

## CCC's Strategy for Trees and Woodlands 2023-2028

See also:

[www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1221301/ccc-tree-management-strategy.pdf](http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1221301/ccc-tree-management-strategy.pdf)

[www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/biodiversity/ash-dieback-disease/#](http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/biodiversity/ash-dieback-disease/#)

### 1. INTRODUCTION – WHY A TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY?

The delivery of a Tree and Woodland strategy will enable CCC to demonstrate that it is delivering against both the Nature Emergency and the Climate Change Emergency which it and Welsh Government have declared. Successful delivery of the proposed strategy will provide nature-based solutions, relevant to these linked agendas. By managing our trees and woodlands appropriately and by planting more trees and more woodland in the right places, for the right reasons, we will go some way to mitigating both emergencies and delivering the numerous other benefits which trees and woodlands provide.

In addition, this strategy has been prepared in response to item 23 of Carmarthenshire County Council Moving Forward in Carmarthenshire: the next 5 years (2017 – 2022): -

*23. Promote a tree strategy to improve the environment and mitigate the effects of air and noise pollution in our more populated areas.*

However, this strategy is broader in its remit than Action 23 and it reflects CCC's wider management responsibilities for trees and woodlands across its estate, and where and why it would like to plant more trees and woodland, and the steps it need to take in order to do this. It sets out priorities for action.

At present the remit of this strategy is restricted to CCC owned or managed land, and adjoining land where tree issue impact on CCC's responsibilities e.g., trees on private land adjacent to the highway.

In recognition of its wider responsibilities across the county CCC will continue to run the Coed Cymru project, providing advice to private woodland owners on management.

CCC will continue to comment on NRW Forest Resource Plans for the WG Woodland Estate and larger new planting schemes in Special Landscape Areas, or similar.

It is advised that the strategy is reviewed in 2028.

### **Trees and woodlands provide a wealth of benefits**

Trees provide us with many benefits, they create a sense of place. Trees, and places with trees are recognised as having a positive impact on mental and physical health: they are places where people choose to relax and exercise. They are key components of Green Infrastructure initiatives.

We are regularly reminded of the environmental benefits associated with trees and woodlands; they absorb and store greenhouse gases, and sequester carbon, helping to mitigate climate change, they can help improve air quality, reduce noise pollution, and they create a cooling effect in built up areas. Trees can help reduce flooding by increasing absorption and infiltration of surface water, and they provide a habitat for wildlife and contributing to ecological connectivity and ecosystem resilience, they enhance the landscape. In addition to the above, the trees and woodlands in our agricultural landscapes provide timber and firewood, shelter for stock, they intercept agricultural run-off (phosphates etc) and their establishment can improve the workings of the farm in terms of Health and Safety by reducing the number of agricultural operation on e.g. steep slopes.

Trees and woodlands have an economic value, they usually increase property values, and making areas more attractive to investors. They create attractive areas in town centres where people use shops and restaurants and will choose to spend time. A green environment makes for a better work environment; employees who have views of trees and access to areas with trees feel happier and perform better. Visual Amenity Value of trees in monetary terms can be calculated by the Helliwell or the Tempo System, and we are increasingly aware of the benefits to both our physical and mental health of spending time in wooded or environments with trees.

The strategy reflects the fact that well managed trees and woodland provide multiple benefits.

## **2. FORMAT OF THE STRATEGY**

The strategy is set out in tables which address CCC's different service areas. Delivery of the actions it contains will address different responsibilities and agendas:

- Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Carmarthenshire's Well-being Plan (PSB) and Carmarthenshire County Council's Well-being Objectives Well-being Objective 3 - Enabling our communities and environment to be healthy, safe, and prosperous
- Environment Act (Wales) 2016
- Carmarthenshire County Council's Environment Act Forward Plan 2023-2025
- Planning Policy Wales 11 – with reference to both Chapter 6 and to Green and Blue Infrastructure
- The declaration by the Welsh Government and CCC of both a Climate and Nature Emergency, and the role trees and woodland have in mitigating climate change and delivering opportunities for Nature Recovery.
- It is consistent with the Well Manged Highway Infrastructure – A Code of Practice 2016
- Design Commission for Wales Placemaking Charter to which CCC is a signatory

### 3. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGY:

The 10 guiding principles developed by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) provide guiding principles for managing and planting new trees and woodlands. CCC is adopting these principles in delivering its tree strategy:

1. **Protect existing forests** – we should all take measures to combat de-forestation and the loss of trees
2. **Work together with local people** – new tree and woodland planting works best when it provides additional benefits for local communities
3. **Manage existing woodlands and design new woodlands to maximise biodiversity** recovery and meet multiple goals such as increasing biodiversity, helping the local economy, reducing carbon emissions, providing accessible Green Infrastructure
4. **Select appropriate areas for new tree and woodland planting** - Some areas such as peatlands, species-rich grasslands and wetlands already contribute significantly to carbon sequestration, in addition to the other ecosystem services that they provide. These areas are not suitable for tree planting as trees can displace the existing biodiversity and do more harm than good. Some of the best places to plant trees are those from which woodland has been lost  
Aim to improve the overall extent and ecological connectivity provided by new trees and woodland areas, and look to connect or expand existing woodlands
5. **Use natural regeneration wherever possible** - Let nature do the work for you. Natural regeneration is the process through which a woodland regrows after a piece of land has been abandoned, or when a woodland begins to restore itself after trees have been removed. It is often cheaper, easier and more cost effective. Carbon capture in naturally regenerated land can be 40 times higher than in a conventional plantation
6. **Select species to maximise biodiversity** – introduce a variety of native species that will thrive in the chosen location, this will help to create a new woodland habitat which will be rich in native biodiversity and will be more resilient and less prone to disease. The planting of non-native trees can be appropriate in more urban landscapes and in areas with planned or historic landscapes. Creating new woodland is not just about getting trees in the ground, it is about providing the building blocks of a new ecosystem
7. **Use resilient plant material** – aim for genetic diversity in the planting stock and consider how the climate of the immediate area may change and make informed choices as to seed collection.
8. **Plan ahead** for infrastructure, capacity and seed supply. Work with your local community, provide training and share skills and knowledge regarding collection, storage, and planting of seed. Employing people from the local area helps bolster local economies.
9. **Learn by doing** – research proposals, trial ideas and methods, monitor and adapt
10. **Make it pay** – realise the economic benefits of a new or regenerating woodland – use the area as a site for local people to enjoy informally or for more formal activities. Regular access to woodlands and trees is beneficial for physical and mental well-being at many levels

**Other approaches to setting targets for increasing the trees and woodland cover in our landscapes:**

#### **Welsh Government Targets**

To plant 43,000ha of new woodland by 2030

**UK Committee and Climate Change and the Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan for the UK (Jan 2020)**

Woodland cover in the UK is currently c.13%. In Scotland it is 19%, Wales 15%, England 10% and in Northern Ireland 9%. In Carmarthenshire it is 14.4% (NRW). Woodland cover in the UK is one of the lowest in Europe (Spain 37%; Germany and Italy 32%; France 31%)

The Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan 2021 states that 17-19% woodland cover is recommended by the UK Committee on Climate Change if the UK is to be carbon neutral by 2050, i.e., an almost 50% increase in woodland cover from what we have today. If Wales is to increase its woodland cover to 19% this will require roughly a 50% increase in woodland. **WG Draft Sustainable Farming Scheme**, promotes the requirement that all agricultural holdings in receipt of support should be made up of at least 10% woodland cover.

