A POLICY FOR TREES IN ISLINGTON

Produced jointly by
Greenspace and Leisure Division
Planning Division
of the
ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

CONTENTS Page

Appendices

A. Map of the Borough
B. Geology
C. Legislation
D. Roads Maintained by Transport For London (TFL)
E. Current Leaflets
F. Summary of Policies
G. List of Appropriate Species for Planting

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is a revised version of the original Islington Tree Policy, first drawn up in 1992. Much has changed in the intervening time but the need for a policy remains as strong as ever.

The purpose of this document is to amplify this Council's tree policy as outined in the 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.

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 some of our time and effort in helping them to remain part of our landscape and, in particular, of our built-up environment.

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.

The recent increase in structural damage to buildings is perhaps 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.

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.

2.0 LOCATION

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.

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

3.0 GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

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.

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.

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.

4.0 ECONOMIC PROFILE, ECONOMY AND POPULATION

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.

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.

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.

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. One of these trees, a Beech tree in Barnsbury, was chosen by the London Tree Forum as one of the first 'Great Trees of London'.

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 about 178,218 (UDP 2001).

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.

5.0 THE CASE FOR TREES IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

Benefits

The necessity for trees in towns is evident. One has only to visit a treeless urban landscape to recognise this. But 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.

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.

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 the 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".

Problems

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:-

- 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);
- changes 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

One of the biggest problems for trees in the urban situation is construction in its many forms. With respect to Council land the most common form is road and footpath reconstruction. This was highlighted by the Department of Transport's document 'Roots and Routes: Guidelines on Highways Works and Trees'.

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 need to remove some trees.

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

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.

Because of some or all these factors most street trees tend to have shorter lifespans (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.

Disadvantages

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.

- 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.

Management and Species selection

It is, therefore, important to take steps that will ensure the continuity of tree cover across the Borough, so that there is a varied age and species distribution. Without this variety being built into the management programme there will be a tendency over many years for some areas of the Borough to lose their tree cover altogether or for it to change so that perhaps only one or two species are dominant. This last situation would have serious implications if a species with a specific disease caused

major losses in future years as 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 and oakwilt.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

Sustainability and Biodiversity

In June 1992 the world's largest gathering of world leaders was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. That meeting signalled the fact that environmental concerns have moved up the international political agenda. The central message is summed up in Article Four of the Rio declaration:

"In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and cannot be considered in isolation from it."

This means that international, national and local policy makers have to start re-appraising their policies and practices to ensure that they are sustainable. This process has widely become known as Local Agenda 21. These have now reached the local level in the form of Biodiversity Action Plans. Biodiversity is not just about special or rare species; there is a need to ensure that all species thrive throughout the town and countryside.

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 and birds in particular.

Work is currently underway on Islington's Biodiversity Action Plan. Trees form an important component of two of the key habitats, Parks and open spaces and the Built Environment. Habitat Action Plans are being prepared for these and the Tree Service has an input to both. These will help define specific objectives and actions around trees and biodiversity.

In the meantime there 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 considered 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, 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.
- Specific trees can provide important communal gathering places for House Sparrow, 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. Log piles provide an important habitat for fungi and invertebrates, including the stag beetle, another London and Islington priority species.

6.0 SUBSIDENCE AND INSURANCE CLAIMS

Subsidence

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.

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.

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. We are currently moving over to computer records for all current work. We are also scanning all relevant historic documents 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.

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. 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.

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.

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.

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.

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', and British Standard 5837 l99l 'Trees in Relation to Construction'. A revised version of this document is due to be published in 2003.

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).

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. Some research is currently being undertaken into this issue. A final report of this research is not yet available.

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.

Insurance Claims

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.

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.

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.

It is for these reasons that the Greenspace and Leisure Tree Service recommends the adoption of a cyclical maintenance programme for highway trees. (see section 8.1 and Policy 15)

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

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.

7.0 CURRENT MANAGEMENT SITUATION IN ISLINGTON

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

Trees on Council land that are managed by the Greenspace and Leisure Division

The management of all trees on Council land is undertaken by the Greenspace and Leisure Division's Tree Service. This consists of a Tree Service Manager and a Tree Service Officer.

The overall aim for the Greenspace and Leisure Division's Tree Service 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 community as a whole.

Privately owned trees are discussed in Section later in the doccument.

8.0 GREENSPACE AND LEISURE TREE SERVICE CLIENTS

The three main service areas which the Greenspace and Leisure Tree Service manage are:

Highways

This includes all trees located on the pavements and other areas managed by the Highways Client, but does not include those trees located on borough trunk roads which are managed by Transport for London. For a list of these roads, see Appendix E.

Housing

These are trees located in Council housing estates and Council-owned properties.

Greenspace and Leisure

Parks and Open Spaces
Nature Conservation sites
Cemeteries

Other service areas

Social Services
Education
Administrative buildings.

The Greenspace and Leisure Division as a whole, including the Tree Service, was reviewed under the Best Value process in 2000. 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 Section will liase with both the Eyes scheme and the proposed Voluntary Greenspace Ranger Scheme, to ensure that those involved are fully briefed

In addition to the above, a range of Performance Indicators (PIs) has been introduced to monitor the performance of the Tree Service. These indicators are reviewed annually, and include both a 'sustainability' and 'customer focus' indicator.

Computer Aided Management

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.

The data from the recent Highways tree survey and the current Housing Estate survey are being put onto this system. Already all of the trees on Building Admin land are stored on EzyTreev. It is envisaged that this work will be completed by March 2003.

From that point onwards the system will become live and the retrieval of tree information will be significantly faster than it currently is, ensuring better customer satisfaction and a more efficient service.

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

The system will also be used to record inquiries, track the progress of both inquiries and work, measure the section's and its contractors' performance, as well as providing comprehensive budget management.

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.

It is also envisaged that in the future tree details and locations will be displayed on the corporate mapping system, allowing all council employees to view tree locations on maps and access their details. There is also the potential for this to be displayed on the Internet so that anyone can access this information.

It is hoped that the Planning tree section will obtain the TPO module that is available so that their information can also be inputted on to the system, linking the two services via the one system.

General policies for all Council owned trees

The following is a list of policies that apply to all Council owned trees.

Policy 1	The Council will aim to provide a sustainable, high quality, tree population. Trees selected will be appropriate for the site in which they are to be planted. Consideration will be given to their eventual size and shape.

Policy 2	The Council will ensure that the tree population is managed in a cost effective and sustainable manner.

Policy 3	The Council will encourage and enable better understanding of trees with a view to promoting greater community involvement and awareness.

Policy 4	The Council will endeavour to maintain a high level of tree maintenance and undertake all works to BS 3998.

