A POLICY FOR TREES IN ISLINGTON

Ensuring sustainable well cared for trees for now and the future

Produced jointly by
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ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION DEPARTMENT
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1 Introduction

1.1 This document is a revised version of the original Islington Tree Policy, first drawn up in 1992 and then revised in 2002. Much has changed in the intervening time but the need for a holistic policy is now stronger than ever.

1.2 The purpose of this document is to amplify this Council's tree policy as outlined in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and to unify the treatment of all trees in the Borough, whether they are on Council or private land. It seeks to ensure that all trees make the best possible contribution to the environment of those who live and work in Islington.

1.3 This document also demonstrates that Islington Council recognises the importance of trees in the urban landscape, that it is committed to improving the urban forest and ensuring that it is managed in a sustainable way.

1.4 Urban foresters in Islington have adopted the following mission statement, "We will protect, promote, care for and improve Islington's Urban Forest by managing the trees for the long term benefit of the community."

1.5 Trees are one of the few landscape features that cross all the boundaries of modern urban living, in time as well as space. They touch every aspect of our lives, our homes, our work, our journey to work, our recreational space. As such, and in terms of the benefits they bring to our community, they deserve our time and effort in helping them to remain part of our landscape and, in particular, of our built-up environment.

1.6 Modern towns and cities place tremendous pressures on trees and on their ability to survive in such inhospitable environments. Some form of construction will always be in progress. By adopting a tree policy which recognises that large and established trees can be damaged permanently

unless duly protected and which seeks to manage not only the present stock but new planting as well, we can ensure that Islington continues to improve its environment both for the benefit of people and for that of the trees themselves.

1.7 The combination of a changing climate and the increase in structural damage to buildings is undoubtedly the largest single threat to the existence of trees in urban areas. Sound management of the tree stock will serve to ensure the harmonious co-existence of trees and buildings in Islington. In recent years claims and allegations of damage to structures has increased, though general environmental awareness heightens the greater need for retaining trees in towns and cities.

1.8 Anyone who plants and cares for trees knows they do so not solely for their own enjoyment, but for the enjoyment and enrichment of the lives of those who come after them. It is hoped that the adoption the proposals in this document, apart from ensuring the long-term future of Islington's trees, will also go further, in conjunction with other complementary conservation initiatives, to create a real improvement in the quality of life for the people of Islington.

2 Location

2.1 Islington is situated immediately to the north of the City of London. It is one of London's smallest Boroughs covering just 5.74 square miles (1487 hectares). The Borough is long and narrow extending from Finsbury and Clerkenwell in the south to Archway in the north. It is no more than two miles wide at its widest point.

2.2 The Borough has two major Town Centres: the Angel and the Nags Head, which developed on the important business and travel route; the A1 that leads from the City of London to the North of England.

3 Geography and Geology

3.1 The highest point in the Borough is in the north and is approximately 100 metres above sea level. Travelling south the levels drop sharply in the first mile down to the London basin and the River Thames which is about half a mile from the southern-most boundary of the Borough.

3.2 The geology is fairly simple, the majority of the underlying strata being London clay, with some patches of brick earth around Barnsbury and Canonbury. There are also some river terrace gravels overlaying the London clay around Clerkenwell and Finsbury. In some of the higher parts in the north, around Hornsey Lane and Crouch Hill, there are Claygate beds of sand and loam overlaying the London clay. However, there is evidence to suggest that some parts of the Claygate beds in this area were

themselves covered over with the spoil from the excavations of the Archway cutting which was completed in 1813.

3.3 Whilst these areas of interruption in the uniformity of the London clay are not in themselves significant they are important in terms of their different physical behaviour upon drying out (desiccation). The significance of this will be made clearer in the section dealing with subsidence. It should be noted that a significant number of properties within the borough are constructed on man made ground and as such they do not act in the same way as properties constructed directly on clay.

4 Economic Profile, Economy and Population

4.1 Historically Islington began as a small settlement outside London set in a clearing of the then vast Forest of Middlesex, of which Kenwood and Highgate Woods are both surviving fragments.

4.2 As the trees were cleared for agricultural use the area became more involved in providing fresh produce for the London market, in particular dairy produce, its close proximity to London making it ideal for this purpose. Until around 1800 Islington remained a village on the outskirts of London, surrounded by open countryside, providing fresh farm produce and with a developing reputation as a spa and recreational resort for Londoners.

4.3 With the coming of the industrial revolution this changed dramatically. The population rose from 10,212 in 1801 to a staggering 436,000 in 1901. This population increase heralded a change in Islington's economic status from agricultural producer to that of an area teeming with shops, businesses, factories and the accompanying residential areas.

4.4 The change resulted in most of Islington's fields and open spaces being built over as the urbanisation of the area continued. However, many of the landmark trees from the past are still to be seen gracing the landscape.

4.5 Following the end of World War Two there began a reverse in the population movement as people started leaving the Borough in large numbers to live in the newly constructed new towns outside London. In the last two to three decades this migration has seen a turnabout with the Borough once again being seen as a desirable location in which to live. The present-day Borough has a population of approximately 180,000.

4.6 The desirability of Islington as an area in which to live has been aided by the fact that, despite it being an Inner City Borough, it still retains many areas with extensive tree cover both on Council and privately owned land. With greater awareness and concern among the general public about the environment in which they live, people are placing a higher priority on the

quality of life they can expect from where they live and work. In urban areas this invariably means having accessible recreational open space and tree lined streets and squares.

5 Policy Context

5.1 Legislation, primarily the Highways Act 1980 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in conjunction with Planning Policy Guidance notes, Circulars and Supplementary Guidance issued by Central Government inform and empower local government in the care and management of trees.

6 The Case for Trees in the Urban Landscape

6.1 Benefits

6.1.1 The necessity for trees in towns is evident. One has only to visit a treeless urban landscape to recognise this. It is often difficult to reconcile tree planting with other needs associated with the infrastructure required in modern cities: roads, footpaths, street lighting, utility services etc., all of which do not necessarily co-exist harmoniously with trees.

6.1.2 Towns and cities are essentially artificial environments that have been developed by people in order to allow large communities to live and work together. Trees are an anomaly in such a controlled environment, differing significantly from the built environment in that they do not remain static but continue to grow. This can cause a conflict to develop when trees are seen as a threat to the built form.

6.1.3 However, the benefits of trees are numerous and should be appreciated.

- They filter airborne dust and pollution
- They absorb traffic noise in built-up areas
- They reduce temperature extremes and generate breezes
- They act as a screen increasing privacy in residential roads and gardens
- They provide shade
- They convert carbon dioxide to oxygen, increasing the quality of the air on a local basis
- They provide food and nesting sites for birds, other animals and insects thus increasing nature conservation value of an area

- They provide displays of colour throughout the year

- They are a comparatively low maintenance addition to the landscape in terms of their high visual impact given the right species selection

- They act as a buffer between the stresses of modern urban living and improve the quality of life for people living and working in towns

- They provide many psychological and health benefits. Trees have been shown to reduce stress significantly ("Human Responses to Vegetation and Landscapes." 1986. Dr. Roger Ulrich. Landscape and Urban Planning, 13: 29-44. Urban Nature Benefits: Psycho-Social Dimensions of People and Plants. 1999. Center for Urban Horticulture. The Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective. 1989. Kaplan, R. and S. Kaplan. Cambridge University Press)

- They also increase local property values: a survey of any Estate Agent's window will always show more expensive properties being in "tree lined streets"

6.2 Problems

6.2.1 It is essential to recognise that trees, like any other living organism, are extremely susceptible to localised changes in their environment, which can result in physiological stress, infection and possibly death. These changes can be brought about by a number of factors. Some of these are:

- Climate change

- Extreme weather

- Nearby development

- Road and footpath reconstruction

- Trenching works by communications, IT and utilities companies

- Pollution

- Incorrect pruning

- Pests and diseases

- Vehicular damage (particularly by skips and high-sided vehicles)

- Change caused by the effects of global warming such as more frequent high winds, shorter winters, higher temperatures and changes in the seasonal rainfall pattern

- Vandalism

- Leakages from gas and water pipes

6.2.2 One of the biggest problems for trees in the urban situation is construction in its many forms.

6.2.3 When granting planning permission, the Council has various powers under the Town and Country Planning Act to ensure the protection of trees 'off site' that may be affected as a consequence of a granting of permission. Typically Grampian Conditions or Section 106 Agreements can be used to protect street trees from development pressures or be used to agree schedules of work with developers that may include planting of new street trees to counter any losses or harm.

6.2.4 Scaffolding and closure of part of the highway and footpaths etc require a license and in issuing such a license under the Highways Act 1980, conditions can be applied that require consideration and protection of trees. Also under this act, Section 278 agreements can be entered into where development activity affects the highways and repair or improvements are required.

6.2.5 Statutory undertakers, for example the companies supplying gas and electricity, are permitted to excavate the highway to carry out repairs and maintenance. There is little legal provision that requires them to take special precautions to ensure the well-being of trees, although there is a code of conduct known as NJUG10, which many are signed up to. Often, if problems arise, local negotiation results in satisfactory resolution.

6.2.6 In densely built-up urban areas the pressures on trees are enormous. A tree in a footpath is subject to far more stress than a similar tree found in a more rural location. Casual vandalism, drought, vehicle pollution, direct vehicle damage, poor soil, compaction, salt damage and, at some point in its life, severe disturbance from footpath or road reconstruction all contribute to this stress. A combination of these factors may, unfortunately, result in the death of some trees.

6.2.7 On private land the main problem is usually from building works near an existing property or the construction of new properties near existing trees.

6.2.8 Cutting across both Council and private land, quite literally, are the works of the Statutory Undertakers: gas, electricity, water, telephone and cable television, all of whom have a remit from Parliament to undertake whatever works are necessary in the provision of their service. Whilst these bodies do consult Local Authorities about their activities, damage can and does occur.

6.2.9 Because of some or all these factors; most street trees tend to have shorter life spans (25-30 years) than their park or woodland counterparts. This diminished lifespan must be reflected in a long-term planting regime so that no one particular area loses more trees than are being planted, as has been the case in the past in Islington.

6.3 Disadvantages

6.3.1 The disadvantages of trees can also be numerous unless care is taken in selecting the species to be planted and proper tree management is carried out. Some disadvantages are as follow:

- Large leaves may block drains and guttering, provide dense shade in summer and a slip hazard in autumn
- Large pulpy fruits may cause mess and a slip hazard on footpaths, if not cleared
- Aggressive root action from nearby trees can cause kerb and footway damage creating an uneven and hazardous surface
- High water demanding trees may also contribute to structural damage in nearby properties
- Honeydew, produced by aphids feeding on the leaves, drips on parked cars, footpaths and house windows
- Excessive suckering occurs from the base of certain species of tree
- Excessive shading can be caused where inappropriate trees are planted or allowed to grow in inappropriate locations.

7 Management and Species Selection

7.1 It is important to ensure the continuity of tree cover across the Borough, so that there is a balanced age range and varied species distribution. Without this being built into the management programme there will be a risk that over many years some areas of the Borough will lose their tree cover altogether or for it to change so that perhaps only one or two species become dominant. This last situation would have serious implications if

species vulnerable to a specific disease caused major losses in future years as has happened in the past with Dutch Elm Disease. This risk is becoming greater, as the speed of the spread of international pests and diseases is increasing. Examples of these are Asian gypsy moth, oakwilt and most recently the Horsechestnut leaf minor that was only first detected in the UK in 2002 and now effects over 10% of all Horsechestnut. This percentage is much higher than the national average in the south east.