Carmarthenshire currently supports c.14.4% woodland cover. If it is to support 19% woodland by 2050, in line with the Woodland Trust's recommendation above, across the county we will need to plant 11022ha by 2050, or 408ha p.a. each year from 2023 to 2050. CCC owns 6500ha land. We have calculated that 5.34% of the CCC estate is wooded i.e., 347ha. If CCC is to increase the woodland cover on its land from 5.34% to 19%, or a total of 1235ha, it will require that CCC plants 888ha of woodland by 2050, or on average 33ha p.a.

## 5. A TREE AND WOODLAND STRATEGY FOR CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – delivery, reporting and resources

The tables below set out CCC's responsibilities for trees and woodlands, how these are currently managed, and how CCC can now do more to deliver against both the Climate Change and the Nature Emergencies. The service areas that are delivering the Tree and Woodland Strategy must build these actions into their Divisional Business Plans and report on them. These actions are set out Section 7.

Elements of the strategy will be included in CCC's Environment Act Forward Plans – these plans run for 3 years e.g., Jan 2023 to Dec 2025. The actions in this plan are formally reported to Welsh Government at the end of the 3-year period.

CCC has set up an Officer Delivery Group, facilitated by its Rural Conservation Section, to steer and oversee the delivery of this strategy which meets 2-3 times a year to review progress and agree priorities and responsibilities.

The strategy falls within the cabinet member portfolio for Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability.

### 5.1 Staff resources and budgets are required for:

- Compliance checking of the correct delivery of tree protection schemes and landscaping schemes approved as part of developments
- Planning, delivery, and long-term management of tree planting on CCC estate resulting from the actions in this strategy, and wider national policy. This new demand will increase as CCC's delivers new GBI schemes, often as part of other projects e.g., economic regeneration schemes, Highway and Transportation schemes, landscaping schemes that are apart of approved CCC developments, schemes to mitigate air and noise pollution, and new planting to deliver Nature Recovery and ecosystem resilience.
- Developing and promoting Supplementary Planning Guidance for GBI, landscaping and SUDS and master plans which will identify how GBI will be delivered on the larger sites allocated for development in the Revised Local Development plan in an integrated manner.
- Further air quality monitoring to inform the targeting of tree planting at problem areas
- Developing and delivering a communications plan for CCC's Tree and Woodland Strategy

## 6. THE TABLES

Table 1 A -G sets out CCC's responsibilities with regards to trees and woodlands and how it approaches the management of trees and woodland on its own estate and on privately own land. This document should be read in conjunction with the Council Tree Management Strategy 2023 and its Ash Dieback Strategy (see Appendix 1 and 2).

The Table 2 A – C sets out why CCC should be planting more trees, and how this could be achieved.

**TABLE 1 MANAGING EXISTING TREES AND WOODLAND**

<p><b>A</b> <b>Grounds Maintenance, Housing, Education, Social Care</b> – all trees in the public realm managed by Grounds Maintenance for CCC e.g., street and car park trees, trees in parks, trees managed within highway limits trees managed on all CCC sites by Grounds Maintenance</p>	
<p>What are CCC's responsibilities?</p>	<p>Under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and 1984, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, landowners have responsibility for public safety. CCC's Grounds Maintenance manage trees across a variety of CCC managed land. CCC Highways and Transportation are responsible for some street and car park trees. Town and Community Councils also manage trees in some of these areas</p>
<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>Carmarthenshire Tree Management Strategy (Sept 2019) sets out how CCC manages trees on its properties see Appendix 1 <a href="https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1221301/cc-tree-management-strategy.pdf">https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1221301/cc-tree-management-strategy.pdf</a></p> <p>Routine tree safety surveys using the Tree Assured system are carried out at all CCC properties where there are trees, this includes all school sites and Safe Routes to School where there are tree safety issues.</p> <p>CCC staff are trained in Visual Tree Inspections</p> <p>CCC's Ash Dieback (ADB) plan sets out how CCC manages trees affected by ADB. See Appendix 2</p>
<p>What we want to do</p>	<p>Ensure all departments with a responsibility for trees understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where they can go for guidance</li> <li>• that budgets must be in place to fund tree management work (other than Ash Dieback which is funded corporately)</li> </ul> <p>Ensure all trees and woodlands in the public realm and for which CCC responsible are managed as a sustainable resource, and in accordance with CCC's published Tree Safety Management Strategy, and its approach to managing Ash Dieback</p> <p>Ensure trees which must be removed for safety reasons on CCC estate are replaced</p> <p>Promote best management practices of tree management, via publishing guidance and providing training.</p> <p>Promote the mapping and the use of management plans for all trees for which CCC is responsible</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of existing trees</p>
<p><b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION, we will</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to improve the skill base of CCC officers with regular trees safety and tree management training for CCC staff</li> <li>2. Continue to complete safety surveys of all street trees for which CCC is responsible, and carry out necessary work</li> <li>3. Ensure that any trees which are removed by CCC for safety reasons are replaced</li> </ol>

<b>B Existing trees and woodlands in CCC's Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves managed by Outdoor Recreation</b>	e.g., Pembrey County Park, Llyn Llech Owain CP, Gorslas; Ynys Dawela, Brynaman; Morfa Berwig Local Nature Reserve, Llanelli; Cwmoernant reservoirs, Carmarthen
What are CCC's responsibilities?	Under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and 1984, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, landowners have responsibility for public safety. When managing trees in these areas we address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity - Environment Act</li> <li>• Social Benefits - CCC amenity policies</li> <li>• Public safety - Occupier's Liability Acts, Health and Safety Act, CCC Tree Policy and Ash Dieback strategy</li> <li>• Forestry legislation - Forestry Act and UK Forest Standard.</li> </ul>
Where we are now	Respond to H and S issues and grant funding opportunities to carry out woodland management. Sites are routinely surveyed using the adopted TreeAssured system for tree risk management.
What we want to do	Ensure all trees and woodlands on CCC's estate are managed as a sustainable resource, and in accordance with CCC's tree safety procedures using the Tree Assured system Ensure CCC delivers the management plans it has in place for the trees and woodlands in its country parks and Local Nature Reserves. These will address nature recovery, carbon sequestration and they will make use of low impact silvicultural system such as continuous cover forestry, and they will safeguard public access
<b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION – we will</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Keep under review the management of woodlands on CCC's estate, ensuring its woodlands are subject to plans that address their sustainable management</li> <li>5. Identify funding for implementation of plans –including potential grant funding and sources of funding to cover costs over and above grant aid. Agree the implementation of costed management plans for CCC woodlands with relevant departments</li> </ol>

**C Trees and woodlands on CCC's County Farms, on its rural land holdings, and on its sites proposed for disposals**  
**Check intro section re wealth of benefits**

