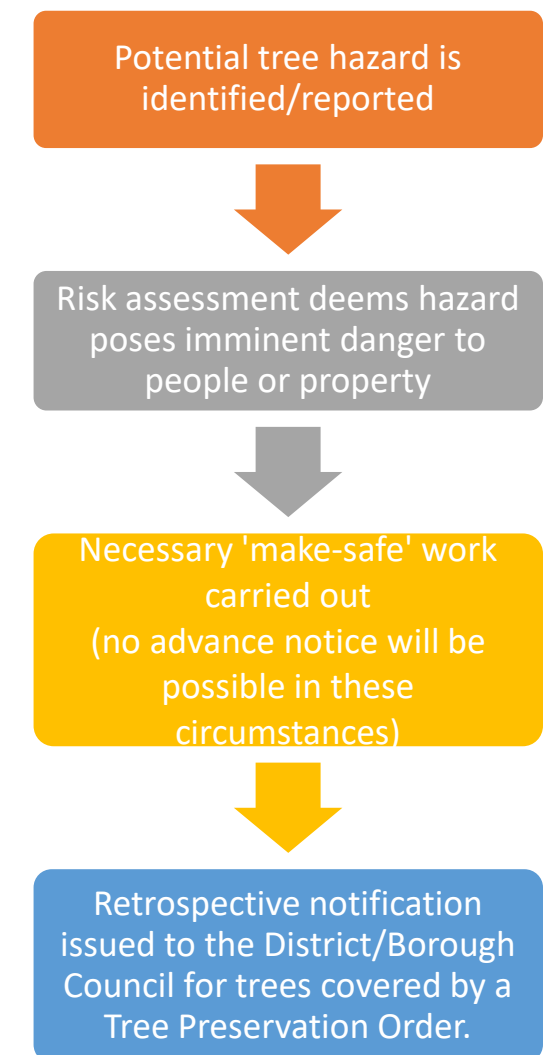


Reactive tree works

Our reactive works rectify hazards that pose an imminent danger to people or property ("make safe works"):

Make safe works are triggered by either: our safety inspectors or as a result of reports from the public. These works are often undertaken following storms as emergency works. Typically, this involves felling or cutting back dead, dying, diseased or damaged trees that pose an imminent danger to highway users or property, including blocked roads.

Process for emergency works to make an immediate hazard safe



What you can expect from the Highway tree maintenance service?

Cases which should be reported Herts County Council	
✓	Potentially hazardous trees or rural and highspeed roads
✓	Trees affecting public access, highway safety and visibility on rural and highspeed road
✓	Tree damage to highway surfaces
✓	Tree damage to buildings
✓	Overhanging tree branches when a physical obstruction is caused, such as preventing access
✓	Trees hit by vehicles
✓	Trees and hedges growing on private property causing an obstruction
✓	Trees on Herts Rights of Ways (report to HCC)

What to report to St Albans City & District Council?	
✓	Potentially hazardous trees in urban and residential areas
✓	Trees affecting public access, highway safety and visibility in urban and residential areas
✓	Overhanging tree branches when a physical obstruction is caused, such as preventing access in urban and residential areas
✓	Trees physically touching properties in urban and residential areas
✓	Trees touching streetlights in urban and residential areas
All other issues should be reported to the HCC Customer Services Centre	

Report an issue

Reporting online is the quickest and easiest way to let us know of any issues. We will always aim to respond to your enquiry as quickly as possible. Please include location details, and a photo where possible, to help us find the issue quicker.

If there is a problem with a tree in on a verge is a residential street you ca report this to St Albans City & District Council Monday to Friday between 9am to 5pm. At all other times please contact the HCC Customer Service Centre.

Trees on rural and highspeed roads are managed directly by HCC and any issues should always be reported to HCC.

St Albans City & District Council, Parks and Green Spaces

- Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

01727 819366
www.stalbans.gov.uk/gm

HCC Customer Service Centre:

- Trees on rural and highspeed Roads
- Out of hours call outs

0300 123 4040
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/faultreporting

Cases that Herts County Council nor St Albans City & District are responsible for	
✗	Loss of light to a property or garden
✗	Interference to Solar panels
✗	Tree debris - fruits, nuts, seeds, leaves or sap
✗	Bird fouling or bird nesting
✗	Interference to Satellite, TV and phone reception
✗	Interference to telephone lines
✗	Pollens and allergies
✗	Height or size of the tree

Replacing trees felled because of Planned or Reactive Tree Works

Where possible, we will plant a new tree in approximately the same position which usually takes place in the winter.

Overgrown hedges / tree branches

If you report a problem about an overgrown hedge or tree branch that's causing a danger or an obstruction on the highway, we will carry out an inspection. If we consider that it is causing a danger or an obstruction, we will either:

- contact the landowner, asking them to arrange for their hedge or tree branch to be cut back
- or if the hedge or tree branch is ours, we will carry out the necessary make-safe work to ensure the highway is safe and operational In line with the position set out above if an overhanging branch

Trees containing nesting birds

Prior to tree works commencing a site-specific risk assessment is carried out by our agents and contractors, which considers all factors that could cause harm to wildlife or damage the environment. Works may be postponed and rearranged

If a Highway tree is damaging your property

If a highway tree is damaging your property, the first thing to do is contact your home insurance company for advice. If you have evidence to show that a highway tree has damaged your property, or could cause damage in the future, then you can report this online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/faultreporting or call us on 0300 123 4047.

Leaves

Autumn leaf fall is a seasonal event that is a natural part of the life of a tree. Leaf fall is considered to be a minor issue that can be easily rectified by the owner/occupier affected by the leaf fall. Leaves can be collected and placed in the garden waste recycling bin for collection. We will not fell or prune highway trees solely to stop problems caused by natural and/ or seasonal phenomena.

Our Tree Strategy

Our [Tree strategy and guidance](#) (PDF 130KB) explains the rules we follow, including when we decide to replant or prune.