7.2 Recently international attention has been drawn to tree planting as one of the more viable and immediate responses to growing concern over the greenhouse effect. Through the process of photosynthesis, trees can lock up huge quantities of carbon that would otherwise be contributing to global warming. Trees can also locally ameliorate the effects of global warming through creating shade and a cooler microclimate around them.

7.3 Islington, as a Local Authority, should not under-estimate its powers in this respect. Several hundred street or parkland trees are just as relevant in tackling this problem as a couple of hectares of forest or woodland. Also, the immediate visual impact of planting street trees and trees in parks far outweighs a comparable number of woodland trees.

7.4 By instigating a correct management regime it is believed that the disadvantages presented by trees in towns can be overcome so that they continue to make a positive and long lasting contribution to the environment. This management regime also needs to be flexible in order to respond quickly to adapt to our now changing climate.

7.5 Once a decision has been taken in respect of retention or new planting then a system of management must be brought into play. Existing trees can, of course, be pruned to reduce the problems mentioned above. This needs to be done regularly and according to good arboricultural practice.

7.6 On some occasions, the best course of action may necessitate tree removal with the intention of re-planting with a new tree.

7.7 The pruning regime is largely dependent on the type of tree. Therefore, initial species selection is crucial and can greatly mitigate maintenance costs both in the short and the long-term. Planting of upright, small-leaved trees in narrow streets, will in one action reduce complaints generated with regard to shading, leaf litter, low branches and vehicle obstruction.

7.8 The number of different types of trees available to the modern arboriculturalist is extensive and with increased sophistication in micro-propagation techniques the list can only get longer. Therefore, it is always possible to find a tree to suit the site.

8 Tree Planting

Policy 1:	The Council will aim to plant large shade-producing trees. In order to create an impact they should be as large as possible when mature for each location. However, in most circumstances it will be necessary to scale down to an appropriate size considering specific constraints such as locality to buildings, soil type, other plants etc

Policy 2:	The Council will endeavour to increase the stock of trees on public land throughout the Borough by its tree-planting programme. Planting will normally have priority in the less attractive areas and those where there is a noticeable absence of mature trees.

8.1 Objectives of Tree Planting

8.1.1 Enhancement: To increase the tree cover and species diversity across the Borough, both by planting trees on Council land and by encouraging planting on private land, such that there is an overall increase in the tree population.

8.1.2 Maintenance: To undertake the management of the existing stock ensuring that there is a continuous programme of tree replacement throughout the Borough, so that there is a mixed range of age and species providing future generations of residents with a pleasant green environment.

8.1.3 Species Selection: Planting, where appropriate, potentially large indigenous or exotic species. Creating skyline features where before none existed.

Policy 3:	The council will aim to diversify the species of trees within sites to ensure the sustainability of the overall tree stock. This is to mitigate the risks that monocultures present for tree management, such as pests and disease that may threaten that entire species.

8.1.4 Conservation: Using the objectives detailed here wherever possible to encourage nature conservation throughout the different land use categories, so that across the Borough there is a measurable increase in the conditions suitable for wildlife to colonise areas where before it had limited foothold opportunities. This will be done in sympathy with other existing nature conservation initiatives in the Borough.

8.1.5 Publicity and Promotion: In undertaking the implementation of the policy it is intended to increase the level of public awareness of the tree resource by the production of leaflets, by holding meetings and encouraging public involvement.

8.1.6 Sponsorship: To continue to promote and encourage members of the public, businesses and other groups to sponsor trees through the council's Tree Sponsorship Scheme.

8.1.7 Climate Adaptation: To ensure that the council's tree stock is robust and diverse enough to adjust to the changing climate. This will be attempted through increasing species diversity and planting new species that may be able to deal with climate change better than some of the existing stock.

8.2 Planned tree planting

8.2.1 Trees in urban areas are usually present either because a conscious decision was made to plant them or because they self-seeded in parks and gardens and were allowed to grow and mature. A certain amount of natural regeneration can and does occur in areas such as railway embankments and designated nature conservation sites, but the possibilities for this kind of regeneration in a densely populated urban area are clearly limited.

8.2.2 This explains why systematic planning of the tree resources is needed. Without due care there can easily occur a gradual decline in the number and type of trees that are present in various parts of the Borough as trees that are seen as unsuitable are removed without adequate provision being made for suitable replacements.

8.3 Sponsorship and Commemorative Plaques

8.3.1 Tree Sponsorship: The council has successfully facilitated a tree sponsorship scheme for a over a decade. This scheme has allowed residents and businesses to sponsor tree planting on any council owned land. The council has also allowed residents sponsoring a tree in a greenspace site to also purchase a commemorative plaque that is installed next to the tree. It has been decided to cease with commemorative plaques as they have caused management issues in relation to maintenance as well as presenting issues when developing parks.

8.3.2 Residents will still be able to sponsor a specific tree, the details of the sponsored tree will be recorded in a register/ book that will be held at the town hall.

8.3.3 Sponsorship of trees will continue to be promoted and the potential for tree business sponsorship explored in more depth. The cost of sponsoring trees will be different for the public and businesses. Businesses will be expected to pay for the entire cost of supply, planting and establishment of a tree, where residents will be charged for the cost of purchasing the tree.

8.3.4 The choice of species of sponsored trees will be discussed with the sponsor, but the final choice will be with the council's tree service as it is important to plant the right species in the right place.

9 Sustainability

9.1 The Council has adopted the following policy statement in its Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) to demonstrate its commitment to improving the Islington environment :

9.2 "Islington Council is committed to creating a borough that is environmentally sustainable. We will seek to minimise harmful impacts on the environment whilst working to create a greener, cleaner, healthier place to live and work; now and for the future.

9.3 We will ensure that we enhance and improve our environment through:

- our policies
- our services
- the way we use our own resources

9.4 By working with residents, business and our partners across the borough, we believe we can deliver better services and a better quality of life for all who live and work in Islington; both now and for generations to come".

9.5 Our Impact on Sustainability - From global to local

KEY FACTS:

Of the hottest years ever recorded, three have been in the last decade.

Over 1.3 billion tonnes of waste are generated in the EU per year, of which 58 million tonnes are hazardous waste. Between 1990 and 1995 total waste generation in Europe increased by 10% whilst GDP increased by 6.5%

9.5.1 The polar ice caps are melting fast. Extreme weather events around the world are hitting the news. We are becoming uncomfortably aware of more and worse events, which throw lives into chaos and take years to rectify. But whilst the reality of climate change is now accepted, reaching agreements and commitments is often frustrating and falls far short of what we need to achieve to keep the world safe from serious climatic effects. International and national bodies disagree on how best to tackle world environmental problems and struggle to tackle an issue that needs sustained action far beyond the life of any one administration.

9.5.2 Action needs to be at all levels; from international agreements on carbon trading and waste quotas, to individual householders installing cavity wall insulation and recycling. It is in this connection, between the global and the local, that local authorities can make a real difference. Islington Council recognised this in making environmental sustainability one of its four corporate priorities. With the range of services we provide, we touch many aspects of residents' lives. With the right services, provided in a sustainable way, we can make it easier for people to act sustainably. At a local level, we can show leadership by making our activities as environmentally sustainable as possible.

9.5.3 The actions that relate directly to the Tree Service are:

- plant at least 1,500 new trees
- plan for the impact of Climate change on Council services
- increase the number of green roofs within the borough

9.6 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change

9.6.1 Climate Change is a huge threat to our way of life and we are already seeing some of its impacts locally. We need to respond in two ways. The first is to take action to minimise our contribution to climate change. This must focus on reducing CO2 emissions and the Plan proposes the establishment of a borough-wide Climate Change Partnership working, including business and major organisations and authorities across Islington, to set and meet reduction targets. An important step has been the councils signing of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, demonstrating the Council's commitment and leadership and its partnership with other authorities. The second is to respond to the environmental changes that are already inevitable, for example, by planting different tree species or developing buildings with maximum solar shading. The Plan, therefore, proposes that the Council begin now the process of understanding the impacts of these changes on future service needs and provision.

9.7 Climate Change Adaptation

9.7.1 The council has achieved beacon status for climate adaptation and has produced a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in which the Tree Service is a key stakeholder which has a number of current and future initiatives it directly or indirectly involved with.

9.7.2 The current initiatives are:

- Trailing out new tree species which are likely to adapt to the predicted changing climate over the next 50 years
- Developing a well to ensure sustainable watering of trees
- Undertaking research with Reading university in pioneering sustainable watering trials'

9.7.3 There are many action points detailed in the strategy that directly or indirectly relate to trees. The Tree Service acknowledge the importance of this strategy and will prioritise the actions that are in the final strategy to ensure that the council fulfils its commitments in relation to trees and climate adaptation.

10 Biodiversity

10.1 In an urban borough such as Islington, trees make a vital contribution to the bio-diversity and wildlife value. They are important intrinsically as species in their own right and also in terms of the other species they support in terms of invertebrates and birds in particular.

10.2 Bio-diversity Action Plan (BAP).

10.3 In an urban borough such as Islington, trees make a vital contribution to the biodiversity and wildlife value. They are important intrinsically as species in their own right and also in terms of the other species they support in terms of invertebrates, birds and bats in particular.

10.4 Islington produced its own local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) in 2002 which set out how the Borough aims to protect and enhance key habitats and species. The BAP is now being reviewed and updated to reflect the changes regionally and to address issues such as climate change.

10.5 Trees form an important component of the BAP in particular , in Parks and Open Spaces and the Built Environment Habitat Action Plans. There is also the Native Black popular which has been notable to warrant its own action plan. The Tree Service play a key role in these plans and will help define specific objectives and actions around trees and biodiversity.

10.6 There are a number of measures that should be considered as part of the Tree Policy.

- Although native trees are not suitable for planting in the street setting, they should be given consideration when planting in parks and other open spaces although it is recognised that it won't always be appropriate to plant native species.

- Other non-native species should be assessed for their wildlife value and these should be favoured. For example the sycamore an often much maligned non-native in nature conservation, although doesn't support a wide variety of species, it does support an enormous bio-mass of invertebrates (mainly aphids), which provide a rich food source for birds.

- Consideration could be given to improving the wildlife value of trees through the erection of bird and bat boxes. Where bird boxes have already been installed on a tree that needs to be removed, assuming there is no active nest the box will be moved to another suitable tree nearby.

- Specific trees can provide important communal gathering places for House Sparrows, a priority species for London and Islington. Consideration should be given to whether sparrows use a tree when considering its removal or replacement. Loss of communal roosts is cited as a possible contributory factor in their rapid decline.

- When trees are felled, greater use should be made of some of the timber. Consideration should be given to leaving dead wood in situ, log piles provide an important habitat for fungi and invertebrates, including the stag beetle, another London and Islington priority species.

- Bats are an important species that the tree policy can directly impact and therefore has it's own section relating to them.

11 Bats

11.1 Bats and trees

11.1.1 Bats are small nocturnal mammals that fly. There are 17 species of bat in the UK, and at least 8 species known to breed in Greater London. All species of bat eat only insects and use trees to some extent, for feeding on associated insects, as territorial markers, for roosting in summer and winter and as navigation points. They can also roost in buildings (both modern and old), bridges, and various underground structures such as cellars and tunnels. Temperature and light are important factors when bats select

roosts. Roost preference depends on the bat species, the time of year and the breeding status of the bat

11.1.2 Bats roost in trees, in cavities, cracks and splits, but also in less obvious places

11.1.3 such as under ivy and under loose bark, and it can be very difficult to locate them in trees. The damaged parts of a tree are the most likely places to find roosting bats, but they are the parts most likely to be cut off for safety, cosmetic or tree-health reasons.

11.1.4 All species of bat have declined over the years and many are now threatened or endangered. Factors affecting them include habitat degradation, disturbance to and loss of roosting sites and use of certain pesticides.

