



Position Statement on Tree Felling

The White Rose Forest (WRF) partnership understands that tree felling can often be an emotive subject. Although the decision to cut down trees should not be taken lightly, the partnership recognises that tree felling is part of normal, sustainable forestry management.

Tree felling may take place in order to:

- respond to tree health issues (e.g. Ash die-back)
- remove non-native species
- improve biodiversity through restoration of priority habitats and promotion of ground flora
- improve woodland accessibility (improving appearance and allowing people to feel safer through increased visibility)
- maintain and protect woodland infrastructure
- be utilised for timber: it is worth reflecting that sustainably produced timber can offer effective long-term carbon storage in the form of timber, where it is taken off-site and used in construction, furniture etc

There are other reasons why non-woodland (e.g. urban, in-field trees, etc.) tree felling may be undertaken, including where a tree may:

- pose a health & safety risk
- pose a risk to property and infrastructure
- obstruct sight lines on a highway, river or canal.

For further background on tree felling please see some of the further information and guidance available:

- How to report suspected illegal felling: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/report-suspected-illegal-tree-felling>
- Forestry Commission blog on tree felling: <https://forestrycommission.blog.gov.uk/2020/05/18/tree-felling-do-you-know-right-from-wrong/>
- Forestry England blog on tree felling: <https://www.forestryengland.uk/blog/why-do-we-fell-trees>
- Tree legislation guide from the Arboricultural Association: <https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Public/A-brief-guide-to-legislation-for-trees>
- Gov.uk guidance on felling licences: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-felling-licence-when-you-need-to-apply>
- Tree Preservation Orders & trees in conservation areas <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>