

## **Executive Summary**

### **A Tree Policy for Limerick**

Limerick City and County Council is responsible for the planting, maintenance and management of a large number of trees in public spaces in the City and County. These are located on streets and greenways, in parks, on the grounds of public buildings and in residential greenspaces.

This document will provide a framework to inform and support decisions made by the Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) on the management and development of a sustainable tree population in the city and county.

The Policy is intended act as a point of reference for the public, Councillors, Council staff and professionally interested people to enable informed discussion and to establish a clearer, consistent and more structured approach to the issues affecting trees.

This will result in a better understanding of these issues and an overall improvement in the standard and continuity of tree care. In turn, this will allow for a pro-active and systematic approach to tree management, resulting in a healthier tree population and creating a greener, more sustainable and climate resilient environment for residents and visitors to Limerick.

#### **Public Trees**

This policy relates to trees in the ownership, control and or management of the Local Authority.

This document outlines policy interventions relating to the planting, maintenance and management of public trees, but also includes policies in relation to trees in the context of development on private lands.

#### **Trees on Private Land**

Owners of trees and woodlands have a statutory duty under the Occupiers Liability Act 1995 and the Roads Act 1993 to maintain their trees to ensure they are not dangerous or in a hazardous condition and that they do not pose a threat to the public.

Section 70 of the Roads Act 1993 obliges landowners and occupiers of land to take all reasonable care to ensure that the trees, hedges and other vegetation growing on their land are not, or could not become, a danger to people using or working on a public road.

#### **Tree Policy**

The key objectives of this policy are to establish the current position with regard to Limerick's public trees; to implement a proactive tree management programme; and to prepare and implement a public awareness and education programme on public trees. The policy also sets out, in broad terms, the resources necessary to achieve these policy objectives

It recognises the environmental, social, economic and health benefits of trees and includes for mechanisms to place an economic value on our public tree stock to support decision-making.

The policy sets out the Council's position on the management and maintenance of the public tree stock with a view to providing a clear and understandable rationale for the decisions the Council will make in this regard.

The policy includes an approach to the design of street tree planting schemes, and introduces the concept of planting the “**right tree in the right place**”. It sets out the Council’s approach to tree planting and replacement. It also provides for appropriate species selection, and includes a sample list of species suitable for use as street trees.

There is a specific chapter outlining the Council’s position in relation to the threat of the tree disease Ash Dieback to our tree stock.

The development of this Tree Management Policy signals a new commitment by Limerick City and County Council to looking after one of our most valuable natural resources. It represents a significant change in how we manage trees with the development of a more strategic, proactive, planned approach to inspection, planting, maintenance and management. This will enable progress towards an improved service and a more effective and informed tree maintenance programme.



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