11.2 Legislation and Protection

11.2.1 All bats are European protected species, in England and Wales bats and their roosts (even when bats are not present) are protected under The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).

11.2.2 The laws mean that all bats are protected from being killed, injured, taken or disturbed and their roosting places are also protected from being disturbed, damaged, destroyed or the entrances obstructed intentionally. This includes recklessness which means that an offence could be committed if operations are not carefully planned, necessary checks not carried out and a license obtained where necessary.

11.3 Bats in Islington

11.3.1 The way we manage and service the borough's tree stock and woodland habitats can have a significant impact on bat species and the vital spaces they need to survive. It is therefore imperative that we have carefully planned management practices in place to ensure that this impact is a positive one.

11.3.2 At least 6 different bat species have been recorded in Islington a number of which are actually breeding here.

11.3.3 The serious consideration of bats in relation to trees is something the tree policy looks to address. The laws protecting them have become stricter and quite rightly so. The tree policy supports the aims in the Forestry Commissions (FC) good practice guidance on managing woodlands with bats, which are as follows:

- to protect all existing confirmed roosts sites
- to retain most potential roost sites
- to ensure a succession or continuity of roosts for the future
- to create a good network of habitats used for feeding and avoid isolating any areas

11.3.4 We aim to follow FC's guidelines which are in Appendix G. It is important to recognise that these should not only apply to woodlands, but the way our entire tree stock is managed.

11.3.5 We have already been actively helping bats in the borough by installing bat boxes on trees in some of our parks and open spaces, which have already proved successful with bats having been recorded as using them.

11.4 In relation to bats we will aim to:

- To keep old trees and deadwood in situ where possible and safe to do so
- Carry out a bat survey on any trees to be felled or needing tree surgery if there is any possibility of bats using them as roosts.

If bats are found to be using a tree that is to be removed or worked on:

- We will seek advice from Natural England and/or the local bat group, and apply for a special licence from Natural England, where necessary.

Bats discovered during tree work:

- Occasionally, even after all precautions, bats are discovered when branches are removed or trees felled, particularly in winter. Carefully collect up any bats with gloved hands into a box and contact Natural England and the London Bat Group for advice.

If no bats are found, yet possible roosting places have been identified:

- We will aim to carry out work in spring or autumn unless it is deemed essential works under health and safety, in which case we will seek professional advice.

Maintaining trees which are known bat roosts:

- Trees with known bat roosts may become unstable with time. Seek specific advice in maintaining the tree from local experts so that the roost is not lost.

Encouraging bats and enhancing habitat:

- If there are few other suitable trees for bats to roost in (perhaps due to the species of trees or their age) then erecting bat roosting boxes can maintain the local bat population. Woodcrete boxes are low/no maintenance.

- Maintain fly lines where possible. Bats use regular fly-ways to move between roosting and feeding areas.

12 Raywood Ash Trees

12.1 Raywood Ash trees were first planted across London as amenity trees around 30 years ago. They are admired for their attractive foliage and crown, especially during the autumn when they turn shades of deep purple. This species is also a very fast growing species of tree which made them a very popular tree to plant by Arboriculturists and landscape architects.

12.2 Unfortunately Raywood Ash trees are mechanically weak and as the tree matures they have a tendency to shed limbs presenting a risk to people and property under the trees. Of the 10,500 street trees 472 are Raywood Ashes however a significant amount of the emergency call outs that the Tree Service responds to on the highway are due to the shedding of branches or the splitting of stems or Raywood Ash trees. In March of 2007 of the 7 out of hour call outs responded to 5 were to this type of tree.

12.3 The risk of mechanical failure can be alleviated through the reduction of the size of the crown through pruning. However Raywoods do not respond well to this type of pruning, often dying back from the pruning cut and new growth is often weak and grows abnormally resulting in weak growth. This results in the need to cut the tree back harder each time the tree is pruned, resulting in the slow demise of the tree.

12.4 Raywood Ash trees have not been planted by the Council for at least ten years due to these associated problems.

12.5 The management of these trees is difficult as whilst the aesthetic value of the tree is appreciated by the public, the inherent structural weakness posses a significant threat.

12.6 It is the councils view that these trees should no longer be planted in positions where there are vulnerable targets that will be within the ultimate

size of the tree. Vulnerable targets being people, vehicles or property. This area is known as the 'target area'.

12.7 Where Raywood Ashes are planted in areas with a high risk target area (eg pavement trees or trees in playgrounds) they should be allowed to develop into mature or semi-mature trees with minimal pruning. Once a tree attains an age where it is likely to start to shed limbs or the tree has started to shed limbs the tree should either be felled and replanted or reduced in size and felled at a later date.

12.8 The management for this species is based on identifying the risk the tree posses and the target area that would be affected. Therefore a Raywood Ash in a park in an area where pedestrians rarely pass can be left to grow until it starts to shed significant limbs at which time it should be removed and replaced with a new species.

13 Valuation of Trees

13.1 For many reasons it is important to try to measure the contribution that Council owned trees provide to us in a monetary value. By assessing the evaluation of each tree enables a more effective and efficient level of management.

13.2 There have been many systems developed for valuing trees. Islington's adopted system is the Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees (CAVAT). It is the system that the LTOA has adopted to work in conjunction with their risk Limitation Strategy.

13.3 There are two variants of the method, one designed to allow the stock as a whole to be managed in relation to its value, and the second intended for cases relating to individual trees, or groups, where a more detailed consideration is necessary. Details can be found in Appendix E

13.4 All highway assets such as street lamps, railings etc have been valued, we therefore decided to start valuing the highways tree. At time of writing the highway tree stock had been valued, at a total value of just under £110 million pounds.

13.5 It is intended to value all of the council's tree stock as the trees are inspected as part of a cyclical inspection regime or responsive inspection.

13.6 Tree valuation will be used when assessing the damage caused through actions by developers and other external organisations on trees, and will be used to form the basis of any financial compensation that is required.

14 Subsidence

14.1 Drought-related subsidence is generally a problem only in those areas which are underlain with shrinkable clays. That is, the properties have their foundations on clay which displays volumetric changes under different levels of moisture content. It shrinks when moisture is removed and swells when moisture is replaced. These conditions prevail throughout much of Islington.

14.2 This problem became more prominent after the severe drought of 1976 when structural damage occurred to many buildings and when the number of claims started to increase at an alarming rate. This increase has continued through the 1990's up to the present time.

14.3 It is essential that record keeping and filing of all works and correspondence is maintained to assist in the repudiation of alleged subsidence and third party personal injury claims. Since the last review all relevant historic documents pertaining to claims and tree works history have been scanned onto CD-ROM to ensure more efficient and effective referencing to help investigations into new and old insurance claims. This form of record keeping provides extra insurance for existing records against degradation, fire and theft of these records.

14.4 When dealing with a property displaying movement there are more often than not a variety of factors involved that are causing the structural failure. All too often a nearby tree is blamed as the easy option for remedial action.

14.5 Some other reasons for structural failure are:

- Inadequate foundation design
- Major works to adjacent properties
- General structure failure
- Previous internal alterations (sometimes decades ago)
- Nearby excavations
- Vibration from rail or road
- Climatic changes
- Different foundations between buildings and extensions
- Land slip

- Change in building use
- Use of mortar using no lime
- Change in surface materials in close proximity to trees and buildings e.g. when soil is capped with concrete the water permeability of the area is reduced considerably
- Seepage from broken or poorly maintained water pipes and drains

14.6 The last reason causes the most problems for arboriculturalists as very often the drain or pipe has been broken for a long time, sometimes years. Naturally any nearby plant roots will migrate towards the source of moisture so that when a problem is discovered tree roots are invariably present. There is no evidence to suggest that tree roots can actively penetrate an intact pipe or drain. In these situations, the owner of the drain should seek to get the drain repaired at their own expense.

14.7 Trees can damage buildings by their roots extracting moisture from the clay sub-soil on to which the building's foundations are laid. When this clay shrinks, movement occurs in the building which then produces visible signs of cracking through the brickwork and internal plaster. Different species of tree remove water at different rates (by transpiration), some are high water demanders, e.g. Poplar, Willow, Oak, and some are low e.g. Birch, Sorbus, Malus. This is true also of different aged trees: a large mature tree which is physiologically stable or in decline may actually be using less water than a smaller tree which is growing vigorously and transpiring at a greater rate.

14.8 The relationship between trees and buildings is a very complex one. While a good deal of work has been done on their interaction it still remains difficult to predict how much moisture a particular tree is removing from the ground in isolation. Any such extrapolation should take into account all the local factors and ground conditions. This of course means that each case must be viewed and assessed individually on its own merits. Research into this matter is ongoing. The Tree Officers will actively keep abreast of all new developments.

14.9 To help in this assessment of existing trees' influence on buildings and how new building construction should allow for the presence of trees there are a number of reference documents. These include the National House Building Council's 1984 chapter 4.2 "Building Near Trees", the British Research Establishment digest 'The Influence of Trees on House Foundations in Clay Soils', Institute of Structural Engineer's 'Subsidence of Low Rise Buildings 2nd Edition 2004 (Check Date)', and British Standard 5837 l99l 'Trees in Relation to Construction, 2005 (Check Date)'. The London Tree Officers (LTOA) Risk Limitation Strategy for Tree Root Claims; 3rd edition 2007. .

14.10 These documents provide valuable information concerning some of the more quantifiable aspects of the problems of subsidence and construction near trees. The first two deal primarily with the effects of trees on building foundations in clay soils and the recommended precautions deemed necessary to reduce existing problems. The BS 5837 document deals solely with the precautions necessary to protect and preserve trees on development sites where there is a certain amount of conflict between the need of trees on the site and that of the design and construction of the new building(s).

14.11 Where a tree is suspected of contributing to structural movement in a building the recommended prudent course of action is to prune the tree so as to lower its water uptake. Within the arboricultural industry, there are differing opinions with regards to pruning methods and their effect on water uptake. The Hortlink Project undertaken by the BRE indicates that crown thinning has little effect on water uptake. Crown reduction is a more effective method of controlling water uptake, but only if this is followed by re reduction on a regular basis.

14.12 In undertaking any tree works, care should be taken that pruning, while initially lowering water uptake, does not result in a subsequent increase in leaf surface area as can happen in certain species (e.g. Lime, Sycamore, Plane) following crown reduction. It is accepted that a significant number of trees in urban situations require regular maintenance. However, the aim of this routine pruning must be to mitigate the influence of the tree for the longest period possible while still retaining its amenity value. Local Authorities must stay abreast of these changes in the industry.

14.13 Due to the nature of subsidence claims and the time they can take to process residents who are suffering from alleged subsidence often become and frustrated.

14.14 To ensure that claims are dealt with effectively, efficiently and in line with best industry practice the council is adopting two external documents that will structure how we deal with claims and how we proactively manage our trees. These documents are:

14.15 1) The London Tree Officers Association "A Risk Limitation Strategy for Tree Root Claims 3rd Edition 2007".

14.15.1 This document sets recommendations for proactive management regimes and how the claims process should work.

In summary it recommends:

Publicly Owned Trees:

- Local authorities instigate a regime of cyclical pruning of council owned tree stock in areas predisposed to building movement where this is appropriate.
- Local authorities provide dedicated resources for dealing with subsidence generated claims directed at council owned trees.
- Local authorities instigate a regime of selective removal and replacement of street tree stock in areas predisposed to building movement where this is appropriate.

Privately Owned Trees:

- Local authorities provide dedicated resources for dealing with subsidence generated Conservation Area notifications and Tree Preservation Order Applications.
- Local authorities review all existing unsettled claims providing dedicated resources to challenge those unwarranted claims based on poorly investigated and inaccurate evidence or where in the case of preserved trees the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999 can provide relief from the claim.