Policy 5	The Council will fulfil its obligations to adhere to Health and Safety regulations.

Policy 6	The removal of trees should be resisted unless there are sound arboricultural or other reasons to indicate otherwise: • dead, dying or dangerous, • proven to be causing significant structural damage, • inappropriate species for their location.

Policy 7	The Council intends to replace all trees which are removed, where appropriate, and depending on availability of funding.

Policy 8	The Council's Tree Service will ensure that they keep abreast of and adopt where necessary, any relevant developments within the arboricultural industry.

Policy 9	The Tree Service will adopt and embrace the Council's overall policies and objectives for the provision of service to the community.

Policy 10	The Council will not heavily prune or remove trees for the following reasons: • mess caused by insects or birds; • interference with satellite dish reception; • excessive leaf fall; problems associated with pollen; • where tree is perceived to be too large; • blockage of light; • because someone is willing to pay for the removal and replacement of a tree. N.B. We will, however, undertake suitable pruning to ameliorate these problems.

Policy 11	The Tree Service will introduce a range of Performance Indicators annually to ensure a high performance in relation to maintenance works and customer satisfaction.

Policy 12	It will be policy that all other services and departments undertaking tree planting gain the approval of the Greenspace and Leisure Tree Service.

Policy 13	The Council will not consider the removal of trees on the grounds of subsidence alone, without evidence that the tree is significantly contributing to the damage. This evidence will consist of at least the following: • evidence of live roots of the same family or species found below the level of the foundation depth; • soil moisture tests at varying depths to below foundation level; • evidence of desiccated soil; • a geotechnical survey including trial pits and soil profiles;

- a structural report providing evidence of actual damage including crack monitoring records;
- details of other vegetation within the theoretical zone of influence that are not easily visible from a public place

N.B Other evidence may be required such as a survey of the drainage system. As research in to this area continues the above list is likely to change.

The adoption of a proactive cyclical pruning regime is considered by the Tree Service to be the most significant change that is available to the Council to help retain trees and manage this problem effectively.

Maintenance techniques

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

Crown reduction – Reducing the overall size of the crown area by a specified percentage (usually 30% unless otherwise stated) 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.

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 30% unless otherwise stated.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Customer Focus

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.

In the case of emergencies the tree service will respond within a maximum of two hours.

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.

Where budgetary constraints dictate, works may have to wait until funding becomes available. This is usually the following financial year. In these cases customers will be informed that an inspection will be undertaken, a reference number given and informed when any work is likely to be undertaken.

Consultation

Policy 14	Where trees are identified for removal advance notices will be placed on the tree. In addition to this where trees of significant value are highlighted for removal local residents directly affected will be informed via letter. It will not be standard practice to consult with residents for works that are considered to be routine maintenance works, or where due to Health and Safety implications removal needs to be undertaken quickly.

Performance

All correspondence will be responded to in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Council's Customer Care Policy.

Once works have been let, it is anticipated that they will be completed within 6 weeks, except tree planting which is seasonal. However, this is dependent on funding availability.

8.1 <u>TREE SERVICE CLIENTS : HIGHWAY TREES</u>

Current Situation

Islington has approximately 9785 trees, identified by the street tree survey undertaken in 2001.

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.

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

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.

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

Current Management of Highway Street Trees

The Greenspace and Leisure Tree Service currently manage the tree stock on a predominantly responsive basis reacting to a high number of complaints and enquiries received on a daily basis, via a number of communication channels. Following the Street Tree Survey, the Tree Service is currently transposing this data

on to the EzyTreev computerised tree management system. The maintenance of highway trees is now undertaken by a sole contractor on a schedule of rates basis. It is anticipated that this will ensure that the tree stock is maintained in a uniform and consistent manner, and will help to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness.

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.

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

All highway trees are inspected on a yearly basis.

Future Management

The Tree Service's intention for the future maintenance of highway trees is for a proactive cyclical pruning regime. It is widely accepted that this type of management system:

- 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,
- means 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.

This type of management regime is recommended in the document 'A Risk Limitation Strategy for Tree Root Claims'. This was produced by the London Tree Officers Association in association with the Countryside Commission. The document was written by a working group that included Zurich Municipal and a number of Loss Adjusters including Ufton Associates and Ellis and Buckle. It has been adopted by most of London Boroughs and is widely considered to be the best way to maintain trees close to buildings on shrinkable clay soils.

This form of management has been demonstrated by other London Boroughs to help reduce overall costs over a period of years. Though initially such a strategy may be considered expensive, overall long-term savings to the Council will be realised through a reduction of overall payments made to third party claims.

Zurich Municipal has identified that Islington has the highest overall costs for subsidence claims out of all the local authorities that they insure. This is felt to be largely due to the lack of a cyclical pruning programme.

Policies for Highways Street Trees

Policy 15	The Tree Service aims to introduce a cyclical pruning regime of all highway trees as soon as funding becomes available.

Policy 16	There is a presumption against the removal of trees which are healthy but are subject to complaint, unless there is an overriding justification.

Policy 17	It will not be Council policy to remove trees on the grounds that they are causing disruption to pavements, kerbs, garden paths and walls.

Policy 18	An annual inspection of all street trees will be undertaken to identify all dead, dying or dangerous trees.

Policy 19	A 24-hour emergency call-out system will be available for all tree-related emergencies.

Policy 20	The Council will undertake cyclical pruning of problem areas, as identified by regular inspections and high incidence of structural damage.

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'.

8.2 TREE SERVICE CLIENTS : HOUSING DEPARTMENT TREES

Trees on housing land are managed in two main ways:

1. Ad hoc works
2. Programmed work on estates.

Adhoc Tree Works

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

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, the Estate Service Officer (ESO) will send an 'Ad Hoc Tree Maintenance Request Form' to the Tree Service. Before placing the order the ESO checks with the Estate

Service Team Leader (ESTL) whether the works are part of the Planned Tree Maintenance Programme. If the works are not covered, the ESTL will decide on whether the works can proceed having regard to the budget that is available. Only the ESO team leader can authorise ad-hoc orders. The Tree Service will then inspect the tree(s) and undertake any necessary works. Monthly financial reports are generated by the Tree Service and sent to Housing.

Planned Tree Maintenance Programme on Housing Estates

The Tree Section agree in advance with Housing Services, before the beginning of the financial new year, 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. ESTLs are advised by the AHM (Area Housing Management) with ESO portfolio of the estates to be maintained at the beginning of the financial year. Some funding for these projects is likely to come from the Tenant Compact Monies agreed by each Area Panel.

A full computerised survey of all trees on Housing Estates was completed in February 2003. 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.

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.