<p>What are CCC's responsibilities?</p>	<p>Under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and 1984, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, landowners have responsibility for public safety.          CCC Tree Safety Management Strategy and Ash Dieback Strategy          Forestry legislation and policy - UK Forest Standard          Biodiversity - Environment (Wales) Act 2016</p>
<p>Where are we now?</p>	<p>Coed Cymru Officer advises and oversees work when issues e.g., windblow affect woodlands on CCC farms</p>
<p>Where do we want to be?</p>	<p>Ensure all trees and woodlands on CCC's estate are managed as a sustainable resource, in accordance with its tree safety procedures          Work with the Strategic Land-use Review Group to identify opportunities for improving the management of the existing woodland and expanding the woodland resource on the County Farms          Promote use of low impact silvicultural systems on CCC's estate such as continuous cover forestry, and aim to avoid clear felling when possible          Design tree and woodland management/planting projects to deliver multiple benefits          Secure the funding that will be required for woodland management over and above WG grant available          Promote replacement of dead, diseased, and unsafe trees          Raise awareness of the importance of existing trees and woodlands on CCC's County Farms, of the multiple benefits and ecosystem services which they provide</p>
<p><b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION</b></p>	<p>6 Progress the management of the trees and woodland on CCC's County Farms as set out above</p>

## D CCC Highways - Trees and woodlands on private land adjacent to the highway which can have impacts on public safety

<p>What are CCC's responsibilities?</p>	<p>Under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and 1984, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, landowners have responsibility for public safety. Under the Highways Act 1980, CCC as the Highway Authority has a duty to ensure highways are maintained to a safe standard. This includes trees on private land which have the potential of causing harm to highway users.</p>
<p>Where we are now</p>	<p>Carmarthenshire Tree Management Strategy (updated 2023) sets out how CCC manages trees adjacent to the highway <a href="https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1221301/ccc-tree-management-strategy.pdf">https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/media/1221301/ccc-tree-management-strategy.pdf</a></p> <p>In addition, in response to the spread of Ash Dieback across the county, regular tree surveys are carried out across the road network with priority given to the A &amp; B roads and other high use class 3 roads.</p> <p>Highway Inspectors are trained in Visual Tree Inspection techniques and how to recognise and understand the risks associated with Ash Dieback and other tree safety issues.</p> <p>Owners of trees adjacent to the highway that pose a risk to the public are provided with advice and guidance on how to manage this risk, and the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 are applied when necessary. See CCC's Ash Dieback pages <a href="https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/biodiversity/ash-dieback-disease/#">https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/biodiversity/ash-dieback-disease/#</a></p>
<p>What we want to do</p>	<p>Continue to raise awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•landowners' responsibility to manage their trees and woodlands adjacent to the highway</li> <li>•safe working practices</li> </ul> <p>Provide on-going refresher training for Highway Inspectors and keep them up to date with tree safety and tree management issues.</p> <p>Using the CCC web site continue to raise awareness of the wildlife legislation that applies to removing trees and appropriate working methods that minimise adverse impacts and provide advice and encourage appropriate replacement tree planting.</p> <p>Work with forest management companies and NRW to raise awareness of the impacts of forest management on and how these risks can and best be reduced e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Liaise with managers of woodland adjacent to county roads, especially those where there is a steep wooded slope above the road, where clear felling combined with heavier rainfall events may result in landslides.</li> <li>•Encourage woodland managers to practice silvicultural systems that avoid clear felling and manage a natural shrub-rich forest edge to develop alongside the road.</li> <li>•Manage CCC highways with respect to trees within highway limits and adjacent to roads, in accordance with the Well Manged Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice (UK Roads Liaison Group 2017)</li> <li>•Work with CCC Communications Team who can support officers in disseminating information on tree management and tree planting</li> </ul>
<p><b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION - we will</b></p>	<p>7. Continue to identify and implement tree safety work, consistent with the industry best practice, and provide regular training for CCC officers</p> <p>8. Continue to communicate and raise awareness of tree safety issues with private landowners</p> <p>9. Work with forest managers and NRW to raise awareness of tree safety issues and the impacts of forest management on highways and how these risks can be minimised</p>



<b>E Rural Conservation - Trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders and trees within Conservation Areas</b>	
What are CCC's responsibilities?	Trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders - CCC has discretionary legal powers to designate Tree Preservation Orders, and place orders on trees that meet the necessary amenity criteria. If work to a TPO tree is required, a formal application must be made to the LPA who will determine if the works should proceed. Trees within Conservation Areas - If work to a tree in Conservation Area is proposed the LPA must be informed. If they oppose the work, it must place a TPO on that tree
Where are we now?	Trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders - CCC determines applications to carry out works to trees covered by TPOs. It places TPOs on trees when the necessary criteria are stratified and there is a threat to a tree Trees within Conservation Areas - CCC determines applications to carry out works to trees in Conservation Areas
Where do we want to be?	Delivering an action plan for review of the c. 200 TPOs in Carmarthenshire, identifying the human, IT and financial resources required, and the necessary budget This has not been carried out for c.10 years. Some protected trees may have died e.g., due to Ash Dieback disease
<b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION – we will</b>	10.Develop and commence delivery of an action plan for the review of the Carmarthenshire TPOs

<b>F Place and Sustainability - Trees and development</b>	
What are CCC's responsibilities?	Trees and the impact of development is addressed by local and national planning policies. Town and Country Act 1990 S.197 – Planning permission can include appropriate provision for the management of trees. Felling legislation (enforced by NRW) applies to felling of trees outside of gardens and orchards. Impact of development on trees and woodland is fully considered in planning process with input from Arboricultural Officer, Landscape Officer and Planning Ecology New and upgraded forest accesses and tracks are also the subject of planning applications, Rural Conservation Section staff respond to consultations on these, as do Highways Planning, ensuring new entrance designs meet road safety standards, and are acceptable in the local landscape etc.
Where are we now?	CCC's Arboricultural Officer is consulted on planning applications that impact on trees. Developers are advised that impacts on trees must be managed by avoiding and protecting trees on a site. If a development (inc. all underground and over ground services, assess routes and SUDs construction) can avoid direct impacts on trees this should be set out on a plan showing the necessary construction exclusion zone and where any necessary protective fencing must be installed. This must be erected prior to development to BS 5837. If there are impact on the existing trees these must be set out in an Arboricultural Impact Assessment to BS 5837, with mitigation identified. If trees are to be removed, replanting as part of an LPA approved landscaping plan is requested and delivery of this plan becomes a condition of the permission granted.