All Trees:

- Local authorities challenge unwarranted claims based on poorly investigated or inaccurate evidence.

14.16 2) Joint Mitigation Protocol & LTOA Evidential Requirements For Trees

14.16.1 The Joint Mitigation Protocol has been produced by a group of partners (The Subsidence Forum, Property Claims Forum etc.) who have worked with local authority risk managers, tree officers (including Islington Council) and representatives of the insurance and loss adjusting industries to produce a protocol for consistent management of subsidence claims suspected of involving trees. It aims to standardise investigative reports, response times, processes and overall timescales so that each new insurance claim has a defined and limited time scale. This protocol will benefit local authority managers, insurance companies, loss adjusters and home owners. See Appendix C.

15 Insurance Claims

15.1 In recent years, local authorities have come under increasing pressure from the insurance industry. This is due to many reasons, some of which are:

- The huge increase in property prices making house owners less tolerant of cracks in buildings that would have once been repaired and accepted as normal
- A generally more litigious society
- Negative tactics by the insurance industry
- New householders' surveys highlighting trees as needing removal or regular pruning
- Recent court precedents that have found in favour of claimants against tree owners
- Generally negative press towards trees

15.2 Defending tree claims is always difficult. Courts only need to be shown the presence of roots beneath a building to agree a claim. We can as a Council, however, reduce the costs of a claim if we show that we are a reasonable user (as in National Trust v Leakey), in that we have a regular inspection and maintenance system in operation with necessary records held either on paper or computer.

15.3 Where the whole or part of a tree fails causing damage to persons or property, the same system of inspection and maintenance must be implemented. In some ways, claims of this nature can be more serious. Any large branch or tree falling onto a person or car can cause serious damage, injury or death. Without any system of inspection or maintenance, the consequences will not simply be monetary.

15.4 It is for these reasons that the Greenspace and Regeneration Tree Service have now adopted a three yearly cyclical maintenance programme for all highway trees. (see section 8.1 and Policy 15)

15.5 The Tree Section recommend that all council owned trees are inspected on a regular basis by qualified arboriculturists and that these inspections are recorded.

15.6 All claims are dealt with on an individual basis, and trees are inspected as and when requested to do so by the Council's Insurance Section. All correspondence in relation to claims in the first instance must go through the Insurance Section. Some roads are currently maintained on a cyclical basis. The Tree Section will undertake an inspection and provide a report for the Claims Section within four weeks of receipt of a request to do so. This report, where appropriate, will include a recommendation for tree works. In most cases, some work will result from this inspection.

15.7 Claims will be processed in accordance with the Joint Mitigation Protocol see appendix C.

16 Current Management Situation in Islington

16.1.1 All the trees in the Borough can be divided into two categories: those owned by the Council and managed by the Greenspace Service and those owned privately.

16.2 Trees on Council land that are managed by the Public Realm Division

16.2.1 The management of all trees on Council land is undertaken by the Greenspace Tree Section.

16.2.2 The overall aim for the Greenspace Service's Tree Section is to manage a potentially problematical resource with a high public profile in a cost-effective manner. This must be done wherever possible in such a way that the trees retain their essential attractiveness and beneficial effect for the environment and for the current and future community as a whole.

16.2.3 In 2000 the Greenspace and Regeneration Division (as it was then known) was reviewed under the Best Value process as a whole, including the Tree Section. It was rated as a 2-star service and is likely to improve. As a direct result of this review, an Improvements Plan was produced and agreed. A range of improvements for the division were identified, including the following specific tree-related objectives:

- The introduction of new contractual arrangements with a schedules of rates process for maintenance of Council-owned trees – Achieved April 2002

- To carry out a full survey and to compile a full inventory of all Highway-owned trees. Achieved January 2002 this confirmed that there are 9,785 trees located in the highways. A database for this has been purchased and the tree data is currently being inputted. This will improve efficiency, customer care and ensure a more cost-effective service

- The implementation of the Council's Tree Pledge, set out in 'Time for a Change' report to Policy Committee. The aim of this was to plant 500 new trees within the borough by May 2002. Achieved April 2002

- To complete the revised version of the Council's Tree Policy and the production of Annual Service Plans for the Tree Service – Achieved 01-02 and 02-03

- The re-establishment of the Council's Tree Warden Scheme. Due to the recent implementation of the Environment and Conservation Department's "Eyes for Islington" initiative, it was decided by the Head of Greenspace and Leisure that it would not be appropriate to run two similar schemes in parallel. Instead the Tree Service will liaise with both the Eyes scheme and the proposed Voluntary Greenspace Ranger Scheme, to ensure that those involved are fully briefed.

16.2.4 The Tree Section was subjected to a restructure in 2007 when the number of tree officers was increased.

16.3 Computer Aided Management

16.3.1 In April 2002 the Greenspace and Leisure Tree Service acquired the EzyTreev tree management system. EzyTreev is an integrated suite of computer systems, which provides a complete facility to assist in tree management. It uses digitised maps as a primary point of reference for tree data.

16.3.2 All of the trees located on Highways land, Housing Estates, Greenspace Sites, Building Administration and Social Services sites have now been recorded on to the Ezytreev system.

16.3.3 Also all tree works is now processed through EzyTreev. This ensures that a comprehensive history of all works and inspections will build up over time, helping significantly to repudiate third party insurance claims.

16.3.4 The system also allows for full analysis of the data so that over time useful statistics such as which newly planted species are best suited to different locations within Islington can be obtained.

16.3.5 Tree locations are now displayed on the corporate mapping system, allowing all council employees to view tree locations on maps and soon they will be able to access their basic details (Such as species type and height). Work is also being done to allow this information to be displayed on the Internet so that anyone can access this information.

16.3.6 The Public Realm division widely uses an asset management system known as “Symology”, the Tree Sections data and systems will be moved onto this system and Ezytreev will cease to be the tree database.

17 CCTV

17.1 Over recent years the number of CCTV cameras within Islington has increased significantly and it is likely that the numbers will to continue to increase over the coming years. This has resulted in a number of issues with trees:

- Cameras being placed close to trees, or in positions where desired sightlines are blocked by trees foliage resulting in the need for pruning

- Cameras being placed close to a young tree that will become blocked as the tree grows. This can lead to the need to either undertake severe pruning to a tree that will significantly reduce its amenity value, remove the tree or relocate the camera

- The presence of a camera significantly reduces the possible locations for establishing new trees. Modern cameras can zoom a great distance, therefore resulting in a large area of possible conflict between the cameras views and possible trees.

17.2 Any agency tasked with installing CCTV cameras within Islington must work with the council before any camera is installed. This must be done regardless of the presence of trees or not. If consent is not gained the removal or the substantial pruning of trees to improve sightlines will not be considered. And priority must always be given to trees with a high value.

18 General policies for trees

The following is a list of general policies

Policy 4:	The Council will aim to provide and maintain a sustainable, high quality, tree population.

Policy 5: All council departments or partner organisations responsible for council land that contains trees will adhere to the tree policy.

Policy 6: The Council will ensure that the tree population is managed in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

Policy 7: The Council will encourage and enable better understanding of trees with a view to promoting greater community involvement and awareness.

Policy 8: The Council will endeavour to maintain a high level of tree maintenance and undertake all works to the British Standards for Tree Work - BS 3998.

Policy 9: The Impact on trees and any tree losses shall be clearly defined in an unambiguous way in the Environmental Implications Section of all reports prepared by the council..

Policy 10: There will be a presumption against the removal of council trees unless there are sound arboricultural or other reasons to indicate otherwise. These being

- Dead, dying or dangerous
- Proven to be causing significant structural damage
- Considered to be by the Tree Service to be inappropriate species for the location
- When removal is required as part of an agreed management programme or as an overall improvement project

Policy 11: The Council will replace trees that it removes

Policy 12: The Council will ensure that it keeps abreast of and adopts where necessary, any relevant developments within the arboricultural industry.

Policy 13: The Council will not prune or remove trees for the following reasons:

- Interference with satellite dish reception
- Excessive leaf fall
- Where tree is perceived to be too large
- Obstruction of view
- Mess caused by insects or birds
- Blockage of light

- Overhanging neighbour's garden
- Problems associated with pollen

The Council may prune, but not heavily or remove trees for the following reasons:

- Blockage of light
- Overhanging neighbour's land

Trees reported with the above issues will be inspected and if pruning is due as part of a cyclical maintenance programme consideration will also be given to alleviate the above through appropriate pruning. The Council will not consider the removal trees for the following reasons:

- Someone is willing to pay for the removal and replacement of a tree
- The perceived risk that it will cause subsidence in the future, where there is no actual damage

Exceptional circumstances – where conflict with other policies occur consideration will be given to retention of trees and future growth needs

Policy 14:	All agents, partners and contractors of the council will be required to comply with this policy.

Policy 15:	It will be policy that all other services, departments and organisations managing council land obtain consent from the Public Realm Tree Service before pruning, or planting any tree.

Policy 16:	The Council will manage and process claims in accordance with the London tree Officers Risk Limitation Strategy and The Joint Mitigation Protocol. .

Policy 17:	A 24-hour emergency call-out system will be available for all tree-related emergencies.

Policy 18:	Any external organisation that undertakes actions that result in the removal of any council owned tree(s) will fund the replacement and establishment of new trees that produce the same canopy cover when planted as that of the tree(s) that is being removed or compensate for the loss of the tree(s) the value as calculated by CAVAT

19 Tree Removal

19.1 The tree service must authorise all council trees that are proposed to be felled regardless of who manages the site and who is undertaking the work.

19.2 Council owned trees will only be felled for the following reasons:

- Dead trees – trees that are dead will be felled.

- Dying trees - once a tree is identified as being in the advance stages of decline and after all other management options have been considered will be felled.

- Diseased trees – trees identified as having a disease that will lead to the death or significantly affect the structural soundness of a tree to the extent that it is considered dangerous will be felled.

- Mature and large trees or trees with a high amenity value that have suspected heartwood decay. Whilst it is possible to identify from an visual inspection if the heartwood is decaying, it is not always possible to ascertain the full extent of the decay. In these cases a second inspection will be undertaken using non invasive decay detection equipment. Crown reduction will be used to retain these trees where the extent of the decay is not considered significant, and felling as a last resort.

- Where a tree is suffering from a root decaying pathogen and the full extent of the decay cannot be reasonably determined the tree will be felled.

- Dangerous – When a tree is either in an obviously dangerous condition or determined by a qualified Arboriculturist to be in a dangerous condition it will be removed on an emergency basis following no consultation. Photographs and a report will be made in order to demonstrate in retrospect the reasons for the felling. Such condition usually results following direct damage such as wind damage, road traffic accidents, lightning strikes causing significant bough or stem breakage or root plate damage.

- Causing an obstruction to the highway – the council has a duty of care to ensure that trees do not cause an obstruction to the highway. Where this obstruction can not be removed through pruning, and an engineering solution is either not feasible nor practical consideration to the removal of the tree will be made.

- Subsidence – Where a tree has been positively implicated in a subsidence following the protocol as detailed in section

19.3 Stand Thinning

19.3.1 It is good management practice in open areas and particularly woodlands where tree cover is desired to plant large numbers of trees close together. This allows for high establishment rates and the trees compete with each other and attain height more quickly. However these areas must be carefully managed to ensure the tree cover is maintained in a good condition. It is important that at intervals trees are selectively thinned out to allow the best trees to space to grow into and develop into large well formed trees. This requires an Arboriculturist to identify the better specimens in the stand and to remove poorer ones. This operation should be repeated on a cyclical basis (dependant on the species of tree) and a percentage of trees removed until the optimum density is achieved.