All of the trees on housing estate land are currently being inspected. It is our intention to re-inspect on a cyclical basis, the period of time between inspections will be determined once this survey is completed. It is envisaged at this stage that inspections will be on a three-year basis.

Council Owned Street Properties - Trees

A significant number of 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 adhoc basis and there is no regular inspection programme in place. Housing needs to consider how best to organise the management of these trees.

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

Policy 22	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.

8.3 TREE SERVICE CLIENTS : SOCIAL SERVICES TREES

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

1. Ad hoc works
2. Programmed works.

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

Requests for adhoc tree works will either come via Social Services staff or direct to the Tree Service.
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.
Any ambiguities in ownership/ maintenance or issues with party walls will be raised directly with a designated person within Social Services.
Social Services will be informed of all works when the orders are placed with the contractor.
Financial reports will be submitted at the end of each month.

Programmed Works.

It has recently been agreed to undertake a full survey of all of the trees on Social Services sites. This will be completed during this financial year (2002/03). This will enable us to produce a cyclical tree maintenance programme that is intended to start during the next financial year (2003/04).

8.3 TREE SERVICE CLIENTS : OTHER SERVICE AREAS

Education
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.

Upon request the Council provides advice and facilitates tree works for individual schools on an ad hoc basis.

The Tree Service's intention is to approach Cambridge Education Authority (CEA) formally with the aim of formulating a Service Level Agreement. The financial implications of this will need to be considered by CEA.

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.

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

Administrative Buildings

All of the trees on these sites are maintained directly by the Tree Service and have been recorded on our tree management database. It is our intention to manage these trees on a cyclical basis, commencing during the 2002/03 financial year.

8.4 TREES ON LAND MAINTAINED BY GREENSPACE AND LEISURE

Parks and Open Spaces

All trees in parks are managed on an ad hoc 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.

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

It is our intention to undertake a health and safety inspection of all trees in Greenspace and Leisure parks and open spaces in the spring of 2003. This inspection will be undertaken at least every three years.

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.

Improving Public Open Spaces through Regeneration

Reclaiming and improving public open spaces is an important benefit of regeneration schemes and can lead to the opportunity to plant new trees.

Nature Conservation Sites

These sites are managed primarily by the Greenspace and Leisure Nature Conservation Team. Requests for inspections and tree works are made directly to the Tree Service.

Cemeteries

These sites are managed by the Cemeteries Section. The Tree Service responds directly to requests for inspections and tree works from members of the public and the Islington Cemetery Manager.

All boundary trees in cemeteries will be inspected on an annual basis.

All routine works undertaken on all Greenspace sites are placed on a schedule and tendered for by a number of contractors.

Woodlands

Woodland is a very scarce habitat in Islington. We have only three sites in the Borough, Parkland Walk in the north of the Borough, Barnsbury Wood and Docra's Wood. The first two sites are designated Local Nature Reserves and have 5 year management plans. The Parkland Walk is part of a long linear site over three miles in length, the majority of which lies in Haringey. Docra's Wood has only recently been acquired by Greenspace and sits adjacent to King Henry's Walk Open Space. It is a very small site and currently has no public access. Future use of the site will be considered alongside the redesign of the adjacent open space, which will take place within the next year.

9.0 PRIVATELY OWNED TREES

The maintenance of these trees is not directly under the Council's control, but their interests are protected by planning legislation, which is administered by the landscape/tree section of the Development Control Service of the Planning Division. This section consists of an 0.5 Landscape Architect and a full time Tree Preservation Officer. It makes full use of the legislation available to it to protect privately owned trees in the Borough. The most relevant legislation is the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, Sections 197-214. (See Appendix C for a full breakdown of the related legislation).

Islington currently has some 218 Preservation Orders, covering approximately 2300 trees, and 37 Conservation Areas (covering about one third of the Borough's surface area). Conservation Areas are essentially a planning designation whereby an area of special architectural or historic interest is so designated in order to preserve or enhance the area's character or appearance. As it is recognised that trees within Conservation Areas contribute substantially or constitute a significant element in that character the trees are afforded a specific form of protection.

Owners of protected trees are required to make a formal planning application to undertake works to a preserved tree or to give six weeks notice in writing of an intention to prune or fell a tree in a Conservation Area. This notice, known as a

Section 211 notice, gives the Local Authority the opportunity to protect the tree with a Preservation Order if it deems it necessary.

The landscape/tree section undertakes tree inspections, gives advice about privately owned trees, draws up reports for Committee and for issue as decision notices (under delegated powers) and checks that works done to preserved trees are in line with the specifications issued, initiating legal action for contraventions if necessary. It also liaises with planning officers in Development Control on development applications that have a bearing on nearby trees.

Policies for trees on privately owned land

Policy 23	To encourage correct arboricultural management practices;
Policy 24	To use the available legislation as a management tool so that on a Borough-wide basis the quality of tree care is improved;
Policy 25	To make use of the legislation so that the numbers of preserved trees are increased
Policy 26	In dealing with all new development to ensure that works near trees are carried out to the relevant British Standard, currently BS 5837 1991 "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 27	In the processing of planning applications to have a high regard for the retention of all trees of amenity value;
Policy 28	To encourage planting generally on privately owned sites;
Policy 29	To instigate a thorough tree survey of the Borough with a view to getting the maximum number of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders;
Policy 30	To establish and regularly up date a register of competent tree surgeons for distribution to the public.

10.0 EXISTING DISTRIBUTION & LAND CATEGORISATION

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. Either way, no previous planting strategy has been devised for Islington and new planting has been on an entirely random and haphazard basis.

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.

In seeking to come to terms with the current distribution of the Borough's trees and therefore in order to aid future management and planting strategies, it has been decided to divide the Borough into a number of different land use categories. These categories reflect the different types of buildings and the space available for tree planting e.g. road and footpath width, size of house, distance of house from kerb, highway open space, business districts, open parkland, educational sites, residential gardens etc.

The categories are as follows.

Residential A: Terraced housing, usually 2/3 storeys with small front and rear gardens, constructed in defined estate areas such as Upper and Lower Holloway, Archway and Finsbury Park which do not have many trees. These areas have limited space available for tree planting with small gardens and streets and footpaths often too narrow for the growth and development of larger trees.

Residential B: Terraced and semi-detached housing, usually 3/4 storeys with relatively large front and/or rear gardens, constructed in defined estate areas, such as Tufnell Park, Highbury, Canonbury, and Barnsbury. These are the areas of the Borough that have the most trees. All have sufficient space either in front of the properties or behind them to accommodate reasonably large trees. The presence of many well-established trees makes these areas the more desirable residential parts of the Borough.

Residential C: Estates comprising low and high rise blocks with large communal areas between them.