	CCC expects that all existing trees of appropriate quality and condition to be retained to the maximum extent on development sites. Any new development must demonstrate that the constraints posed by existing trees have been fully addressed in the design of the proposals. Specification of tree planting and maintenance as part of mitigation within planning consent is requested and provided pre-determination in most cases. This is covered by policies in LDP and PPW11
Where do we want to be?	All planning applications on sites where there are trees are accompanied by the necessary information regarding any impact on the trees. With the necessary resources in place, initiate compliance checking of the correct delivery of tree protection schemes and landscaping schemes approved as part of developments.
<b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION- we will</b>	<p>11. Development Managers will ensure all planning applications for sites where there are trees are accompanied by the relevant information and that all trees which are appropriate for retention are protected during development</p> <p>12. Develop and resource an approach to compliance checking of all new tree and woodland requested as part of a planning permission. Applicants could report on this themselves, evidencing at least completion and possibly maintenance</p> <p>13. Identify new mechanisms by which funds can be established to fund planting and long-term care of trees and other landscaping in the public realm</p>
<b>G Rural Conservation - Forestry - WG Woodland Estate and applications for WG Woodland Creation (WGWC) and new/upgraded forest accesses</b>	
What are CCC's responsibilities?	<p>CCC is consulted on NRW's long term forest resource plans for the WG woodland estate in Carmarthenshire</p> <p>CCC is consulted by NRW on larger WG Woodland Creation schemes in the county's Special Landscape Areas</p> <p>New and upgraded forest accesses and tracks are the subject of planning applications (see above)</p>
Where are we now?	<p>CCC is consulted on WGWC applications in the county's Special Landscape Areas</p> <p>It is consulted by NRW on Forest Natural Resource plans for WG Woodland Estate and applications for WG Woodland Creation (GWC) grants</p> <p>In its responses to the above, CCC encourages the principles of sustainable management of natural resources to be applied to all long-term forest resources plans, and the planting of new woodland. With regards to both long-term plans and WGWC it highlights the other benefits forests and new woodlands can provide – public access, landscape, water catchment management, biodiversity, and nature recovery.</p> <p>In its responses to NRW on plans for the WG Woodland Estate, it highlights the need for the WG woodland estate to be managed and for new woodlands to be established in ways that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoiding forest practices that rely on single species plantations and clear felling</li> <li>• adopt sustainable forest practices that conserve forest soils, minimise clear felling, conserve and promote biodiversity</li> <li>• promote nature recovery and ecological resilience, as per CCC's and NRW's and WG's S.6 Environment Act duty</li> <li>• make a positive contribution to the landscape</li> <li>• encourage management systems that will result in creation of a high value timber resource</li> <li>• minimise risks to highway safety</li> <li>• reduce flooding by controlling run-off</li> <li>• avoid the spread of invasive species,</li> <li>• promote public access</li> </ul>

Where do we want to be?	To see an improvement in the management of Carmarthenshire's woodland resource with less reliance on clear felling and greater use of low impact silvicultural systems, which will deliver multiple benefits – e.g., nature recovery, catchment management, and management of soil carbon Working with NRW and forest management companies to reduce the risks of forest management on highways
<b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION – we will</b>	14. Continue engagement with NRW regarding management of WG Woodland Estate and with WGWC schemes and the planting of new woodlands in SLAs and ideally elsewhere in the county 15. Initiate discussions with NRW and private forestry companies regarding the risks which forests pose to highways and how these may be reduced

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**TABLE 2 NEW TREE AND WOODLAND PLANTING**

## Why and how CCC can and should plant more trees in Carmarthenshire

**A CCC Property, Education, Housing, Social Care, Grounds Maintenance, Highways and Transportation, Place and Sustainability -**  
Tree and woodland planting on CCC land and in the public realm that will address the Nature Emergency, to mitigate the impacts of Ash Dieback and to address Climate Change

What are CCC's existing responsibilities?

The Welsh Government Net Zero Wales Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25) requires that all public sector organisations should use the Route Map and Reporting Guide to develop and publish plans by March 2023 to achieve a collective net zero public sector by 2030. Policy 84 supports commitments to map out local authority land holdings by April 2022 to identify types of land and their sequestration potential to develop plans to maximise carbon benefits, renewable energy and to identify potential flood management measures; it also supports carbon sequestration as a valid core purpose for use of public land and opportunities actively pursued by local authorities on their own land, including habitat restoration, tree planting etc. as appropriate.

On 20th February 2019 Carmarthenshire County Council unanimously committed to making Carmarthenshire County Council a net zero carbon local authority by 2030. Action NZC-15 in the Council Net Zero Carbon Route plan is to explore the feasibility of tree-planting, and other such measures, on Council controlled land to contribute towards carbon offsetting.

WG and CCC have announced a Nature Emergency. Expanding the extent of native broadleaved woodland and the number of individual trees we plant will help address this emergency. Sustainable management of CCC's existing woodland resource and new tree and woodland planting is also critical for Nature Recovery

PPW11 sets out the requirement for biodiversity enhancement, which can include tree planting as a planning requirement

CCC facilitates the Carmarthenshire Nature Partnership which is preparing the Carmarthenshire Nature Recovery Plan. This document highlights the role of woodland in Carmarthenshire in providing for Nature Recovery. See Part 2 page 33 of the following:

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/biodiversity/carmarthenshire-nature-partnership/#.YbizqEX7TIU>

<p>Where we are now?</p>	<p>CCC's Strategic Land Use Review group is reviewing its landholdings and is assessing where there are opportunities to plant trees on CCC land, and where there are opportunities for more renewable energy. Planting to sequester carbon is being addressed in conjunction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivery of Green Infrastructure and opportunities for providing public access</li> <li>• reduction of phosphate levels in water courses,</li> <li>• compensation for losses of trees due to Ash Dieback</li> <li>• mitigating air and noise pollution</li> <li>• improvements in water management, infiltration, and reducing flooding down stream</li> <li>• nature recovery and the creation of new wildlife habitats and enhanced ecological connectivity</li> <li>• 3 new woodland planting schemes in Ffairfach, Kidwelly and Llandybie are already being progressed with WG grant aid which deliver against the above agendas. The total area of these schemes is 4.5ha. These areas will be planted in winter 22/23.</li> <li>• Tree Safety Officer works with schools to identify opportunities for new tree planting, in conjunction with tree safety work.</li> </ul>
<p>Where do we want to be?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure commitment and funding across CCC for the cost of planting and long-term maintenance requirements of the trees it plants</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the multiple and linked benefits of tree and woodland planting, which include carbon sequestration, nature recovery, and compensating for the losses associated with Ash Dieback. Co-ordinate grant applications to deliver these projects</li> <li>• Set target of increasing woodland cover on CCC land from 5.34% to 19 % by 2050, in line with UK target. This will require CCC to plant 33ha of woodland every year between 2023 and 2050</li> <li>• Ensure all CCC projects are assessed for opportunities for tree and woodland planting – e.g., regeneration projects, highway improvements, new schools, new housing developments. Within these projects review and reduce the areas allocated for new amenity grassland replacing these with trees, woodland and shrubs as appropriate.</li> <li>• Review the area of amenity grassland CCC manages, and where appropriate establish woodland and trees. Use planting designs that in the long term will reduce the maintenance costs of these areas</li> <li>• Identify and deliver at least 6 new planting schemes p.a. on land managed by CCC – Housing, Highways, Education, Property and Regeneration, planting at least 33ha p.a. to 2030</li> <li>• On tenanted CCC farms, aim for a minimum of 10% woodland cover by 2030 consistent with WG Sustainable Farming Scheme, and increase this to 19% by 2050, consistent with relevant WG and UK targets</li> <li>• Take 1 in 100 car parking spaces out of CCC car parks and planting a tree instead in recognition of the link between car travel and carbon footprint</li> <li>• Where this does not conflict with the existing value of an area for biodiversity, and where appropriate, increase the tree and woodland cover in CCC's Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves</li> </ul>

**PRIORITIES FOR ACTION – we will**

1. Gain commitment across CCC to deliver an increase in the number of trees and the amount of woodland cover on its estate from 5.34% to 19 % by 2050 and to plant 33ha of new woodland each year until 2050 to achieve this goal.
  2. Promote and adopt a simple, easy to follow guides for tree planting and maintenance based on advice from the Arboricultural Association, Woodland Trust and the Trees and Design Action Group. See also a bilingual tree planting video made in Carmarthenshire for schools:
    - <https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Guide-to-Young-Tree-Establishment>
    - <https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Arboricultural-Resources>
    - <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/>
    - <https://www.tdag.org.uk/trees-in-hard-landscapes.html>
- Tree Planting in School Grounds/ Plannu Coed mewn Tiroedd Ysgol – a YouTube video made in Carmarthenshire
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aqe4JsWx060>
3. Develop and demonstrate an integrated approach to delivery of tree and new woodland planting across CCC projects that will deliver against several agendas: Green and Blue Infrastructure, SUDS, carbon sequestration, nature recovery, ash dieback, landscape, and amenity, reduction in phosphates, and improving air quality
  4. Ensure all new tree planting linked to CCC projects is planted and maintained in accordance with the agreed design scheme

