

Request for tree works by Wroughton Club

Wroughton Club has requested that Wroughton Parish Council carries out work to the trees in the Weir Field hedge adjacent to Wroughton Club. The Club advised: *'the trees and bushes are really overgrown in both height and width such that it restricts access to that side of our building, (which has cellar equipment attached that requires frequent maintenance visits), also, the height of the growth is such that it is overhanging our gutters and causing signal/reception problems to both TV Antenna at the rear of the building and dish to the front as well as leaves directly dropping into and causing restrictions to the rainwater flow in the gutters. Is it possible for the Parish Council to get these trees and bushes reduced in height and width please?'*

Wroughton Club first complained about these trees back in September last year. These trees had not been identified by Bawdens in their 2022 assessment as requiring any work to be carried out. We understand the Club asked WRC about the trees when WRC carried out works on behalf of WPC in the Weir Field last year. We then asked WRC to take a second look just to ensure the trees had not deteriorated since Bawdens assessment. WRC advised the trees were healthy and therefore no work was required.

We advised the Club that if the trees are not touching the building or the gutters, and as WPC has not been advised work needs to be carried out to make them safe/ healthy, they did not fit the criteria for work to be carried out and therefore it was unlikely the Parish Council would agree to the request to have them reduced in height and width. We have also advised that we have recently instructed Bawdens to carry out the 3-yearly tree assessment and the trees in this hedge would be assessed again as part of that assessment. However, the Club has requested that the work is carried out urgently on the following basis:

This was never about the safety and health of the trees, it was about the height and intrusion of the trees, blocking gutters, disturbing TV/Antenna signal, and since my original email..... we now have the additional problem with Squirrel's getting into the roof. We have taken some action ourselves with the lower level overgrowth that was blocking access to our external equipment, but, it is the height of the trees that requires addressing. Please can this be made clear to whoever is reviewing this matter on behalf of the council, as previously stated we would be happy to look at making a financial contribution to get these reduced in height, but they are council property trees, and therefore, as they are causing the above issues to the Club property we feel that this should at least be considered, and not dismissed because of the 'health of the trees'.

Please find attached pics of where the branches are actually touching gutters and overhanging/touching the building, I have also attached a pic. where other trees are well overhanging the rear cellar yard where we have deliveries and bin lorries etc. these could also do with cutting back. With regard to financial contribution, not knowing what the cost would be, it is difficult to put a sum of money against it, but if I suggest that we would be prepared to pay 50% of the cost, maybe that will help to expedite the issues, bearing in mind these would need to be soon asap before birds start nesting etc. – Thanks

The Parish Council agreed the Tree Works Policy to try to ensure a consistent, objective and fair approach to considering requests from residents for tree works to be carried out. The Tree Works Policy is available on the Parish Council's website here: <https://wroughton.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Tree-Works-Policy-agreed-OS-2023-10-01.pdf> Members need to consider the Club's request to reduce the height and width of the trees in conjunction with that policy. Please see the 4th photo on the final page of this report taken by the Deputy Clerk which clearly shows the branches of the trees touching the building and the gutter, extending beyond the wall and above the height of the gutter.





Wroughton Parish Council's Tree Works Policy states: *WPC will not prune trees that overhang neighbouring properties **unless the trees are dangerous or using an actionable nuisance, i.e., touching the walls, roofs, windows, gutters, garage etc.** This will ensure that damage to property such as aerials, tiles or gutters is avoided. Adjacent landowners have a common law right to prune back tree branches to their boundary, providing that this would not lead to tree death and providing that the tree in question is not protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or situated within a Conservation Area.*

If Members resolve the trees should be removed, the Grounds Team will carry out the work if they can carry this out safely. If not we would need to ask a tree surgeon to carry out the work.

Recommendations:

- 1. Agree that the trees can be felled or reduced to the height of the hedge to ensure that no damage is caused by the Parish Council's trees to the Club's building.**
- 2. Agree that if the Grounds Team is unable to carry out the work, the Deputy Clerk can ask WRC (the tree surgeons who carried out the works under the tree works tender last year) to quote to fell or reduce the trees to the height of the hedge.**
- 3. Agree that in order not to delay the works, the Clerk or Deputy Clerk, in consultation with the Chair or Vice Chair of this Committee can agree the quote for the tree work as long as they consider it to be reasonable, the details to be reported back to the next Committee meeting.**
- 4.**
- 5. Thank the Club for their offer to make a financial contribution to the cost of the works, but given the request fits the criteria set out in the Parish Council's policy for the works to be carried out to prevent damage to the building, a contribution is not required.**