The presence of trees depends largely on the communal grounds available for planting. Generally speaking, these areas provide excellent opportunities for planting large specimen trees, particularly as the massed concrete or pile foundations of large apartment block constructions are unlikely to be affected by the proximity of trees. The current stock is good but there is scope for more tree planting and substantial improvements may be made in this category.

Business A: High-density business district, with premises immediately abutting the footpath.

In the south of the Borough around Finsbury, Clerkenwell, Farringdon and Old Street there is a marked lack of trees. This is associated with a large percentage of office, warehouse and commercial premises that were constructed with no provision for open space or trees. It is hoped that the use of the policy will see an increase in the number of street trees presently in this area.

Unfortunately, the high number of businesses and their need for improved IT and communications mean that the pavements in these areas contain a high volume of cables and utilities. This can cause difficulty with finding locations for new trees.

Business B: Low-density business/commercial district, with potential for landscaped grounds and communal areas.

Although not very large in percentage terms, this category is nonetheless important as there are a number of sites in Islington planned for development which could incorporate low density commercial business districts that would provide ideal sites for selective tree planting schemes which would enhance the environment.

Public Open Space A: All publicly owned open space accessible to the public.

The areas in this category provide the most scope and potential for planting for maximum impact in terms of the landscape effect of large trees. Trees in these areas may be retained and planted without the constraints already mentioned. It is in these areas that Islington's residents can enjoy trees in their most natural form, in parks such as Gillespie, Elthorne, Barnard, Whittington, Parkland Walk and the larger public squares such as Thornhill, Gibson, Arundel and Barnsbury.

It is accepted that though these sites can facilitate large trees, some areas within these sites can and have become over-planted. This results in areas of dense shade where grass, ground cover and shrub plants are unable to survive, resulting in a decrease in the visual amenity of the park. It is therefor important to balance the need for tree planting with the other aims and objectives of public open spaces.

Public Open Space B: A**ll** public open space adjacent to highways of significant amenity value but too small to be considered parkland.

This category is predominantly land adjacent to the highway that is too small to be considered Parkland but there is enough space for the presence of the types of trees usually found in the Public Open Space A category. Examples are the areas of grass and plantings at St. John's Way, the junction of Junction Road and Holloway Road, Highbury Corner.

Private Open Space: All privately owned open space not accessible to the public: hospitals, institutions, prisons, reservoirs, British Rail land, Crown land etc.

This category comprises the institutions and land-owning organisations all of which have trees on their land which make a positive contribution to the environment. Whilst not directly accessible to the public the trees in these areas do provide a highly significant public benefit.

11.0 OBJECTIVES OF TREE PLANTING

Retention:

- Ensuring the retention, wherever practicable or desirable, of trees on Council land and encouraging this on private land;
- where appropriate using legal powers to protect trees under threat and replace those lost through disease, storms, development or wilful damage;
- in the case of development sites making sure that trees remaining do not succumb to post-development pressure for removal or disfigurement.

Enhancement: To increase the tree cover and species diversity in those areas of the Borough that are identified by the policy as lacking in trees, 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.

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.

Species Selection: Planting, where appropriate, potentially large indigenous or exotic species. Creating skyline features where before none existed. Indigenous hardwoods are favoured against exotic species unless this would conflict with the existing character of an area, or due to local environmental factors, indigenous hard woods would struggle to establish, for example highway sites.

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.

Management: To ensure consistent management practices across the Borough both for Council and for privately owned trees, making effective use of computer technology. To encourage practices that protect the health and well being of trees.

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.

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.

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES

Council Owned Trees protected by virtue of TPOs and Conservation Areas.

Notification of all routine maintenance works to trees in Conservation Areas will be sent to the Development Control Tree Section. This will ensure that the Council is seen to be following legal requirements when dealing with its own trees and that it does so on a fair and equal basis. Tree Preservation Orders are rare on Council land. However, where they do occur, a similar procedure will be followed.

Privately Owned Trees

The main function of the Tree officer in the Planning Service is to ensure the continuity and preservation of trees in the Borough for their intrinsic amenity value and for the benefits they bring to the environment.

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

Members of the public or private companies wishing to undertake work on a preserved tree must inform the Council in writing. If they are unhappy with the decision notice issued they have the right of appeal to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. With respect to works in Conservation Areas the Council must be notified six weeks prior to their commencement, so that should it wish to do so, the Council can preserve the trees by serving a Tree Preservation Order.

Council departments wishing to undertake work involving pruning or works that may possibly damage trees on neighbouring sites will also have to follow the set procedures

Where trees are going to be affected by the work of public utilities who are Statutory Undertakers (water, electricity, gas and telephone companies, cable television etc.). The situation is different as these companies are empowered by Parliament and can disregard tree protection legislation if they so wish. However, these bodies do consult with local authorities on their actions and it is essential to foster good relations with them so that any trees affected are protected by negotiation.

In the case of trees on proposed development sites the Council has a duty to survey them and preserve those worthy of retention. (See Section 197 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.)

Usually only applications involving felling of trees are put out for consultation.

Once a conclusion has been reached as to the best course of action, a decision notice will be issued detailing the permitted works to the protected tree/trees. The notice will give the specifications and conditions the Council is imposing for that particular application.

13.0 TREE PLANTING AND SPECIES SELECTION

The land use categories described in Section 14 Existing Distribution, are used as the baseline for deciding which species are the most appropriate to plant in any given area. These lists are to serve as a guide only. There will be occasions when exceptions are made.

Residential A and Business A

The planting of trees in these areas will reflect the limited space available and consequently the restricted growth potential of any tree.

Generally speaking the properties in this area will be of a terraced nature and trees will usually be planted on the line of the boundaries between two properties

Examples of typical sites and appropriate species can be found in Appendix H

Residential B and Business B

These areas on the whole have more space for tree planting than Residential A and Business A. Wider roads and greater distances between the road and houses, communal areas in business parks all mean that trees with slightly different characteristics may be planted. This means trees with a larger, more spreading habit although species that are prone to insect infestation and large leathery leaves will still need to be avoided.

Examples of typical sites and appropriate species can be found in Appendix H

Of course any of the species suitable for Residential A & Business A may also be planted in these areas but as a secondary feature.

Residential C and Public Open Space B

One of the great advantages that Islington has over some other Inner London boroughs is that there are many small greens, squares and small open spaces, including those on housing estates, dotted around the Borough available for larger type tree planting. They provide ample room for the planting of substantial trees which, when mature, will bestow character to an area.

On these sites it has been common in the past to over plant small areas with trees. It is good Arboricultural/ Landscape management practice to selectively remove some of these trees in later years. This ensures that the best specimens are given sufficient room to grow into well-formed mature trees. It also ensures that areas do not become too dark at ground level.