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## B Public Protection and CCC projects - Planting trees and woodlands to improve air quality in our more urban areas

<p>What are CCC's existing responsibilities?</p>	<p>Air quality in many of Britain's urban areas falls below recommended standards. The Environmental Protection service is responsible for the Review and Assessment of Air Quality – a statutory function under the provisions of the Environment Act 1995. Through this regime, the main pollutant of concern for Carmarthenshire has been identified as Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) from road vehicles. We have 98 locations throughout the County where NO<sub>2</sub> is measured (via diffusion tubes – standard practice outlined in the relevant guidance document), and we have 3 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) where levels have exceeded <u>annual</u> statutory limits in “hotspot” locations. There is an AQMA in Llandeilo, Llanelli and Carmarthen. The Aim of the AQMAs is to improve Air Quality to the extent that no further breaches of the standards occur.</p> <p>Tree planting is one way of improving air quality, and it can also help reduce noise pollution, support climate action, improve health and wellbeing, and enhance biodiversity.</p>
<p>Where are we now?</p>	<p>Tree planting at Johnstown school following analysis of air quality (Public Health, Johnstown School, Woodland Trust) Ad hoc implementation of tree planting as funding opportunities arises e.g., tree planting at St David's Parc through WG ENRaW Green Infrastructure grant</p>
<p>Where do we want to be?</p>	<p>Identify areas of lowest air quality in Carmarthenshire and opportunities for tree planting e.g., school grounds which would improve air quality in these areas. Deliver tree planting initiatives in collaboration with Public Health and schools (EcoSchools and Healthy Schools initiatives are relevant)</p> <p>Work in partnership with Town and Community Councils to raise awareness of the opportunities for planting in open areas and manage existing trees where air and noise pollution are issues</p> <p>Ensure all CCC projects that have the capacity to deliver some tree or woodland planting that could help in addressing air quality do so. Review amenity grassland as a land use in such projects, and consider areas where grass could be replaced with tree, shrub, or woodland planting</p> <p>Identify active travel routes that would avoid areas with lowest air quality, and integrate these with GBI initiatives</p> <p>Put the necessary budget and staff resources in place to deliver the above</p>
<p><b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION – we will</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. With Public Health identify areas in the county where air/ noise pollution is of greatest concern and where there are also nearby opportunities for tree planting, e.g., schools</li> <li>6. Develop costed plans for viable schemes which include the staff resources required for delivery and long-term maintenance of these areas</li> <li>7. Seek opportunities to put in place the staff resources and budgets required and work in partnership to deliver tree and woodland planting, and GBI initiatives in urban areas across Carmarthenshire, aimed at mitigating air pollution and improving air quality</li> </ol>

<b>C Place and Sustainability - Tree and woodland planting and new development and the provision of Green Infrastructure, landscape, SUDS, Nature Recovery/ Ecological enhancement</b>	
What are CCC's existing responsibilities?	<p>PPW 11 and local planning policy address tree issues, ecology, and landscaping as part of planning process</p> <p>CCC's Moving Forward Document requires a strategy as follows: Action 23: Promote a tree strategy to improve the environment and mitigate the effects of air and noise pollution in our more populated areas.</p> <p>PPW11 promotes the development of Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI). PPW11 emphasises that GBI plays a fundamental role in shaping places and our sense of well-being, and therefore the planning system should protect and enhance GBI assets and ecological networks. In accordance with PPW11, a GBI Assessment was carried out within the county, and this is being used as a tool to inform the preparation of the Revised LDP (Land Use Consultants Feb 2022). Further work detailing GBI is contained with the Placemaking &amp; Design SPG which will be updated as part of the Revised LDP process. Tree and woodland planting is one delivery mechanism for GBI.</p>
Where are we now?	<p>Planning permissions are often conditional upon protection of exiting trees and where trees are removed upon significant re-planting. Landscaping, which regularly involved tree planting is a requirement of many developments.</p> <p>Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are a requirement of development, and these areas can include trees, see</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/documents/positions/planning/sustainable-drainage-systems.pdf">https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/documents/positions/planning/sustainable-drainage-systems.pdf</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.trees.org.uk/Trees.org.uk/files/d9/d94feb31-759d-40d9-8abd-48715df32f7e.pdf">https://www.trees.org.uk/Trees.org.uk/files/d9/d94feb31-759d-40d9-8abd-48715df32f7e.pdf</a></li> </ul> <p>Planning permissions can also require biodiversity enhancements which can include tree and woodland planting</p> <p>CCC is (Nov 2021) developing a GBI strategy for 8 of its towns, tree planting projects will form a part of this strategy</p>
Where do we want to be?	<p>Approving developments that use tree and woodland planting as part of an integrated approach to the provision of GBI, SUDS, landscaping, nature recovery, public amenity, and improving air quality</p> <p>Evidencing that all CCC projects (E.g., Housing, Education, Regeneration etc) incorporate appropriate tree and woodland planting which will deliver multiple benefits (GI, landscape, ecology) and have sought advice landscape and ecology advice from CCC's Rural Conservation Section when necessary</p> <p>Demonstrating an integrated, long-term approach to the delivery of GBI across other relevant agendas e.g., economic development, CCC's Ten Towns Initiative</p> <p>Developing and adopting SPG and practices that ensure long term maintenance of trees and woodland in the public realm (tree, shrub, and woodland planting, roadside, within housing developments etc) is planted and maintained in accordance with the approved landscape design scheme</p>
<b>PRIORITIES FOR ACTION we will</b>	<p>8. Develop, publish, and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance which sets out an integrated approach for landscaping, SUDS and the provision of GBI, managing tree issues and providing for nature recovery (ecological enhancement) on development sites. This guidance must highlight the multiple benefits that tree and woodland planting can deliver.</p> <p>9. Secure resources implement compliance monitoring to ensure all tree planting and landscaping associated with development across Carmarthenshire is delivered and maintained –</p> <p>10. Prepare Master Plans for larger allocated sites in the LDP which will set out how GBI, SUDS, landscaping and ecological enhancement will be delivered as an integral part of new development</p>