19.4 Consultation for Tree Removal

19.4.1 In recognition of the level of public interest regarding tree removal the council will consult on the removal of established trees. Exceptions to this are:

- Trees that have become dangerous and need to be removed on an emergency basis.
- Young trees that have failed to establish properly and have died
- Trees that are obviously dead

19.4.2 There are three levels of consultation, the decision as to which level will be applied to each tree will lie with the tree officer, but can be changed following initial responses.

19.4.3 Level one: a felling notice placed on the tree at least a week in advance of the felling dates and letters to the immediate residents posted at the same time and the local ward councillors will be notified. The signs and letters will give information about why the tree is being felled.

19.4.3.1 This level of consultation will be applied to small and medium sized trees (up to 14m) located in areas with other trees.

19.4.4 Level two: will consist of letters being posted at least one week in advance, these will be the same as level one and in addition giving residents and other interested parties the opportunity to meet on site a Tree Officer and discuss the reasons behind the felling and to discuss replacement species. Signs will be placed upon the trees again two weeks prior to felling.

19.4.4.1 This level of consultation will be applied to small and medium sized trees in areas with very few or no other trees visible. It will also be applied to all

large and extra large trees (14m+) and where a number of trees in the same location are to be removed.

19.4.5 Level three: consultation will consist of level two consultation and in addition a public meeting.

19.4.5.1 This will be undertaken where large or extra large sized trees are to be removed that are predominant trees in the area, and are judged to have exception amenity value.

19.4.6 Appeals. If following the consultation process there are still a number of objections a report will be compiled by the tree officer and presented to the area committee.

19.5 Consultation for Stand Thinning

19.5.1 As stand thinning can result in the removal of a number of trees, attaching notices to each tree is not considered appropriate. In these cases information signs will be erected around the stand giving felling information as detailed in the above section. The sign will also clearly show by means of a map the area of trees this work is being applied to and if reasonable detail the trees to be removed. At the very least the total number of trees proposed to be removed will be detailed. Officers will be available to meet residents who wish to discuss the proposals.

19.6 Felling Programme

19.6.1 All Highway and Greenspace trees that are due to be felled will be removed during the late autumn. The exception to this will be trees that are considered to be too dangerous to wait until this time or if felling has been agreed as part of an insurance claim, or where it is being undertaken as part of the delivery of an improvement project. In these cases consultation in line with the above consultation guidelines.

20 Maintenance Techniques

20.1 This part of the policy lists the different pruning techniques that are normally undertaken.

20.2 *Crown reduction* – Reducing the overall size of the crown area by a specified percentage (usually no more than 30% unless) by pruning back the leaders and branch terminals to lateral branches that are large enough to assume the terminal roles (at least one third the diameter of the cut stem). These final pruning cuts should not be made back to twigs or buds as growth points or left as bare stubs, unless agreed prior to works being undertaken.

20.3 *Crown thinning* – the removal of selected branches throughout the crown of the tree so that the overall density of the leaf surface area by a specified percentage without affecting the natural shape of the tree. Usually no more than 30%.

20.4 *Crown lifting* – the removal of the lowest branches of a tree so that the remaining lowest branches are at a specified height, usually 2.4m over a footpath and 5m over a road unless otherwise stated.

20.5 *Dead wooding* – The removal of dead branches throughout the crown.

20.6 *Pollarding* - Reducing the height of a tree by a substantial amount so that all that remains is a trunk with a limited branch structure.

20.7 *Formative pruning* – The removal of problematic or potentially problematic branches, ensuring good tree development.

20.8 *General prune* – A generic term encompassing a number of pruning operations.

20.9 *The crown* - generally considered to be the part of the tree between the first main branch and the top of the tree.

20.10 The disadvantages of trees, as listed on page 7, can be reduced in some circumstances by adopting one or more of the above maintenance techniques, whilst retaining the overall amenity value of the tree.

21 Customer Focus

21.1 It is the intention of the Tree Service to inform enquirers what action is planned and when work, if any, is to be carried out. Customers will be informed how long it will take inquiries and complaints to be dealt with. Most inquiries will be dealt with within eight weeks (this is measured from the date of the telephone call to when works are completed). Customers will be given a reference number so at any stage they can quickly find out the status of their inquiry.

21.2 In the case of emergencies such as fallen trees and branches the tree service will respond within a maximum of two hours.

21.3 Some works such as tree planting are seasonal, in these situations the eight-week period will not apply. Inquiries relating to trees located on sites that have been identified for planned maintenance may also exceed the eight week period as it is not cost effective or efficient to pull individual trees out of cycle.

21.4 The implementation of the cyclical pruning regime has reduced the number of complaints against the council as trees are maintained in a systematic and regular manner.

22 Tree Service Clients

22.1 Highway Trees

22.1.1 Islington has approximately 10,800 street trees.

22.1.2 The highway provides a very unnatural environment for the survival of trees:

- There is intense pressure for space from underground cables and pipes
- Telephone cables, buildings, street furniture and vehicles compete for space above ground
- The environment is also heavily polluted by vehicle emissions and construction works
- The soil in which they grow contains hardly any organic matter and lower than normal levels of oxygen
- Rainwater is often taken away by drainage systems before being allowed to sink naturally into the soil
- The trees are exposed to higher temperature extremes and stronger winds from the tunnelling effect of high buildings
- They are often damaged directly by vehicles, vandals, construction companies and trenching works

22.1.3 Despite all this trees can and do survive, albeit with a shorter life span and with varying degrees of success.

22.1.4 Our highway tree stock consists mainly of ornamental varieties, such as cherries, rowans, pears, apples and whitebeams. The vast majority of these trees were planted during the early 70's and are now approaching full maturity and reaching the end of useful life expectancy. This is resulting in an increase in mature trees that we are removing due to natural decline and increasing the need to replant trees.

22.1.5 There are a small number of areas that contain larger sized trees. These predominantly consist of London Planes and Lime trees that have been

planted all across London. This trend was started by the Victorians. The following is a list of some of the roads that exhibit these types of trees:

Aberdeen Road	Ardilaun Road
Gladsmuir Road	Harberton Road
Hanley Road	Hillmarton Road
Kelross Road	Loraine Road
Northolme Road	Richmond Avenue
Richmond Crescent	Sotheby Road
Stavordale Road	Whitehall Park
Highbury New Park	

22.1.6 Legal Context:

22.1.6.1 The Council is considered in law to be the owner of street trees that grow within adopted highways and in consequence is responsible for them. It is empowered to plant and maintain street trees the under auspices of the Highways Act 1980.

22.1.6.2 Street trees generally have no specific legal protection other than that being owned by the Council, any harm caused to them by another could be construed to be criminal damage. However where street trees grow within a designated Conservation Area, they benefit from the same protection as privately owned trees and anyone damaging or destroying a street tree can be penalised under the Town and country Planning Act 1990. The Council itself is exempt from the requirement of notification of intent to maintain street trees or fell those that are dead dying or dangerous.

22.1.6.3 Although it would be highly unusual, it is possible for a street tree to be placed under a Tree preservation Order.

22.1.6.4 The Council, as owner of street trees, has a duty of care towards them and employs trained and experienced arboricultural officers to act as day-to-day managers as well as to provide technical advice to Councillors and other sections and departments within the authority on tree matters. This duty care ordinarily extends to maintaining trees in such a way that they do not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic and, where subsidence may be an issue, appropriate action is taken to manage and minimise any risks.

22.1.6.5 It has been mentioned that trees are vulnerable as a result of construction activity.

22.1.6.6 When granting planning permission, the Council has various powers under the Town and Country Planning Act to ensure the protection of trees ‘off site’ that may be affected as a consequence of a granting of permission. Typically Grampian Conditions or Section 106 Agreements can be used to protect street trees from development pressures or be used to agree

schedules of work with developers that may include planting of new street trees to counter any losses or harm.

22.1.6.7 Scaffolding and closure of part of the highway and footpaths etc require a license and in issuing such a license under the Highways Act 1980, conditions can be applied that require consideration and protection of trees. Also under this act, Section 278 agreements can be entered into where development activity affects the highways and repair or improvements are required.

22.1.6.8 Statutory undertakers, for example the companies supplying gas and electricity, are permitted to excavate the highway to carry out repairs and maintenance. There is little legal provision that requires them to take special precautions to ensure the well-being of trees, although there is a code of conduct known as NJUG10, which many are signed up to. Often, if problems arise, local negotiation results in satisfactory resolution.

22.1.7 Current Management of Highway Street Trees

22.1.7.1 All trees located on highway land have since April 2005 have been maintained on a three year cyclical pruning programme. This program aims to prune every street tree apart from the very young ones once every three years. The borough has been divided into 3 geographical areas (see appendix F); one of these areas will be attended to each year. When the pruning is carried out the aim will be to prune them to ensure that they do not require pruning for another three years, and trying to prevent problems before they occur. This regime will:

- Greatly reduces the number of complaints in relation to street trees
- Directly improves customer satisfaction
- Is more cost efficient in the long term – lower pruning costs per tree
- Protects the Council from negligence claims
- Ensures that the Council will be acting reasonably and prudently
- Reduces the chances of accidents/subsidence occurring in the first place
- Has been shown over a period of years to reduce significantly the cost of subsidence claims in relation to trees
- Reduce incidents of tree failure during storms

22.1.7.2 All works on the highway that involve breaking the ground will be carried out by personnel who are appropriately trained and accredited under the New Roads and Streetworks Act.

22.1.7.3 The Highways Service are to keep the Tree Service informed of any street works / improvements, including streetlights, that may impact on trees.

22.1.7.4 All highway trees are inspected on a yearly basis by either Tree Officers or Arboricultural Contractors. In addition to this Street Inspectors who have received basic tree inspection training will also undertaking regular inspection, and then notifying the Tree Service of any concerns.

22.1.8 Construction and street trees

22.1.8.1 The Council will seek to work co-operatively with those involved in construction activity, where street trees may be affected, to ensure their protection during the course of works.

22.1.8.2 Where trees need to be pruned to facilitate access to a property, for gantries, scaffolding, skips or to assist in the construction of protective hoarding etc, this work will be carried out by the Council tree surgery contractor under the supervision of a Tree Officer for which a charge will be made at the expense of the developer.

22.1.8.3 Where applicable, the Council will apply controls and, if necessary, sanctions to ensure that street trees are given adequate protection from site works.

22.2 Policies for Highways Street Trees

Policy 19:	It will not be Council policy to remove trees on the grounds that they are causing disruption to pavements, kerbs, garden paths and walls. In these cases engineering solutions will be sought.

Policy 20:	The council will maintain all highway trees on at least a three year cyclical basis.

Policy 21:	When undertaking Highway Works near to trees all council operatives and contractors will adhere to the guidelines as set out in the Department For Transport's 'Roots and Routes: Guidelines on Highways Works and Trees'.

Policy 22:	Any external organisation that undertakes actions that require or result in the removal of any council owned tree(s) will fund the replacement or establishment of at least three new trees

22.2.1 Trees on HFI land are managed in two main ways:

- responsive works
- programmed work on estates.

22.3 Responsive Tree Works

22.3.1 The agreed procedure for dealing with the flow of works is, as follows:

22.3.2 All calls relating to Housing trees are dealt with by the relevant housing office. Where it is necessary to place an ad-hoc order for Tree Maintenance, a Quality Assurance Officer (QAO) will send an 'Tree Maintenance Request Form' to the Tree Service. Before placing the order the QAO checks that the works are not part of the Planned Tree Maintenance Programme.

22.3.3 The Tree Service are able to proceed with works under an agreed value without having to seek further authorisation from HFI.