Examples of typical sites and appropriate species can be found in Appendix H

Of course species suitable for any of the other areas above may also be planted.

Public Open Space A

In these areas any of the species mentioned in the previous sections may be planted with no restriction on size or habit as well as exotic trees which may be in keeping with the existing character of an area or park.

On these sites it has also been common in the past to over plant small areas with trees. It is good Arboricultural/ Landscape management practice to selectively removal some of these trees in later years. This ensures that the best specimens are given sufficient room to grow in to well-formed mature trees. It also ensures that areas do not become too dark at ground level.

Examples of typical sites and appropriate species can be found in Appendix H

Private Open Space

In Islington there are at least as many opportunities for planting trees on private land as there are on Council property. Much of the Borough's housing stock has gardens, which can and do accommodate large trees. As such species selection will largely depend on the garden itself and the proximity of adjacent property as well as on the individual taste of the owner, there can be no hard and fast rules. Each case will have to be assessed individually. To help with this a leaflet has been produced suggesting species suitable for different sized gardens (see Appendix F).

Specific Site Location

Having established the type and form of the trees to be planted in the various land use categories it is necessary to go one step further and lay out some rules for the actual positioning of the planting. This is especially important as the sites in roads and estates will be restricted by all the normal infrastructure associated with such areas, street lamps, road signs, traffic lights, services boxes, underground cables etc. The intention here is to pre-empt the problems that can be caused by planting trees too close to street furniture and services.

A young tree planted too close to a lamp may co-exist well for five to ten years but after that it could start to affect the effectiveness of the lamp, necessitating pruning

that would otherwise not be considered. By choosing the correct species and locating the tree a suitable distance from the lamp this can be avoided.

Residential A and B and Business A

Policy 31	When planting in Residential A and B and Business A streets it shall be the policy to avoid planting: -
•	within 4 metres of lamp columns and conversely no lamp column to be positioned within 4 meters of a tree;
•	outside properties of occupants with special access requirements. Where this happens through error the planted tree will be relocated elsewhere during the same planting season;
•	within a reasonable distance of statutory bodies surface installations, junction boxes, stop cocks, valves etc.;
•	at the junction of roads and streets where the traffic sight lines may be impeded;
•	at any point on the highway where the tree's future growth will screen any traffic sign, traffic light, signal, sign or notice or cause a physical obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic such that it can not be resolved through skilful pruning;
•	Close to the main structural flank wall of end of terrace properties.

Scheduling

In certain areas many calls are made to Greenspace and Leisure for new tree planting. If the Borough's tree stock is to be managed evenly the replanting must be done in such a way that no one area receives preferential treatment merely because local residents are more vocal. The aim must be to spread the available resources for planting throughout the Borough. The net result should be that over a period of years all parts of Islington will develop a pleasant environment for the residents and businesses.

More and more people and businesses are placing quality of life high on their agenda when looking for new locations. Islington needs to reflect this in preparing its tree planting proposals.

Residential A and B and Business A

Policy 32	When planting in Residential A and B and Business A streets it shall be policy: -
•	that throughout the Borough mature trees lost through natural wastage (disease, senility etc.) and those that have out-grown their environment are replaced so that in these areas the existing tree populations do not decline;
•	to target those areas currently devoid of trees for main planting schemes;

•	in terms of main planting schemes, not to replant in roads that were planted until three years has elapsed unless trees are being donated by local residents.

Residential C, Public Open Space A and B

Policy 33	When planting on public open space sites it shall be policy to plant: -
•	taking into account any visual landscape factors so that the species chosen will, when mature, have a significant impact in enhancing the character of the area without compromising any existing views, sight lines etc.;
•	allowing for the planted tree to be the eventual successor to any existing trees that are either nearing maturity or in decline;
•	so as to achieve a species mix so that in the event of a future disease affecting one particular species (as happened with Dutch Elm disease) no one area or park suffers from excessive loss due to a single species being the dominant tree.

Business B and Private Open Space

The situation with regard to private open space is slightly different than when dealing with planting on private land as the Council only has an advisory role, unless it is using its statutory powers to enforce the replacement of a preserved tree or to specify conditions in a planning consent.

Policy 34	Planting Policy for trees in Private Open Space:-
•	use statutory powers to obtain replacement plantings when preserved trees are removed;
•	assess development proposals with it being a priority to include tree planting wherever possible in the conditions of the planning approval;
•	provide an advisory service to the public concerning tree planting and location, so as to achieve the active participation and encouragement of the public in planting trees on their own land;
•	take into account any visual landscape factors so that the species chosen, will, when mature have a significant impact in enhancing the character of the area without compromising any existing views, sight lines etc;
•	allow for the planted tree(s) to be the eventual successor to any existing trees that are either nearing maturity or in decline;
•	achieve a species mix so that in the event of a future disease affecting one particular species (as happened with Dutch Elm disease) no one area suffers from excessive loss due to a single species being the dominant tree.

Nursery Stock

In carrying out tree planting on streets it is intended to use mainly advanced nursery stock, that is, young trees with a stem diameter of between l2-l6cm, and a height of approximately 3.5m.

14.0 ADVICE AND PUBLICITY

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.

Policy 35	The Council shall continue producing up to date leaflets about tree care, tree planting, and other tree related issues;

15.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

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.

Policy 36	It shall be policy to review this document at least every five years to ensure that the document remains current and stays abreast of changes in the industry.

16.0 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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.
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.

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

Storm Damage

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

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.

Contraventions

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.

