

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO
AUTHOR:

Conservation Advisory Group
Trees and Landscape Officer

28th May 2003

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS – DISTRICT WIDE REVIEW

Purpose

1. To inform and update the Conservation Advisory Group about the ongoing Review of Tree Preservation Orders throughout the District.

Background

2. There are currently 463 existing Tree preservation Orders within the District, 25 being Parish Tree Preservation Orders. Many of the Orders, including all the Parish Orders were made several years ago, and are now inaccurate.
3. The subject was discussed by Best Value Panel in May 2000. It was agreed that a pilot survey should be undertaken in order to assess the problems.
4. The Parish of Stapleford was selected (Parish TPO and 11 other TPO's). It was apparent from the survey that as well as formally varying some Orders, many would need to be revoked, updated and re-served.
5. The matter was reported for information to Development and Conservation Control Committee in August 2002, where it received Members support.

Considerations

6. The Review is being conducted on a Parish basis, in each case, officers are having to consider whether or not to:
 - Take no action
 - Vary the existing Order (serve a Variation Order)
 - Revoke the existing Order (serve a Revocation Order)
 - Revoke the existing Order, and replace with a new Order or Orders, including additional tree cover where appropriate.
7. So far the following Parishes have been surveyed:
Stapleford, Great Shelford, Gamlingay, Impington, Histon, Girton, Bassingbourn.
8. At the time of writing this report, 74 Tree Preservation Orders have been surveyed. This has so far resulted in 12 Orders being formally varied, 44 Orders being revoked, and 47 Tree Preservation Orders served as replacement.

9. The Trees and Landscape Officer is currently in discussion with the ICT Planning Liaison Officer, with a view to capturing the data onto the GIS mapping system.

Legal Implications

10. It is considered imperative to have updated and accurate records, in order to satisfy enquiries made in respect to statutory protected trees, by members of the public, contractors and solicitors.
11. When captured on GIS the updated information will be readily available to the Land Charges Section.

Staffing Implications

12. Following the pilot survey, it was recognised that in order to achieve the objective of a comprehensive review, additional time and resources were needed, particularly as in addition to the survey work, and the plan and schedule preparation; in the case of this Review, it was agreed with the Head of Legal Services that the consultation process, and serving of Orders would be undertaken by the Trees and landscape Section.
13. As a consequence, the Trees and Landscape Assistant, who was employed on a part time basis, was granted additional hours and employed on a full time basis. This took effect from September 2001.
14. It is recognised that this is a long-term project, and with the current staffing input, it is estimated that it will be ongoing for a least five years.

Conclusions/Summary

15. It is anticipated that the Review will continue, with a focus on Parishes that have a Parish Tree Preservation Order.

For Information

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