22.3.4 It is HFIs responsibility to check ownership of the trees before sending requests to Greenspace. They are also responsible for checking and informing Greenspace of any residents or properties that would not be safe for an officer to visit alone.

22.4 Planned Tree Maintenance Programme

22.4.1 The Tree Service agree with Housing Services, a programme of estates or street properties that are to receive planned maintenance at some point in the coming financial year. The scope of work in each Area office will vary depending on available budgets.

22.4.2 A full computerised survey of all trees on Housing Estates was completed in February 2003 and reinspected early in 2006. The location of each tree is shown on digital maps. This will ensure that future programmed works can target estates and trees that require the most attention, ensuring that budgets are targeted more efficiently.

22.4.3 On a number of housing estate sites, there are areas where groups of trees have been planted close together. It will sometimes be necessary to remove selected trees to allow the remaining trees to develop into good specimens and also to allow more light to penetrate through these dense / dark areas.

22.4.4 Currently estates are on an approximately six year pruning cycle. This is not considered to be adequate and it is recommended that HFI adopt a three year cyclical programme, and on estates where tree related

subsidence has been proven it may be necessary to adopt a two year programme.

22.4.5 The current cyclical programme takes approximately six years to complete, the long term aim is to reduce this to a three year cycle.

22.4.6 HFI have made a significant commitment to replant every tree removed on their land.

22.5 Street Housing Properties - Trees

22.5.1 It is recommended that trees located within the confines of individual street properties should also be inspected on a regular basis. At present these trees are managed on an entirely responsive basis and there is no regular inspection programme in place.

22.5.2 In recent years the management of the majority of this type of housing stock has been passed to Partners For Islington (PFI) See section below.

22.5.3 All tree works undertaken on housing land is facilitated by the Tree Service's term contractor.

23 Partners for Islington (PFI)

23.1.1 Over recent years the management most non-estate housing properties have been passed over to PFI. Public Realm have a contractual agreement with them to inspect and recommend works to their trees upon request. There are a number of issues with trees located on these properties:

23.1.2 It is recommended that trees located within the confines of individual street properties should also be inspected on a regular basis. At present these trees are managed on an entirely responsive basis and there is no regular inspection programme in place.

23.1.3 There has never been a comprehensive survey of these trees. We therefore do not know the total number or quality of these trees.

23.1.4 Many have not been pruned or irregularly pruned, and many are close enough to structures to cause subsidence.

23.1.5 Greenspace and PFI are working closely and will continue to do so to address these issues.

Policy 23:	The Housing Department should ensure that when a Council tenant exercises their right to buy and the sale includes land with trees on it, the Planning Service is informed prior to completion that, if necessary, the trees can be protected by virtue of the relevant legislation.

23.2 Social Services

23.3 Trees on Social Services land are managed in two main ways:

23.4 Responsive works

23.4.1 The procedure for responsive tree works on Social Services sites is as follows:

23.4.2 Requests for responsive tree works will either come via Social Services staff or direct to the Tree Service.

23.4.3 The Tree Service will check the site list provided by Social Services to ensure it is a site on which they wish us to maintain the trees.

23.4.4 Any ambiguities in ownership/ maintenance or issues with party walls will be raised directly with a designated person within Social Services.

23.5 Programmed Works.

23.5.1 All of the trees on social services land were surveyed during the financial year (2002/03). This has enabled us to introduce a two year cyclical tree maintenance programme.

23.6 Education

23.6.1 At present, the Tree Service within Environment and Conservation is not directly responsible for trees located on Education sites. This causes some concern in relation to Health and Safety issues of trees on these sites.

23.6.2 Upon request the Council provides advice and facilitates tree works for individual schools on a responsive basis.

23.6.3 All of the trees on education sites within the boroughs boundaries have now been surveyed.

23.6.4 The tree Service is currently exploring developing SLAs with CEA or individual schools.

23.6.5 It should be noted that, should no arrangement be agreed, a proper management system needs to be adopted for trees on Education sites. The responsibility for this lies with the CEA.

23.6.6 It is a future objective of the tree service to provide advice about trees to educational facilities within Islington.

23.7 Administrative Buildings

23.7.1 All of the trees on these sites are maintained directly by the Tree Service and have been recorded on our tree management database. These trees are now maintained on a cyclical basis.

23.8 Cemeteries

23.8.1 These sites are managed by the Cemeteries Section who are located within the Public Protection division. The Tree Service responds directly to requests for inspections and tree works from members of the public and the Islington Cemetery staff.

23.8.2 A full survey of all trees in Finchley cemetery was undertaken in 2008.

23.8.3 There is no regular inspection of the trees on cemetery sites though this is an aim of the tree service and cemeteries staff.

23.9 Nature Conservation Sites

23.9.1 These sites are managed primarily by the Nature Conservation Team within the Sustainability Division. Most of these sites have now been fully surveyed and there is an intention to establish a management programme. Requests for inspections and tree works are made to the Tree Service via the nature conservation team.

23.9.2 Some of these sites Barnsbury wood and Parkland Walk are managed as woodlands sites. Work has started do develop woodland management plans for these sites.

23.10 Leisure Sites

23.10.1 Most Leisure sites have been subject to a full tree survey. It is the intended that the remaining trees will be surveyed imminently and a cyclical inspection and maintenance programme adopted.

23.11 Parks and Open Spaces

23.11.1 All trees in parks are managed on a responsive basis. The Tree Service receives all enquiries and complaints directly from members of the public or via the Greenspace Rangers and the Grounds Maintenance Providers. The Grounds Maintenance Providers facilitate the removal of low branches and basal growth from park trees.

23.11.2 All of the trees on these sites have now been surveyed and details stored on the tree management database. It is the Council's intention to resurvey all of these trees with the aim to implement a cyclical maintenance programme based on a priority basis.

23.11.3 It is the Tree Service's intention to work with the rest of Greenspace to develop site specific tree management plans for all of these sites. This will take a number of years to achieve and will be linked directly to general park management plans.

23.11.4 All Parks trees have now been recorded on to the council's tree management database system.

24 Parks Management Plans

24.1.1 It is our intention to develop site specific park management plans for all of the significant parks and open spaces. This process is starting with Elthorne Park and Highbury Fields. These management plans set out long term tree management objectives for each site. These objectives will be inline with those set out in this policy. Each management plan will cover:

- History of the site
- Existing tree population
- Age distribution
- Pruning regimes
- Nature conservation and biodiversity.
- Planting objectives (short and long term)

24.1.2 Each management plan will be subjected to a consultation exercise.

24.1.3 Some of the challenges to be addressed in the Greenspace Tree Management plans:

24.1.4 Age distribution: An even age distribution of trees across the site is important to ensure continued tree cover. A number of sites have an unbalanced age distribution, containing a high number of trees that were planted within a relatively short period of time. This has resulted in proportionally more mature and over mature trees existing on these sites than young and semi-mature trees. The risk is that within a relatively short period of time these trees will reach the end of their life expectancy and need to be removed. This will result in a significant change in the tree cover and overall feel of these sites. The limited size of these sites and lack of space to plant new trees whilst the existing mature trees remain present

a difficult challenge for long term tree management. The age distribution needs to be identified and decisions made for each individual site. In some sites it may be necessary to remove some of the existing mature trees to create space to plant new trees to ensure a more even age distribution.

24.1.5 Lack of Species Diversity: Some of our sites contain a limited species range within them. For example a number of our historical sites have a large number of trees that are predominantly of a single species, most notably London Planes. Whilst these sites benefit from the significant visual impact that this type of tree population bring, they also presents significant risks. The biggest of these risks is pest and disease and the subsequent loss of the majority of trees from a single site. Many tree pathogens affect specific species; the most famous is undoubtedly Dutch Elm Disease. Using London Plane as an example, there are currently no pathogens in the UK that could result in the loss of significant numbers of this species, however prior to the emergence of the virulent strain of Dutch Elm Disease there was no such threat to Elm trees. One non-native pathogen that poses a potential threat to planes in the UK has emerged in recent years. A virulent form of a fungal disease which is usually a weak parasite found in Mediterranean climates and the southern U.S. has been found in Germany attacking mature Plane trees. Resulting in branch death and rapid decay and has resulted in the removal of many Plane trees, this disease is relatively new and at the time of writing the proposed name for it is "Massaria disease of Plane" its full significance is not yet realised. The species distribution needs to be identified and decisions made for each individual site. In some sites it may be necessary to remove some of the existing mature trees to create space to plant new trees to ensure a more balanced species distribution.

24.1.6 Over planting and stand thinning – See section xxxx

24.1.7 Visual impact: When considering the long term management objectives, the current species distribution should be examined to identify areas such as seasonal interest and colour that could be improved through long term planting proposals to make sites more visually appealing.

24.1.8 Nature conservation and biodiversity. Consideration for nature conservation and biodiversity for each site should be considered and where possible actions such as stacking logs and standing deadwood used as well as the species distribution assessed to ascertain ensure good biodiversity value. Steps should be taken to ensure that a range of species that support invertebrate are used widely across our sites.

24.1.9 It will be standard practice when removing trees, where a replacement tree is not to be planted, that the empty pits on hard surfaces will be reinstated with the same materials as the surrounding surface. Pits in grassed areas will be filled with top soil and grass seed sown. This may not happen

directly after the felling works, but will be carried out as soon as possible thereafter.

25 Improving Public Open Spaces through Regeneration

25.1 Reclaiming and improving public open spaces is an important benefit of regeneration schemes and can lead to the opportunity to plant new trees. However in certain sites a reduction of the total number of trees may be desirable to improve the aesthetic of a site and/ or to improve the security of the public using the parks. Also it may be desirable to undertake selective thinning, to allow specimen trees aerial space to develop (see section ###) Specific site assessments at an early stage in the project/ planning process should be undertaken to ascertain if overall numbers of trees should be increased or decreased. All schemes will gain the approval of the Tree Service before implementation.

25.2 Consultation for the removal of trees on these schemes will usually be done as part of the overall project consultation and will be in line with the consultation guidance as detailed above. Where the overall project is not being consulted on, the proposed tree removal will be in line with the above consultation.

26 Dog Damage

26.1 Damage to trees caused by dogs is an increasing problem in London. The damage caused is often significant and leads to the demise of the tree. There is no easy solution to this problem, the council aim to deal with this through a combination of the following actions.

26.2 Encouraging or allowing a dog to damage property constitutes criminal damage. It will be policy that the council and its partners should seek prosecution for criminal damage against individuals who wilfully damage trees or encourage their dogs to do so

26.3 The council will develop the work with it has started with the police and MAGPI and benchmark with other London boroughs to establish the best way to tackle this difficult issue.

26.4 The tree service will develop an education toolkit around the benefits of trees and why trees need to be protected that will be distributed to schools within the borough.

26.5 Physical protection of trees, such as tree guards is an important toll against dog damage, but tree guards are not always the best method and officers will be mindful of the potential for dog damage when planting new trees. And adopt suitable protection measures when mature trees are damaged.

26.6 It will be procedure that young trees planted in open grass areas will be protected by a minimum of three stakes and a wire mesh guard.

26.7 To discourage damage to mature trees officers should consider options such as leaving grass longer, shrubs as a physical barriers and wrapping stems of damaged mature trees in protective materials such as bamboo and hessian.

27 Privately Owned Trees

27.1 Islington currently has increased its number of Tree Preservation Orders from 218 (as noted in 2002 tree policy) up to 410 (as at 30th June 09), covering approximately 3100 trees, and 39 Conservation Areas.