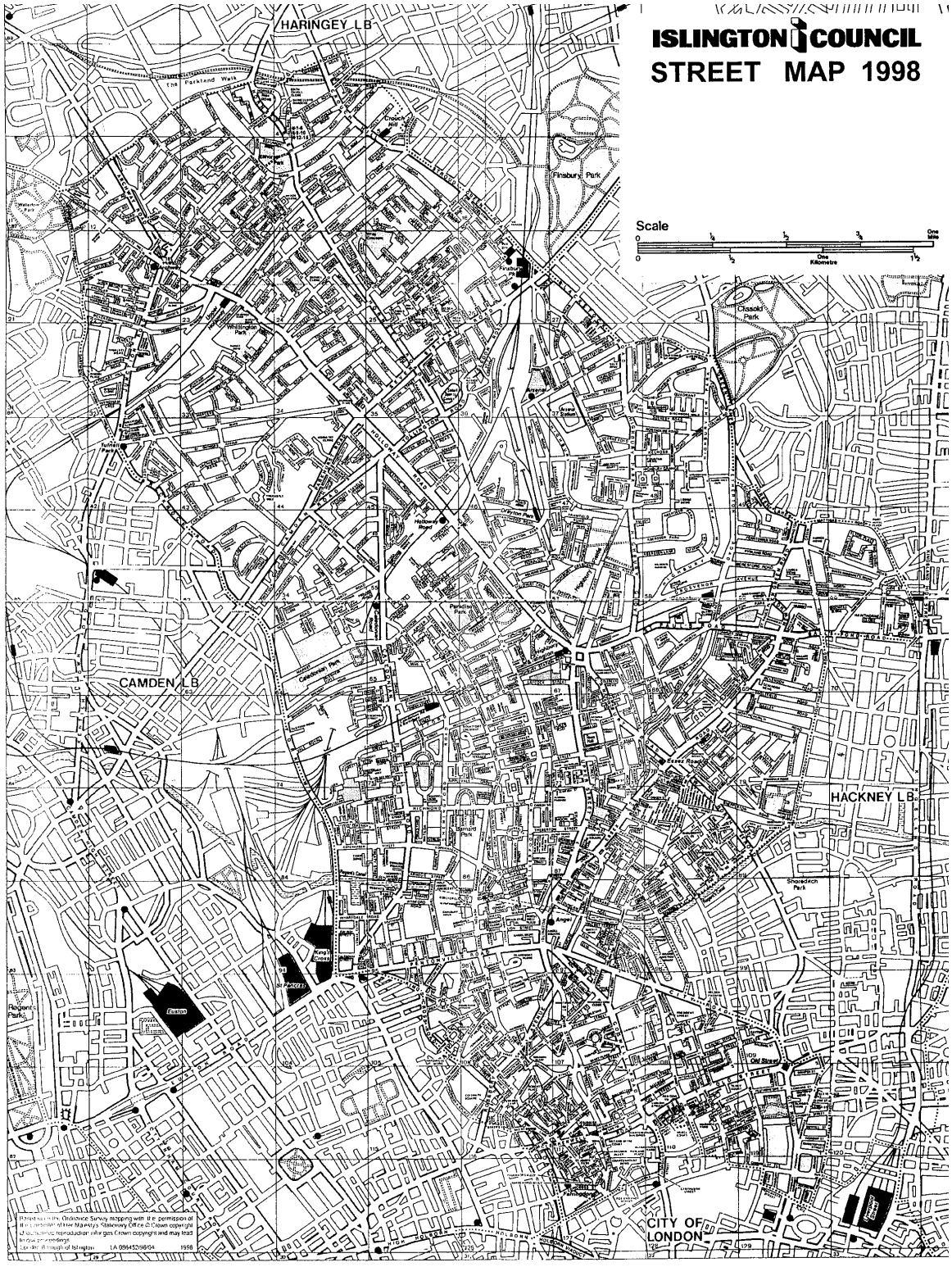
It will be important for a judgement to be made as to whether the works were being carried out for cosmetic reasons or reasons of public safety.

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

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

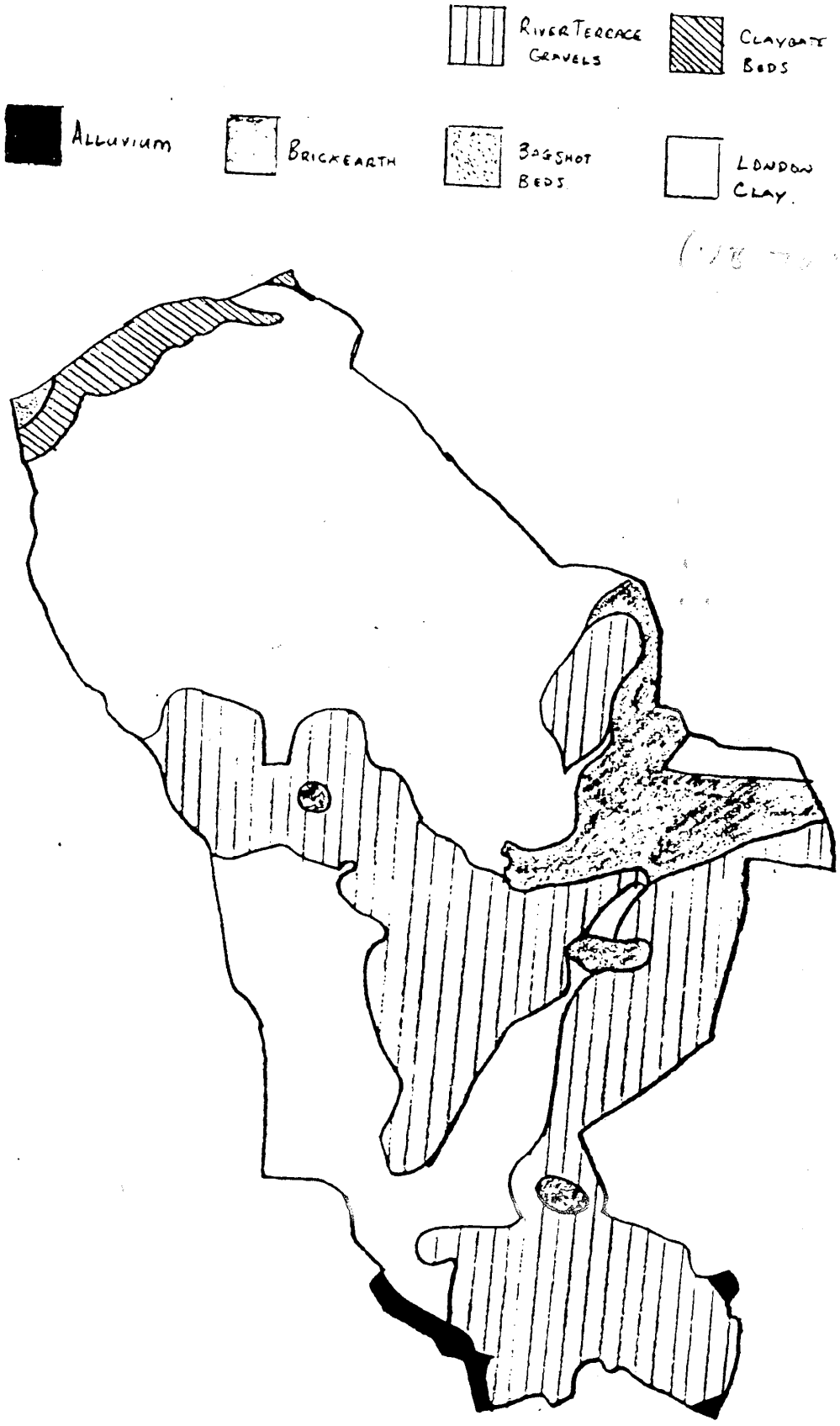
Appendices

Appendix A – Map of the London Borough of Islington



Appendix B1 – Geology of the Borough (To Be Revised)

Appendix B2 – Soil Types Found in Borough (To Be Revised)



Appendix C

Tree Related Legislation

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Gives Local Authorities to power to designate Conservation Areas and to protect trees with Tree Preservation Orders.

