



STEYNING DOWNLAND SCHEME

Tree Inspection and Hazardous Tree Policy

Introduction

1. The purpose of this document is to set out what action the Steyning Downland Scheme (SDS) will take, in partnership with the Wiston Estate, to deal with hazardous trees on land under its control, in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

2. According to Lantra¹, trees generally pose an extremely low risk of causing harm to people or property. The risk of being killed by a falling tree falls into the 'broadly acceptable' risk range of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Risks falling into this range do not usually require further action to reduce risks unless reasonably practicable measures are available². However the HSE also states that persons carrying out undertakings or in control of premises have 'a duty to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that people are not exposed to risk to their health and safety'³. The HSE describes a 'suggested simple tree management system' to address this duty, which has been used as the model for developing this Hazardous Tree Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

3. The SDS has an important role in ensuring all reasonably practicable measures are taken to protect people from hazardous trees on the land which it manages. However the SDS is a small, registered charity with limited capabilities, which relies on volunteers for most of its activities, and will therefore work closely with the Wiston Estate (the landowner) to identify and deal with hazardous trees.

4. Everyone who uses the Steyning Downland has a responsibility to notify the Project Manager if they see a tree which they think is or might be hazardous and to notify the SDS of fallen trees. Contact details for the SDS are available on noticeboards at several locations across the site. In addition, the SDS will carry out the following specific measures:

5. The SDS will:

1. Maintain a map of the Steyning Downland (see Appendix 2), which defines two zones. Zone 1 is land where there is frequent public access to wooded areas. This is taken as land within 10 meters of a public Right of Way or permissive path, where it passes through or adjacent to woodland, together with some other 'honeypot' areas in or adjacent to woodland, where people visit frequently (shown in red). Zone 2 is all remaining land (uncoloured), including most areas of woodland which are not within 10 metres of a public Right of Way or permissive path.

2. Carry out regular, formal inspections of all trees in Zone 1. The formal inspections will be carried out by Lucy Oakley, the Volunteer Tree Inspector, who has undergone training in Basic Tree Survey and Inspection by the Arboricultural Association. All the trees in Zone 1 will be inspected at least once in any 12 month period. If for any reason, the Volunteer Tree Inspector is unable to complete her inspections, she will notify the Project Manager at the earliest opportunity.

3. The purpose of the inspections will be to classify trees into one of three categories, based on their assessed risk to people:

Priority High : Trees in imminent danger of failing.

Priority Medium : Tree in poor condition with significant defects, within falling range of a footpath or other well-used space.

Priority Low : A tree with limited defects or defects which the inspector is unsure of their significance, within falling range of a footpath or other well-used space.

4. Complete a Tree Inspection Form (see Appendix 1) to identify the location of potentially hazardous trees in Zone 1. This will be carried out by the Volunteer Tree Inspector during their inspection.

5. The Volunteer Tree Inspector will send digital versions of the completed forms, with an annotated copy of the map in Appendix 2, by e-mail to the following people as soon as possible after their survey:

The SDS Project Manager at: sds@wistonestate.co.uk

The Wiston Estate Forestry Team at: Jack@wistonestate.co.uk

6. The Project Manager will inform the SDS Trustees of any noteworthy findings of the tree inspections at their discretion, working with the Volunteer Tree Inspector and Wiston Estate Forestry Team.

7. The Project Manager will notify the Volunteer Tree Inspector of any notifications of any potentially hazardous trees or fallen trees received from SDS volunteers or members of the public, with a request that they are assessed by her as soon as is practicable.

8. In the case of an emergency, where a tree has fallen across a Public Highway or has caused damage to property or injury, the Project Manager will assess the situation as a matter of urgency and based on the particular circumstances will:

- a. Ask the Wiston Estate Forestry Team to remove the fallen tree
- b. Contract a commercial forester to remove the fallen tree
- c. Contact the Emergency Services.

9. The SDS has decided that the risk posed by potentially dangerous trees in Zone 2 is sufficiently small to not require regular inspections.

6. The Wiston Estate Forestry Team has agreed that it will:

1. Respond to the completed Tree Inspection forms as appropriate.
2. Carry out detailed tree inspections of the trees identified in the three categories defined above.
3. Complete any tree safety work which may subsequently prove necessary.

4. Notify the SDS as soon as possible of the actions it has taken under this paragraph.

END

Appendix 1: Steyning Downland Scheme Volunteer Tree Inspection Form (*available on request*)

Appendix 2: Tree Inspection Map (*available on request*)

References

1. See the Introduction to 'Technical Award in Basic Tree Survey and Inspection Workbook, version 2', Lantra (undated)
2. Reducing Risks Protecting People, HSE C100 para 123
3. Management of the risk from falling trees or branches, HSE SIM 01/2007/05