27.2 The principal function of the Tree Preservation Officers in the Tree and Landscape Section within Development Management is to regulate the continuity of the tree cover and preserve the intrinsic amenity value & environmental benefit of the trees in the Borough, which are not directly under the Council's control and are in private ownership. The section has processed a 10% year on year increase in the number of tree cases since the last review of the tree policy in 2002, as at the end of 2008 handling over 620 application and notifications of tree works in conservation areas and to protected trees alone.

27.3 The Tree and Landscape Section undertakes tree inspections, gives advise about privately owned trees, prepares reports for Committee and for issuing decision notices (under delegated authority), checks that quality standards of pruning carried out to preserved trees are in line with the specifications issued, initiating preliminary technical inspections for legal actions for contraventions if necessary. It also liaise with planning officers in Development Management on proposed and current development applications that have a baring on nearby trees in addition to providing specialist knowledge to advise in the release of tree and landscape planning conditions.

27.4 Under planning legislation a basic level of tree protection is offered to trees by virtue of being located within a conservation area. Conservation areas are essentially a planning designation whereby an area of special architectural or historic interest is designated in order to preserve or enhance the area's character or appearance. It is recognised that trees within conservation areas contribute substantially or constitute a significant element in that character and are therefore afforded special protection.

27.5 Owners or agents intending to carry out works to trees in a Conservation area must provide a minimum of six weeks prior notice in writing or via the online application form at planning portal to the Local Planning Authority. The notice, known as a section 211 notice then gives the authority time to

make and serve a Tree Preservation Order if it deems it appropriate or necessary.

27.6 An additional level of tree protection is then enforced by the imposition of a Tree Preservation Order. Full use is made of the most up to date legislation to enact its powers to protect and enhance the environmental amenity of the trees within the borough as outlined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, section 197-214 and the Town and Country Planning Act (Trees) as amended 1999 & 2008. This legislation enables trees of significant amenity value in a local area to be protected against unnecessary or excessive pruning, damage during construction activities or complete removal. The protected status extends to all live tissue of the tree including the tree's roots.

27.7 The criteria by which environmental amenity value is assessed are location, species, size form, health and aspect (including visual amenity) all of which contribute in varying degrees to produce a tree worthy of protection.

27.8 Owners or agents are required to make a formal planning application to undertake works to tree's subject of a TPO via the online application form at planning portal. The authority will aim to determine any application with 8 weeks of registration as long as sufficient information has been provided for the authority to determine the application in line with the requirements of the council's tree policy.

27.9 Once a conclusion has been reached to the appropriateness of the proposed works, a notice of the council's decision will be issued detailing the agreed or permitted works to the protected tree(s). The decision notice will give the specifications and conditions the council is imposing for the particular application.

27.10 The impact of development on trees in a conservation areas are/will be a material consideration of any planning application within reasonable proximity to a tree. Development including and subsidiary or enabling works that may result in damage or loss of a Preserved tree will be refused by the authority. In addition unnecessary or excessive pruning works or root disturbance for foundation excavations that would be required to enable a development to be constructed would also be a material consideration in the assessment for planning approval or refusal

27.11 Policies for trees on privately owned land

Policy 24:	To make use of the legislation so that the numbers of preserved trees are increased

Policy 25:	In dealing with all new development to ensure that works near trees are carried out to the relevant British Standard, currently BS 5837 2005 "Trees in relation to Construction", that new trees are allowed for on development schemes, and that foundation details follow the recommendations of the National House Building Councils Practice Note 3 "Building Near Trees". This is to be co-ordinated by liaison between the Tree Officer and the Development Control Officers.

Policy 26:	To encourage planting generally on privately owned sites;

Policy 27:	To instigate a thorough tree survey of the Borough of pre 1999 TPO's with a view to getting the maximum number of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders;

Policy 28:	To establish and regularly up date a register of competent tree surgeons for distribution to the public.

28 Implementation of Policies

28.1 Trees outside Conservation Areas

28.1.1 Approximately 2/3rds of the borough are not covered by conservation areas, therefore there is not a requirement for the authority to be made aware of trees that are planned for pruning or removal. Often very significant landscape trees are removed for development purposes without the authority being made aware of the intention. With the growing pressure on available development and has resulted in a significant difference in the character of the land found in the conservation areas and those areas found outside them. There are many important trees that have no protection on them to stop their removal for hope value for future development.

28.1.2 Islington residents and visitors to the borough often appear concerned that large visually and environmentally important trees are not covered and can be felled without any due regard for the people who respect and enjoy their presence in the built landscape. Once the trees have been removed there is limited control by the authority to be able to achieve the provision of new significant planting on site other than planning conditions.

28.1.3 Recent cases have significantly highlighted the disparity that the boundary line of the conservation area can create. The Baldwin Street Plane trees are but one example. The six semi mature Plane trees located in the car park of an office block were felled to stumps over a single weekend, the conservation area boundary stopped with the boundary wall of the car

park. Currently the authority does not have an active policy of increasing the numbers TPO'd trees in areas outside of conservation areas.

Policy 29:	The council will identify and protect trees worthy of TPOs for trees located outside of conversation areas.

28.2 Felling & Pruning of Protected Trees & Tree Pruning standards within the borough

28.2.1 The authority will robustly resist the removal of any trees that are to be removed from the borough that do not conform to the general tree policy requirements. Even where pruning is within the expectable boundaries of the British Standard it has to be clear that the works that will be approved are essential to the long term retention of the tree in it current position, rather than approving works that are requested for appeasement reasons. The authority will aim to maintain a natural silhouette to the tree unless it can be shown to be in the best interests of the long term health of the tree that it should be pruned or removed.

28.2.2 The planning department will aim to attain the highest possible level of arboricultural pruning standards within the borough and will usually not consent to pruning works that are greater than the standards set out by the Arboricultural Association and industry best practise generally accepted to be crown reductions and thins of no greater than 30%. In exceptional circumstances related to the structural condition of a tree and in some cases where there may be issues related alleged subsidence, pruning works may be agreed that are greater than 30%. All pruning works that are given consent will be required to be carried out in accordance with the British Standard for Pruning trees currently BS:3998:1989, and any subsequent amendments. It must be clearly noted that the authority will always give due consideration to appropriate pruning that will aid the life expectancy of a preserved tree. Excessive or unessential pruning will not be considered appropriate.

28.3 Protected trees and statutory undertakers

28.3.1 Where trees are going to be affected by the work of public utilities who are statutory undertakers (water, electricity, gas, telephone companies, cable television etc). The situation is different as these companies are empowered by Parliament and can have less regard to tree protection legislation. However, these bodies have to prove that there are no reasonably practicable alternative routes for their services, or other appropriate methods of implementing their scheme. Though generally as a best practise exercise these companies do consult with the local authority on their actions and this is essential to foster good relations with them so that any trees affected are protected by negotiations.

28.4 Garden Trees

28.4.1 "The greatest resource of trees in the Capital is that owned by Londoners. Of individual trees surveyed in the 1993 London Tree Survey, over two-thirds were on privately owned land mainly in residential areas, particularly gardens. Twenty per cent of London's Land cover is in private gardens, providing the single largest green space type, and the trees they contain make up a major part of the urban forest" (Mayor of London A Tree and Woodland Framework for London)

28.4.2 While Islington is in parts very densely populated its residents do have valuable areas of land that can provide the ideal location for planting of trees. The authority has a key role and moral responsibility in encouraging tree planting in people's private garden areas and the planning section help provide advise in regard to appropriate species selection.

Policy 30: To encourage planting generally on privately owned sites.

28.5 Garden and Amenity Space Co-existence with Protected Trees on Development sites.

28.5.1 Islington due to its relatively dense inner London nature has great pressure on providing high density housing solutions to the current housing stock shortages. Were development has been identified on a site or adjacent to a site containing a Preserved Tree(s) all appropriate efforts will be made to defend the relationship between defensible space for gardens/amenity space and the impact that protected trees may conflict with this space.

28.5.2 The planning authority will seek to provide appropriate defensible and useable space for Garden/Amenity space provision. Promoting developments that provide appropriate or generous areas or set backs within the scheme for avoiding unnecessary or excessive conflict. Intending to create and foster an appropriate space to enable protected trees to mature without the need for otherwise unnecessary or un-needed pruning activities.

28.5.3 The root systems of protected trees are also subject of the protected status and residents are encouraged to consider very carefully any intended re-landscaping, garden designing, wall replacement, decking construction that will involve any excavations or changes of levels within the root protection area of a protected tree. No works will be considered to be acceptable if they damage, remove or sever, unduly expose or , lead to unnecessary stress to the roots of a protected tree. The planning authority will seek to provide pre-application advice where appropriate avoid unnecessary or unauthorised works affecting tree roots. Advise and education is intended to increase the awareness of potential prosecution that may result form activities that will impact on protected trees.

Policy 31:	No new proposed garden or amenity spaces shall be positioned where they will be excessively dominated or be solely under the crown of protected trees.

28.6 New Development and Building Re-modelling

28.6.1 In the case of proposed development sites the authority has a statutory duty to survey and preserve tree that are worthy of retention. (section 197 Town & Country Planning Act 1990). Where trees protected by TPO's are proposed for removal or are felt by the Tree Preservation Officers that the development including and subsidiary or enabling works that may result in damage or loss of a Preserved tree the authority will generally refuse the proposed scheme. In addition unnecessary or excessive pruning works that would be required to enable a development to be constructed or that would result from post development pressure to unnecessarily or excessively prune the tree will be considered for refusal.

28.6.2 The authority will require any development site containing protected trees, in a conservation area or adjoining a property that contains trees, to carry out pre-application tree conflict appraisals utilising a detailed tree survey and arboricultural assessment in accordance with BS:5837:2005 "Trees in relation to construction". The authority will also make it clear that there is a defined difference between facilitation pruning which is and initial pruning of a tree to enable a development to go ahead, which may be acceptable in some circumstances. Compared to inappropriate cyclic maintenance or conflict mitigation pruning, which would be required to enable a development to be constructed in a location that is too close to a tree(s).

28.6.3 Where development affects neighbouring trees that are worthy of protection and retention the authority will aim to retain suitable distances from the tree that will provide for a realistic long term life span without the requirement for pruning works to facilitate the developments. By virtue of the unlikely nature that council owned trees are going to be subject to tree preservation orders, material consideration will be taken in the planning process, that if a tree were of such suitable condition and environmental

amenity that it would be protected by a TPO on private land, then the authority will always treat it as though it has a TPO on it. Therefore, council owned trees including street trees, housing trees and public open space trees will be given material consideration in the planning process. Alternative schemes will be sort if the development can not be constructed without the requirement for pruning works that would have otherwise not been required if the development had not gone ahead. If the development application can't or won't be amended the scheme shall be refused.

Policy 32:	In dealing with all new development to ensure that works near trees are carried out to the relevant British Standard, currently BS 5837 2005 "Trees in relation to Construction", that new trees are allowed for on development schemes, and that foundation details follow the recommendations of the National House Building Councils Practice Note 3 "Building Near Trees". This is to be co-ordinated by liaison between the Tree Officer and the Development Control Officers.

Policy 33:	In the processing of planning applications to have a high regard for the retention of all trees of amenity value and environmental value taking consideration of both their individual merit and their interaction as part of a group or broader landscape feature.

28.7 Sustainable Development and Protected Trees

28.7.1 Islington Council is committed to delivering sustainable development wherever it is appropriate. The planning department strongly encourage the use of sustainable improvements to schemes including those that increase bio-diversity or enhance the use of renewable energy sources. These improvements will be encourage within developments where they do not compromise established trees and in particular where those trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

28.7.2 Developments will be encourage to observe the constraints of a development site including trees both on site and on adjoining properties, their root systems, their crown spread, the wildlife that lives on them and the shade that tree crowns cast. Where schemes are submitted that conflict with the crown of a tree, their operational efficiency will be reduced or maintenance requirements increased due to their interaction with trees, repositioning or replacing with alternative options for sustainable improvements and renewables will be required.