The Highways Act 1980	Gives Local Authorities the power to issue enforcement notices to deal with dangerous trees near the highway.
The Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976	Gives Local Authorities the power to issue enforcement notices to deal with dangerous trees on private land that are not overhanging a highway.
The Planning and Compensation Act 1991	Gives Local Authorities the power to issue stop notices and enforce planning conditions on development sites to protect preserved trees.

Appendix D

Transport For London Roads in Islington

Archway Road
Baron Street (Pentonville Road to White Lion Street)
Blackstock Road (Riversdale Road To Rock Street)
Camden Road
City Road (Islington High Street to Old Street Roundabout)
Farringdon Road
Goswell Road (St John Street to Wakely Street)
Highbury Corner
Highgate Hill(Tollhouse way to St Johns Way)
Holloway Road
Iseldon Road
Islington High Street (Pentonville Road to Liverpool Road)
King's Cross Road
Parkhurst Road
Penton Rise
Pentonville Road
Rock Street]]
Sandbridge Street
Seven Sisters Road
St Johns Way (Archway Road to Holloway Road)
St Thomas's Road (Prah Road to Seven Sisters Road)
Station Place
Tollhouse Way
Tollhouse Road
Upper Street
Wakley Street
White Lion Street (Baron Street to Islington High Street)

Appendix E

Leaflets Produced

1. Tree Sponsorship
2. Tree Planting
3. Tree Care

These leaflets are produced by the Greenspace Division's Tree Service. The address information is currently incorrect and it is hoped that funding will be secured in the new financial year starting April 2003 in order to remedy this, in the mean time current address details are provided via a small sticker being attached to individual leaflets.

3. Brown Tail Moth
4. Tree Roots and Structures

These two leaflets are produced by an external organisation called the London Tree Officers Association of which Islington is a member.

5. The Great Trees of London
6. A guide to preservation

There are also externally produced leaflets.

Appendix F – Summary of Policies

Policy 1	The Council will aim to provide a sustainable, high quality, tree population. Trees selected will be appropriate for the site in which they are to be planted. Consideration will be given to their eventual size and shape.
Policy 2	The Council will ensure that the tree population is managed in a cost effective and sustainable manner.
Policy 3	The Council will encourage and enable better understanding of trees with a view to promoting greater community involvement and awareness.
Policy 4	The Council will endeavour to maintain a high level of tree maintenance and undertake all works to BS 3998.
Policy 5	The Council will fulfil its obligations to adhere to Health and Safety regulations.
Policy 6	The removal of trees should be resisted unless there are sound arboricultural or other reasons to indicate otherwise: • dead, dying or dangerous, • proven to be causing significant structural damage, • inappropriate species for their location.
Policy 7	The Council intends to replace all trees which are removed, where appropriate, and depending on availability of funding.
Policy 8	The Council's Tree Service will ensure that they keep abreast of and adopt where necessary, any relevant developments within the arboricultural industry.
Policy 9	The Tree Service will adopt and embrace the Council's overall policies and objectives for the provision of service to the community.
Policy 10	The Council will not heavily prune or remove trees for the following reasons: • mess caused by insects or birds; • interference with satellite dish reception; • excessive leaf fall; problems associated with pollen; • where tree is perceived to be too large; • blockage of light;

- because someone is willing to pay for the removal and replacement of a tree.

N.B. We will, however, undertake suitable pruning to ameliorate these problems.

Policy 11	The Tree Service will introduce a range of Performance Indicators annually to ensure a high performance in relation to maintenance works and customer satisfaction.

Policy 12	It will be policy that all departments undertaking tree planting gain the approval of the Greenspace Tree Service.
Policy 13	The Council will not consider the removal of trees on the grounds of subsidence alone, without evidence that the tree is significantly contributing to the damage. This evidence will consist of at least the following:

- evidence of live roots of the same family or species found below the level of the foundation depth;
- soil moisture tests at varying depths to below foundation level;
- evidence of desiccated soil;
- a geotechnical survey including trial pits and soil profiles;
- a structural report providing evidence of actual damage including crack monitoring records;
- details of other vegetation within the theoretical zone of influence that are not easily visible from a public place

N.B Other evidence may be required such as a survey of the drainage system. As research in to this area continues the above list is likely to change.

Policy 14	Where trees are identified for removal advance notices will be placed on the tree. In addition to this where trees of significant value are highlighted for removal local residents directly affected will be informed via letter. It will not be standard practice to consult with residents for works that are considered to be routine maintenance works, or where due to Health and Safety implications removal needs to be undertaken quickly.

Policy 15	The Tree Service aims to introduce a cyclical pruning regime of all highway trees as soon as funding becomes available.

Policy 16	There is a presumption against the removal of trees which are healthy but are subject to complaint, unless there is an overriding justification.

Policy 17	It will not be Council policy to remove trees on the grounds that they are causing disruption to pavements, kerbs, garden paths and walls.

Policy 18	An annual inspection of all street trees will be undertaken to identify all dead, dying or dangerous trees.

Policy 19	A 24-hour emergency call-out system will be available for all tree-related emergencies.

Policy 20	The Council will undertake cyclical pruning of problem areas, as identified by regular inspections and high incidence of structural damage.

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	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.

Policy 23	To encourage correct arboricultural management practices;

Policy 24	To use the available legislation as a management tool so that on a Borough-wide basis the quality of tree care is improved;

Policy 25	To make use of the legislation so that the numbers of preserved trees are increased

Policy 26	In dealing with all new development to ensure that works near trees are carried out to the relevant British Standard, currently BS 5837 1991 "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 27	In the processing of planning applications to have a high regard for the retention of all trees of amenity value;

Policy 28	To encourage planting generally on privately owned sites;

Policy 29	To instigate a thorough tree survey of the Borough with a view to getting the maximum number of trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders;

Policy 30	To establish and regularly up date a register of competent tree surgeons for distribution to the public.

Policy 31	When planting in Residential A and B and Business A streets it shall be the policy to avoid planting: -
•	within 5 metres of lamp columns and conversely no lamp column to be positioned within 5m of a tree;
•	outside properties of occupants with special access requirements. Where this happens through error the planted tree will be relocated elsewhere during the same planting season;
•	within a reasonable distance of statutory bodies surface installations, junction boxes, stop cocks, valves etc.;
•	at the junction of roads and streets where the traffic sight lines may be impeded;
•	at any point on the highway where the tree's future growth will screen any traffic sign, traffic light, signal, sign or notice or cause a physical obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic such that it can not be resolved through skilful pruning;
•	Close to the main structural flank wall of end of terrace properties.