## 7. DRAFT ACTION PLAN

### 7.1 ACTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF CCC'S EXISTING TREES AND WOODLANDS

Dept Plan Ref #	Actions	Measure	By Who? Responsible Officer		
<b>TWS/1</b>	<b>ACTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EXISTING TREES AND WOODLANDS:</b>	<b>MEASURES and MILESTONES</b>			
<b>TWS/1A1</b>	Continue to improve the skill base of CCC officers with regular trees safety and tree management training for CCC staff Tree Safety Officer will provide training for new staff and regular updates for all relevant staff on tree safety and tree inspection. Officers to attend refresher courses every 2 years	Each year report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of tree safety and tree inspection courses run.</li> <li>Percentage of officers identified by managers as requiring training who have attended courses within 2 years of monitoring date, i.e., whose tree safety training up to date</li> </ul>	Tree Safety Officer		
<b>TWS/1A2</b>	Continue to complete safety surveys of all street trees for which CCC is responsible, and carry out necessary work	Each year report on percentage of site for which surveys of street trees are up to date and all identified works have been completed	Grounds and Cleaning Manager CCC Highways		
<b>TWS/1A3</b>	Ensure that any trees which are removed by CCC for safety reasons are replaced.	Each year report on: No. of trees felled for safety reasons and no. for which replacement is organised	Tree Safety Officer		
<b>TWS/1B4</b>	Keep under review the management of woodlands on CCC's estate, ensuring its woodlands are subject to plans that address their sustainable management	By March 2024: Identify no. of sites requiring a woodland management plan and initiate a rolling programme of review on the woodland management plans with the CCC Woodland Officer Prioritise woodlands to be managed. Each year report on no. of woodland management plans reviewed	Senior Asset Management Surveyor (Property)		
<b>TWS/1B5</b>	Identify funding for implementation of plans – including potential grant funding and sources of funding to cover costs over and above grant aid. Agree the implementation of costed management plans for CCC woodlands with relevant departments	Each year report on the no. woodlands, identified as priorities, for management, which costed management plans have been developed	CCC Woodland Officer		

<b>TWS/1C6</b>	Progress the management of the trees and woodland on CCC's County Farms as set out in Table C	Each year report on no. CCC woodlands where management is progressing	CCC Woodland Officer		
<b>TWS1/D7</b> <b>CCC Highways</b>	Continue to identify and implement tree safety work, consistent with the industry best practice, and provide regular training for CCC officers	Each year report on no. officers completing training, see TWS/1A1 is provided above Each year report on annual programme of tree safety surveys on A, B and heavily used C roads Each year report on number of tree work packages progressed through CCC's DPS for tree safety work	Tree Safety Officer		
<b>TWS/1D8</b> <b>CCC Highways</b>	Continue to communicate and raise awareness of tree safety issues with private landowners	Each year report on information provided on CCC web site and to partner organisations	Tree Safety Officer		
<b>TWS/1D9</b> <b>also covers G15</b>	Work with forest managers and NRW to raise awareness of tree safety issues and the impacts of forest management on highways and how these risks can be minimised	Set up meeting in 2023/24 FY to discuss with all partners concerned	Rural Conservation Manager		
<b>TWS/1E10</b>	Develop and commence delivery of a review of the Carmarthenshire TPOs	Feb 23: Complete training in preparation for the review June 23: Complete pilot assessment of 5 TPOs June 23: Set up ARCUS system to generate TPO documents Each year report on number of TPO reviewed	Arboricultural Officer		
<b>TWS/1F11</b>	Development Managers will ensure all planning applications for sites where there are trees are accompanied by the relevant arboricultural information and that protection of all trees which are appropriate for retention to BS standards is set out in conditions or in approved documents	Every 3 months/ 6 months, report on percentage of planning applications received for sites with trees and where these are correctly identified and accompanied by the required arboricultural information. Aim for increase in this figure	Senior Development Managers		

<p><b>TWS/1F12</b></p>	<p>Develop and resource an approach to compliance checking of all new tree and woodland requested as part of a planning permission. Applicants could report on this themselves.</p>	<p>Assess the extent of the problem – By March 24 - gather evidence regarding approved developments where conditions relating to trees have not been correctly discharged. identify and assess options for resolving this issue. In 24/25 pilot different approaches to resolving this issue</p>	<p>Rural Conservation Manager Arboricultural officer Landscape Officer Senior Development Managers</p>		
<p><b>TWS/1F13</b></p>	<p>Identify new mechanisms by which funds can be established to fund planting and long-term care of trees and other landscaping in the public realm</p>	<p>March 24: Report on discussions which Place and Sustainability will initiate regarding the use of S106 and other mechanisms for this purpose</p>	<p>Rural Conservation Manager Arboricultural officer Landscape Officer Senior Development Managers Forward Planning Manager</p>		
<p><b>TWS/1G14</b></p>	<p>Continue engagement with NRW regarding management of WG Woodland Estate and with WGWC schemes for new woodlands in SLAs and ideally elsewhere in the county</p>	<p>Report each year on no. of schemes received each year for consultation and responded to within target date</p>	<p>Rural Conservation Manager</p>		

Dept Plan Ref #	Actions	Measure	By Who? Responsible Officer		
TWS/2	<b>ACTIONS FOR NEW TREE AND WOODLAND PLANTING in CARMARTHENSHIRE</b>	<b>MEASURES and MILESTONES</b>			
TWS/2A1	Gain commitment across CCC to deliver an increase in the number of trees and the amount of woodland cover on its estate from 5.34% to 19 % by 2050 and to plant 33ha of new woodland each year until 2050 to achieve this goal.	Adoption of planting target by Cabinet in 2023	tbc		
TWS/2A2	Adopt and promote simple, easy to follow guides for tree planting and maintenance in the public realm based on advice from the Arboricultural Association, Woodland Trust and the Trees and Design Action Group. See also a bilingual tree planting video made in Carmarthenshire for schools:	In FY 23/24 run up to 3 short workshop sessions for staff involved in requiring tree planting as part of project brief	Landscape Officer		
TWS/2A3	Develop and demonstrate an integrated approach to delivery of tree and woodland planting across CCC projects which will deliver against several agendas: Green and Blue Infrastructure, SUDS, carbon sequestration, nature recovery, ash dieback, landscape, and amenity, reduction in phosphates, and improving air quality	Every 6 months project managers (Property Education, Housing, Regen, Property Design, Active Travel, Professional Design Services, Highways etc) to report back to Rural Conservation Manager on progress in delivering GBI as part of CCCs projects	Rural Conservation Manager		
TWS/2A4	Put the necessary resources and mechanisms in place to enable CCC to demonstrate that all new tree planting, linked to CCC projects, is planted, and maintained in accordance with the agreed design scheme	Each year identify all relevant CCC project which should include tree planting and after care in project brief, and report on percentage of relevant CCC projects which include tree planting and after care in project briefs, and percentage of relevant projects with tree planting and maintenance report completed by project managers	tbc		

<b>TWS/2B5</b>	With Public Health identify areas in the county where air/ noise pollution is of greatest concern and where there are also nearby opportunities for tree planting, e.g., schools	Report on 6 monthly meetings between Public Health and Rural Conservation regarding this action	Rural Conservation Manager		
<b>TWS/2B6</b>	Develop costed plans for viable schemes, which include the staff resources required, for delivery and long-term maintenance of tree and woodland planting schemes designed to improve air quality, and mitigate noise pollution	Report each year on no. costed schemes developed which will deliver air quality improvements in our more urban areas	Rural Conservation Manager		
<b>TWS/2B7</b>	Seek opportunities to put in place the staff resources and budgets required and work in partnership to deliver tree and woodland planting, and GBI initiatives in urban areas across Carmarthenshire, aimed at mitigating air pollution and improving air quality	<p>March 2024: provide evidence of progress in securing staff resources and budgets for this work.</p> <p>March 24: Report on meetings set up to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss if the maintenance arrangements, and transfer of land as part of the SUDS system could be extended to the management of other Green Infrastructure (GI) on development sites</li> <li>• discuss opportunities for SUDS to be designed to deliver GI</li> <li>• explore the viability of S106 contributions to facilitate tree and woodland planting, both on and off site (which may be used to satisfy both GBI and net benefits for biodiversity requirements).</li> </ul>	Rural Conservation Manager		
<b>TWS/2C8</b>	Programme, develop, publish, and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance which sets out an integrated approach for landscaping, SUDS and the provision of GBI, managing tree issues and providing for nature recovery (ecological enhancement) on development sites. This guidance must highlight the multiple benefits that tree and woodland planting can deliver. Promote tree planting in	SPG for Trees and Woodland Planting as part of new development is programmed for Summer 2025	Forward Planning Manager		