28.7.3 In circumstances where the interaction with protected tree(s) reduces the sustainable credentials of a proposed development or scheme material consideration will be made to the importance of the longevity and value given by the protected tree(s). Pruning of protected trees including their roots will not be accepted by the council and alternative locations for the sustainable improvements or renewables will be required to facilitate

their most efficient use. The authority will work with developers and residents to find the most effective location for sustainable improvements and renewables which do not negatively impact on established or protected trees.

28.8 Creation of Whole Site Tree Preservation Orders

28.8.1 The planning department's data storage and GIS search gazetteers work form site specific land parcels. Therefore to avoid uncertainties as to which trees on a site should be protected compared to those under imminent risk or threat. The authority standardises its approach where resources are available to protect all trees on a site that are worthy of protection at that point in time. Regardless of their proximity to the imminent threat. This enables more accurate and clear records to be created for each property.

Policy 34:	When the authority intends to make a TPO on a site it will endeavour to make a TPO incorporating all trees that are worthy of protection within the specific land parcel.

28.9 Tree planting on development sites

28.9.1 The Mayor of London's overarching Vision for London is to develop the capital as an exemplary sustainable world city and supports the Objective of the Tree and Woodland Framework for London. The principals of attaining sustainable tree planting on development sites is supported within this document and Islington has a clear vision of following through these objective on a local level using the planning process as an appropriate tool.

28.9.2 Where any site is developed opportunities must be sort for incorporating tree planting onto the development site. If no trees or significant vegetation were present on the site prior to the proposed development the planning department will seek to attain appropriate locations for trees to be planted. Where trees are not present on the site and it can be clearly proven that, to create space for appropriately scaled trees on site, they can not be accommodated without reducing the density of the development to the point that it would not be supported by the authority's other policies. Then suitable section 106 will be sort for tree planting off site. Where live trees have been removed but were not worthy of retention or were agreed for removal suitable levels of landscaping and tree planting will be required within the development site, in addition to any section 106 environmental improvement agreements

28.9.3 Where tree planting is required by the authority on a development site this will be prioritised to require the planting of Shade Providing Impact Trees. These are trees capable of providing significant environmental amenity in the long term and grow to form larger more visually imp active trees as they establish. Larger trees when established aid solar shading of

buildings during the summer helping reduce the need for energy demanding environmentally unfriendly air conditioning units. Their branch structure during the winter helps to break the frost action of falling air temperatures thus helping to reduce the energy consumption to heat buildings.

28.9.4 Native and semi native species will be preferred, though, appropriate alternatives will be considered if they can be show to be more tolerant of the proposed localised environment or global climate change, provide a visual accent feature to the development or are more appropriate to the site specific circumstances. However the authority will not generally be in support of the use of columnar, fastigiate species or small ornamental trees, nor the use of heavily trained or managed crowns on trees, when it can not be proven that the site can withstand the presence of Shade Providing Impact Trees. This view broadly supports the right place-right tree principle of the Mayor of London's Tree and Woodland Framework.

Policy 35:	To strive for the suitable space for, and the planting of, Shade Providing Impact Trees on development sites

28.10 Section 106 and environmental improvements

28.10.1 Due to the scale of regeneration and development within Islington as a borough there is the need for considerable emphasis on financial contributions that can be made by developers to enhance the local area, its resources and infrastructure. Where developments are required to sign up to a section 106 agreements strong emphasis will be placed on environmental improvements in the public realm. Public realm improvements funded from section 106 finances must involve a strong emphasis on incorporating tree planting projects within the streets and local parks. Sites for tree planting will be prepared, costed, including future maintenance and put forward as improvement projects in each of the ward areas of the borough, by Greenspace Tree Officers

28.10.2 This tree planting initiative is a valuable tool in cooling our cities in a time of increased concern of climate change and the need to reduce and absorb our carbon emissions. Linking new development with local green spaces or transport hubs can be achieved successfully using street tree planting, improving the environment and aiding wayfinding. These are all key features that are identified as strong symbols of Islington Cleaner, Greener, Safer initiative and are in accordance with Objective A3, A4 & B3 of the Tree and Woodland Framework for London .

Policy 36:	Make Greater provision for the planting of street trees from section 106 agreements.

28.11 Replacement tree planting for protected trees.

28.11.1 There are commonly two categories of replacement tree planting.

28.11.2 Where a preserved tree is no longer thought to be appropriate for continued protection the authority will condition the replacement of the tree favouring a like for like replacement or an alternative Shade Providing Impact Tree. The authority will not generally be in support of the use of columnar, fastigiate species or small ornamental trees, nor the use of heavily trained or managed crowns on trees, when it can not be proven that the site can withstand the presence of Shade Providing Impact Trees. Where the location is proven to be inappropriate for a larger growing tree then consideration will be given to the replacement of tree with smaller ornamental trees.

28.11.3 In less common circumstances, where approval for a development has been given, where it has been clearly proven that the tree can't be moved, replanted and re-established in its entirety, then the resulting requirement will be for the need to plant significant sized semi mature trees that would be able to immediately compensate for the environmental amenity of the tree that is proposed for removal. In these extreme circumstances the authority will seek a number of significant sized semi-mature trees to be planted with proof of establishment/replacement guarantees to be provided by the contractor. The proposed development will then need to demonstrate that sufficient space has been left on the site to enable the Shade Providing Impact Trees can grown to mature proportions without the requirement for regular of cyclic pruning.

28.12 Protected trees and subsidence

28.12.1 In recent years there has been a significant rise in the number of alleged tree related subsidence cases that require the complete removal of all trees in proximity to buildings that have been alleged to be affected by tree related subsidence. Some of these cases are genuine and some of these cases are spurious. Due to the vociferous way that many of these claims are dealt with only complete removal or mutilating surgery is deemed to be acceptable by some representatives for insurance companies. This can be the requirement of some agents working for the insurance company even when based on partial or less than accurate information. Islington council requires that only results from appropriate quality tests can provide the tree/property owners the correct information and indeed the council as the planning authority with the appropriate information to determine whether a protected tree should be extensively pruned or removed in relation to a subsidence case.

28.12.2 As previously identified within the text protected trees are by virtue important assets to the local area and therefore the authority expects that

suitably high and/or appropriate levels of evidence are put forward to prove that the tree is the primary or substantive cause of failure of the building subject of the subsidence investigation and that reasonable pruning management can not be implemented as the minimum works necessary to address the alleged subsidence case.

28.12.3 Islington council for some period of time has required a set standard level of evidence to identify if a preserved tree should be pruned or removed where it is alleged to be implicated in subsidence damage to a property. The required tests and levels of evidence required by the authority to be able to make an informed assessment and to avoid excessive or unnecessary tree losses and also spurious claims against the public purse are identified in appendix C. Islington's requirements are broadly concurrent with the guidance provided by the Institution of Structural Engineers "Subsidence of Low Rise Buildings" 2000 also this Islington council has assessed that it would be appropriate to follow the guidance of the London Tree Officers Association "A Risk Limitation Strategy for Tree Root Claims"

Policy 37:	Adopt the LTOA risk limitation Strategy in regard to Private trees.

Policy 38:	Shall provide dedicated resources to investigate, assess and defend tree alleged tree related subsidence cases involving protected trees.

28.13 Public Consultation and Protected Trees

28.13.1 Generally only applications involving the felling of TPO'd trees are put out for local public consultation. Though, all conservation area notices and applications for works to preserved trees are displayed on the council's planning register and can be viewed in summary by logging on to www.islington.gov.uk and following the links through planning pages of the website.

Policy 39:	The planning section will continue to provide pre-application advice for protected trees and a periodically updated list of local tree surgeons that work in the borough.

28.14 Enforcement of illegal pruning/felling and Breaches of Planning Conditions

28.14.1 Due to the increased pressure for development, significant rises in land values and closer proximity issues of protected trees to neighbouring buildings there has been a growing number of illegal, unauthorised and damaging works carried out to TPO'd and conservation area trees. In addition the successful expansion of regeneration and increase of development in the borough requiring planning conditions to protect trees on development sites and neighbouring properties has far out stripped the resources available within the planning department. While the level of

potential Breaches has increased against resources availability there is a growing expectation of the level of protection and enforcement that is required to meet the service needs and reasonable public expectations for enforcing the planning legislation in relation to tree issues.

28.14.2 Islington has prided its self on its green and leafy appearance though this is under substantial threat of compromise at a time that Islington's Environmental vision is greater and requires more protection and retention of trees, which appears to be strongly and vocally supported by the residents and visitors of the borough.

Policy 40:	The council should actively enforce and prosecute where appropriate and apply the maximum penalties where possible. The authority will seek to dedicate more resources to be utilised for the inspection, investigation and enforcement of tree related planning matters.

29 Advice and Publicity

29.1 The importance of leaflets and publicity material produced for public distribution cannot be over estimated. There is a great deal of information concerning trees, their planting and maintenance, which has not yet filtered through into public consciousness. It is hoped that this document will have contributed to deepen the understanding of the ordinary person of the issues concerned with trees in the urban environment. To build on this and reinforce the importance of trees it is proposed to continue producing information for public consumption about local issues involving trees.

29.2 The Tree Service will undertake a number of events each year to promote the benefits of and issues facing trees in Islington.

29.3 The Tree Service will actively promote the work it undertakes and aim to publicise positive news stories.

Policy 41:	The Council shall continue producing up to date leaflets about tree care, tree planting, and other tree related issues;

30 Monitoring and Review

30.1 It should be accepted that this is not a static document. It will be necessary to update and review it on a regular basis, enabling the Council to respond to an ever-changing environment and industry.

31 Emergency Procedures

31.1 There are two situations that require special procedures in terms of how the Borough looks after its trees. Both can occur outside normal working

hours and require an immediate and reliable response on the part of the Council.

31.2 They are:-

- Storm Damage: storms and high winds resulting in multiple tree falls, uprootings, breaks, injuring and trapping members of the public, damaging property, blocking roads, disconnecting services and communications

- Contraventions of Tree Preservation Orders or Conservation Areas: contractors or members of the public undertaking unauthorised tree works resulting in the felling or permanent disfigurement of a protected tree or trees

31.3 Both these situations require the attendance of an experienced arboriculturalist to make an informed decision as to the best course of action.

31.4 Storm Damage

31.4.1 Storms can obviously affect trees regardless of their ownership. With respect to Council owned trees, when storms occur the Tree Service will put into practice their emergency procedure.

31.4.2 Unfortunately during stormy conditions some members of the public use the opportunity to carry out unauthorised work to protected trees, using the excuse that they were in a dangerous condition. To counter this the Planning Department will, on request, provide a site visit by an experienced arboriculturalist to assess the tree and give an authoritative opinion as to its condition.

31.5 Contraventions

31.5.1 In the event of a report being received that unauthorised works are being undertaken on a protected tree, an experienced arboriculturalist from the Planning Department will make a site visit to assess the situation. The presence of the arboriculturalist at the scene of the contravention as soon as possible after the report is received, is especially important as very often the excuse used is that the tree was in a dangerous condition. The only way to bring a successful prosecution is for an arboriculturalist to view the evidence (the felled tree) before it is removed from the site.

31.5.2 It will be important for a judgement to be made as to whether the works were being carried out for cosmetic reasons or reasons of public safety.

31.5.3 In this way a decision can be taken on whether to pursue a prosecution.

31.5.4 These two procedures will need to be set up in very much the same way as the present Greenspace call out system, with provision being made for the individuals concerned to be able to be contacted quickly either inside or outside office hours.