Policy 32	When planting in Residential A and B and Business A streets it shall be policy: -
•	that throughout the Borough mature trees lost through natural wastage (disease, senility etc.) and those that have out-grown their environment are replaced so that in these areas the existing tree populations do not decline;
•	to target those areas currently devoid of trees for main planting schemes;
•	in terms of main planting schemes, not to replant in roads that were planted until three years has elapsed unless trees are being donated by local residents.

Policy 33	When planting on public open space sites it shall be policy to plant: -
•	taking into account any visual landscape factors so that the species chosen will, when mature, have a significant impact in enhancing the character of the area without compromising any existing views, sight lines etc.;
•	allowing for the planted tree to be the eventual successor to any existing trees that are either nearing maturity or in decline;
•	so as to achieve a species mix so that in the event of a future disease affecting one particular species (as happened with Dutch Elm disease) no one area or park suffers from excessive loss due to a single species being the dominant tree.

Policy 34	Planting Policy for trees in Private Open Space:- • use statutory powers to obtain replacement plantings when preserved trees are removed; • assess development proposals with it being a priority to include tree planting wherever possible in the conditions of the planning approval; • provide an advisory service to the public concerning tree planting and location, so as to achieve the active participation and encouragement of the public in planting trees on their own land; • take into account any visual landscape factors so that the species chosen, will, when mature have a significant impact in enhancing the character of the area without compromising any existing views, sight lines etc; • allow for the planted tree(s) to be the eventual successor to any existing trees that are either nearing maturity or in decline; • achieve a species mix so that in the event of a future disease affecting one particular species (as happened with Dutch Elm disease) no one area suffers from excessive loss due to a single species being the dominant tree.

Policy 35	The Council shall continue producing up to date leaflets about tree care, tree planting, and other tree related issues;

Policy 36	It shall be policy to review this document at least every three years to ensure that the document remains current and stays abreast of changes in the industry.

Appendix H

Appropriate Species and Example Sites

Residential A and Business A

Columnare Maple (Acer Platanoides 'Columnare');
Jacquemont's Birch (Betula Jacquemontii);
Silver Birch (Betula Pendula);
Paper Birch (Betula Papyfera);
Autumn Flowering Cherry (Prunus subhirtella ‘Autumnalis’)
Chanticleer Pear (Pyrus Calleryana 'Chanticleer');
Mountain Ash (Sorbus Aucuparia);
Upright Mountain Ash (Sorbus 'Sheerwater Seedling');
Sorbus 'Joseph Rock';
Sorbus x Thuringiaca 'Fastigiata';
Fastigiate Rowan (Sorbus x Hybrida 'Fastigiata').
Snowy Mespilus (Amelanchier lamarkii)

All the above trees have the following properties:-

a) upright habit;
b) small or compound leaves;
c) low water demand;
d) comparatively unaggressive root system;
e) small fruits;
f) easily pruned;
g) produce less shading;
h) comparatively unattractive to sap feeding insects.

Site Examples are:

Studd Street
Gladsmuir Road;
Mercers Road;
Copenhagen Street;
Lloyd Street;
Kiver Road;
Gillespie Road;
Linton Street.

Areas 2 and 5 Residential B and Business B

Examples of appropriate species are:

Field Maple (Acer campestre);
Norway Maple (Acer platanoidies);
Red Horse Chestnut (Aesculus X Carnea);

Grey Alder (Alnus incana);
Himalayan Birch (Betula utilis);
Turkish Hazel (Corylus colurna);
Pink Hawthorn (Crataegus Oxycantha 'Paul's Scarlet');
Common Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna);
Cockspur Thorn (Crataegus 'Gruss-crulli');
Tulip Tree (Liriodendron tulipifera);
Apples (Malus Spp.);
Cherries (Prunus Spp.);
Scots Pine (Pinus sylvestris);
Austrian Pine (Pinus nigra);
Whitebeam (Sorbus aria);
Swedish Whitebeam (Sorbus intermedia);
Small Leaved Lime (Tilia cordata).
Sweet Gum (Liquidamber styriciflua)

Of course any of the species suitable for Residential A & Business A may also be planted.

Site examples are:

Aberdeen Park;
Essex Road;
Goswell Road;

Areas 3 and 7 Residential C and Public Open Space B

Examples of appropriate species are:

Sterile Horse Chestnut (Aesculus hippocastaneum 'Baumanii');
Sweet Chestnut (Castanea sativa);
Hornbeam (Carpinus betulus);
Beech (Fagus sylvatica);
Antarctic Beech (Nothofagus antarctica);
Roble Beech (Nothofagus obliqua);
London Plane (Platanus acerifolia);
Aspen (Populus tremula);
Common Oak (Quercus robur);
Sessile Oak (Quercus petraea);
Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)
Limes (Tilia species)

Of course species suitable for any of the other areas above may also be planted.

Site examples are:

Highbury Corner;

Junction of Camden Road and Caledonian Road;
Junction of Holloway Road and Junction Road;
Islington Green;
Arlington Square;
Thornhill Square;
Arundel Square;
The Andover Estate;
The Marquess Estate;
The Holly Park Estate.

Public Open Space A

Further examples of species are:

Silver Maple (Acer saccharinum);
Common Horse Chestnut (Aesculus hippocastannum);
Deodar Cedar (Cedrus deodara);
Blue Atlantic Cedar (Cedrus atlantica);

Site examples are:

Highbury Fields;
Whittington Park;
Gillespie Park;
Caledonian Park;
Barnsbury Park;

Private Open Space

There are in Islington at least as many opportunities for planting trees on private land as there are on Council property. Much of the Borough's housing stock has gardens which can and do accommodate large trees. As such the species selection will largely depend on the garden itself and the proximity of adjacent property, so there can be no hard and fast rules as to the species.

As the Council will be providing technical advice to members of the public each case will have to be assessed individually. To help with this a leaflet has been produced giving species suitable for different sized gardens (see Appendix D).

Specific Site Location

Having established the type and form of the trees to be planted in the various land use categories it is necessary to go one step further and lay out some rules for the actual positioning of the planting. This is especially important as the sites in roads and estates will be restricted by all the normal infrastructure associated with such areas, street lamps, road signs, traffic lights, services boxes, underground cables

etc. The intention here is to pre-empt the problems that can be caused by planting trees too close to street furniture and services.

A young tree planted too close to a lamp may co-exist well for five to ten years but after that it could start to affect the effectiveness of the lamp necessitating pruning that would otherwise not be considered. By choosing the correct species and locating the tree a suitable distance from the lamp this can be avoided.