	accordance with the principles of place making and quality design.				
<b>TWS/2C9</b>	Secure resources required to implement compliance monitoring to ensure all tree planting and landscaping associated with development across Carmarthenshire is delivered and maintained	March 2024: Report on evidence of progress in securing staff resources and budgets for this work	Rural Conservation Manager / tbc		
<b>TWS/2C10</b>	Prepare Master Plans for larger allocated sites in the LDP which will set out how GBI, SUDS, landscaping and ecological enhancement will be delivered as an integral part of new development	Report annually on progress in developing master plans for larger sites allocated for development in the new LDP	Forward Planning Manager		

**References:**

Tree Council: A Tree and Woodland Strategy Tool Kit for Local Authorities. Jan 2023.

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/science-and-research/tree-strategies/>

Tree Council Guidance on Ash Dieback:

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/ash-dieback/local-authority-ash-dieback-action-plan-toolkit/>

<https://treecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Tree-Council-Ash-dieback-tree-owners-guide-FINAL.pdf>

Town Tree Cover in Carmarthenshire (NRW)

<https://cdn.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/media/682935/carmarthenshire-tcwtc3-technical-annex.pdf>

Carmarthenshire County Council's Tree Management Strategy Sept 2019 (currently being updated)

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/conservation-countryside/trees/#.XqxA40F7nIU>

Arboricultural Association: Industry Code of Practice for Tree Work at Height 2020

<https://www.trees.org.uk/Trees.org.uk/media/Trees.org.uk/Documents/ICoP/ICoP-Tree-Work-at-Height-May20-web.pdf>

Arboricultural Association: Tree Work Definitions and Terminology

<https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Public/A-brief-guide-to-tree-work-terminology-and-definit>

## APPENDIX 1

### Carmarthenshire County Council's Ash Dieback (ADB) Strategy updated October 2022

To manage the impacts of Ash Dieback the Council is adopting the following approach:

**Ash die-back disease (ADB) is expected to affect at least up to 80-90% of ash trees in the county. This impacts on the Council's legal responsibilities, obligations and duty of care. To address this the Council will adopt the following strategy:**

1. Develop a co-ordinated, risk-based strategy that will address the necessary management of ADB across the county in a consistent manner
2. Manage the corporate risk that the disease places on the Council
3. Raise awareness among the Council officers, Elected Members and private landowners of the duty of care and Health and Safety issues relating to the management of ADB
4. Manage the affected trees for which the Council is directly responsible in accordance with the Industry Code of Practice for Arboriculture. Ensure that diseased trees on land adjacent to areas for which it is responsible are managed appropriately by landowners
5. Ensure that the Council's management of ADB complies with UK and EU Wildlife legislation and delivers its Environment (Wales) Act S.6 Biodiversity Duty
6. Promote and deliver new tree and woodland planting to compensate for the expected loss of ash trees
7. Develop effective partnerships to deliver the above
8. Ensure that all works carried out in response to ADB are procured in accordance with Council procedures

#### BACKGROUND

##### What is ADB disease?

ADB is a fungal disease that is affecting ash trees across the UK and Europe. It is considered to have arrived in the UK around 20 years ago from fungal spores carried by wind from the continent and from infected tree planting stock imported from mainland Europe. The fungus (known as *Chalara* or *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is likely to have originated in Asia where it co-exists with native ash species. However, it has caused widespread damage across mainland Europe where up to 90% of ash trees have been killed by the disease.



### **How frequent is it across Carmarthenshire, and elsewhere in Wales?**

ADB is widespread across much of Wales. The percentage of ash trees affected by the disease in Carmarthenshire appears to be increasing each year, and it is likely that the majority of ash trees in the county will be affected by the disease, with many of these dying, or seriously declining over the next few years. Some trees may show some resistance to the disease, but it is too early to be able to quantify this. It is expected that 80-90% of our ash trees will be affected. Ash is probably the second most common tree in the county, and the loss of these trees will have a significant impact in the landscape.

### **WHAT IS THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGY FOR MANAGING ADB?**

Consistent with several other local authorities across England and Wales, the Council is adopting the approach to managing ADB that is set out by the Tree Council in its Ash Dieback Plan. The strategy is risk based and focuses only on those trees that when dead or dying pose an unacceptable risk to the public, or to property. The Council also works consistently with advice from the Arboricultural Association and is a corporate member of the latter.

Council officers from across the organisation implement the policy and working practices necessary to deliver the proposed strategy, this includes:

Highways and Public Rights of Way

Housing

Property

Education

Grounds Maintenance

Leisure

Place and Sustainability

Regeneration

Communications

Health and Safety

Procurement

The Council considers its responsibilities regarding ADB as:

Responsibility	Action
<p><b>A co-ordinated risk-based response:</b></p> <p>Develop a co-ordinated risk-based response to the management of ADB that can be delivered consistently across the Council, reflecting its responsibilities</p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICER</b> – Rural Conservation Officer and Tree Safety Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officers involved in this issue have met regularly since June 2019 to progress the delivery of this strategy. They meet to set priorities and agree actions. This work links in with departmental and corporate management teams. It is facilitated by the Rural Conservation Section in the Planning Service. Funding is in place for an Ash Dieback project officer post initially for 2 years</li> </ul>
<p><b>Managing trees on land for which the Council is responsible:</b></p> <p>Managing appropriately the ash trees on land for which the Council is directly responsible – e.g., schools, parks, car parks, public open space for which it is responsible, housing areas, some land adjacent to the highway along more recently built roads, trees on farms owned by the Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To comply with its duty of care responsibilities the Council regularly surveys all its properties for tree safety using the TreeAssured system, and this includes surveys of ash trees. In 2019 it trained 37 officers to recognise and understand the risks associated with ADB.</li> <li>• All management of diseased ash trees by the Council will be carried out in accordance with the Council’s published Tree Management Strategy and the Tree Safety Operational Plan set out within this strategy. See also Appendix 2 in the Strategy: TreeAssured Procedure -TreeWorks (West Wales) Ltd 2014 - See link below</li> <li>• Affected trees on the Council managed properties and affected trees within highway limits will be managed in accordance with the above strategy and in accordance with the ICoP for Arboriculture and to BS 3998, the BS standard for tree work</li> <li>• Working practices will require periodic review to ensure Council procedures and best practice are being followed and that efficiencies are adopted where possible.</li> </ul>

<p><b>LEAD OFFICERS</b> – Tree Safety Officer and Head of Property and highway Services</p>	
<p><b>Trees on land adjacent to land for which the Council is responsible:</b></p> <p>Ensuring the appropriate management of diseased trees on land adjacent to areas for which it is responsible, the public highways – roads, cycle ways safe routes to school (SRTS), and public rights of way</p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICERS</b> –Tree Safety Office and Highway Services Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Highway Authority is inspecting the road network and assessing the risks posed by trees affected by Ash Dieback. It is identifying affected trees within highway limits and affected trees within falling distance of the road that are on privately owned land. Carmarthenshire has the second largest highway network in Wales with some 3,500 km of highway to maintain. With such a large network the authority will inspect the roads via a risk-based approach which takes account of the strategic importance of the route and traffic volumes. It will develop and use efficient methods of informing private landowners of their duty of care responsibilities regarding trees affected by Ash Dieback</li> <li>• Surveys specifically for the purpose of identifying diseased ash trees are being carried out on the A and B roads and will be repeated as the disease progresses</li> <li>• the Council is also surveying its Safe Routes to School</li> <li>• The South Wales Trunk Roads Agency carried out the same surveys along the county’s trunk roads.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Raising awareness</b></p> <p>Raising awareness among the Council’s officers, Elected Members and land managers of their responsibilities, under the Health and Safety and Work Act (1974) and the Owner Occupier Liability Act (1957 and 1984) for public safety e.g. management of ash trees adjacent to roads</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s Communication team together with the Ash Dieback project are delivering a Communication Plan for ADB which will include a web page for ADB, a set of FAQs and a leaflet for landowners</li> <li>• The ADB group is arranging training for officers and Elected Members on ADB and the Council’s responsibilities</li> <li>• Officers are developing effective methods of working with landowners in relation to roadside trees in private ownership, as well as using the more formal approach set out in the Highways Act</li> </ul>

<p>Raising awareness and understanding of the disease among the public</p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICER</b> for Communications Plan</p> <p>Press and Communications Officer and Tree Safety Officer</p>	
<p><b>Health and Safety:</b></p> <p>Manage the affected trees for which the Council is directly responsible in accordance with the Industry Code of Practice for Arboriculture. Ensure that diseased trees on land adjacent to areas for which it is responsible are managed appropriately</p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICER:</b> Lead Business Partner</p> <p>Health and Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will only procure arboricultural contractors to carry out Ash Dieback work that can demonstrate that they are working in accordance with the Industry Code of Practice for Arboriculture and BS3998:2010</li> <li>• All the Council’s operatives will work and will be managed in accordance with the Industry Code of Practice for Arboriculture and BS 39998:2010. All the Council’s operatives that will be working on trees affected by ADB will be trained to the necessary standards and will hold NPTC certificates appropriate for this work. They will also receive training specific to managing trees affected by ADB</li> <li>• Keep under review all risk assessments that relate to ADB and associated work</li> <li>• Ensure that all traffic (and pedestrian) management systems reflect the necessary safe working circles for arboricultural work being carried out</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ash Dieback and wildlife</b></p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICER</b> – Rural Conservation Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s primary concern regarding the management of trees affected by ADB will be the risks to the public and property. Consistent with its S.6 Environment Act duty it will adopt working methods that are compliant with EU and UK wildlife legislation, and which will minimise any adverse impact on habitats and the species they support. It will provide mitigation as appropriate</li> </ul>

<p><b>New tree planting:</b></p> <p>Raising awareness of the need for appropriate new tree planting to compensate for the loss of ash trees from Carmarthenshire’s landscapes and habitats, consistent with the Council’s S.6 Environment Act (Wales) Duty</p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICERS</b></p> <p>Rural Conservation Manager, Tree Safety Officer and Coed Cymru Officer</p> <p>(</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The web page will include advice regarding replanting and the Council’s Coed Cymru officer and Ash Dieback officer are able to advise landowners</li> <li>• The Rural Conservation Section will seek opportunities to secure grant aid for new planting projects that will compensate for the loss of ash trees in Carmarthenshire, and will encourage others to do like wise</li> <li>• The Council will identify opportunities in its projects to deliver tree planting schemes that will help to compensate for the loss of ash trees in the county as well as deliver other multiple benefits</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working with partners:</b></p> <p>Working effectively with partners across Carmarthenshire and at a regional and national level to deliver the above</p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICER</b> Rural Conservation Manager and Tree Safety Officer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council is working with WLGA, NFU, FUW, CLA and NRW on ADB, and will welcome opportunities to work with other interested parties, as appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Corporate Risk Management</b></p> <p><b>LEAD OFFICER:</b> Head of Property</p>	<p>The potential impacts of dead and dying trees due to Ash Dieback are accepted as posing a significant corporate risk. In developing its ADB strategy, the Council is setting out how it will manage these risks.</p>

**Health and Safety:** The Council's approach to managing Health and Safety as set out above addresses the potential risks of death or fatal injury resulting from Ash Dieback related accidents, both to professionals working on trees and to the public, e.g., road users.

Health and Safety issues on Council managed estate e.g., country parks, schools, and associated infrastructure e.g. safe routes to school will be managed as set out above with reference to both managing land for which the Council is directly responsible and managing land adjacent to these areas.

**Risk to the Environment:** Under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 the Council has a duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience. ADB poses a threat to the county's biodiversity. The promotion of woodland management, and tree planting as part of the Council's approach to managing ADB will address this matter. Of particular importance is the delivery of the Council's own plans for new woodland planting which have the potential to address both the loss of habitat and public amenity that will be a direct impact of ADB.

**Risk to the Council's reputation:** The way in which the Council manages Ash Dieback will impact on its reputation. For example, in managing ADB officers will be aware of:

- the impact of road closures and closure of public open spaces on the Council's reputation
- the need to manage public concern regarding ADB
- the need to manage its relationships with landowners.

The delivery of the Council's ADB communication plan addresses these issues.

**Financial risk and risk to the economy:** ADB will have an economic impact on the economy of Carmarthenshire, principally this will be the direct cost of removing trees that pose a threat to public safety, and this cost will fall largely on private landowners - most ash trees in the county are in private ownership. There will also be a direct cost associated with repairing any damage to property or infrastructure resulting from falling trees.

Together these costs place a significant financial burden on public bodies such as the Council, not only in managing trees for which it is directly responsible but ensuring the trees on land adjacent to its responsibilities are managed appropriately. Similarly, ADB poses a threat to other types of infrastructure e.g., rail network and overhead lines managed by other agencies.

There is also the cost of new planting to compensate for the loss trees and woodlands to ADB.

ADB risks have been highlighted through the Property & Liability Risks Working Group and Risk Management Steering Group. A financial bid for support to scope and undertake ADB works was initially presented to the Risk Management Fund, but has instead been funded, initially from corporate budgets.

A risk-based approach has been taken to identify and remove trees with well developed symptoms of ADB along priority highway routes and in school grounds based on frequency of use and risk to persons from affected trees, or parts of trees, falling. The removal of affected ash from less frequently used areas will follow subject to the necessary funding being in place.

A risk remains that sufficient funding will be required to undertake essential works to affected trees to prevent damage, and further funding requirements will be kept under review and further funding bids made, as appropriate.

	<p>ADB will remain a standing update on the Risk Management Groups to ensure this is effectively monitored, as well as in appropriate Divisional Business Plans for those services with Ash trees in their portfolios.</p> <p><b>To manage these risks and all other risks associated with tree safety the Council must retain the necessary capacity and expertise within its staffing structure.</b></p>
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## APPENDIX 2

### CCC Tree Management Strategy Sept 2019 (currently being re drafted)

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/conservation-countryside/trees/#.Xqx40F7nIU>