

Tree Preservation Orders

A TPO (Tree Preservation Order) is a statutory protection afforded to trees under the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Any requests to make a TPO should be sent to our Tree Officer for consideration. Additionally, we may initiate TPOs as a result of a planning application or in response to any threat.

An order can cover anything from a single tree to a woodland and all types of trees can be protected. Unless a woodland TPO is proposed, only trees over 3.5m in height are considered for a TPO. Hedges, bushes and shrubs will not be protected.

Some trees (or woodlands) should be protected because they enhance views, help define character and promote a sense of place, add colour and seasonal interest, have historic importance, support wildlife and/or if they are under threat. Criteria for making an order can be found on our website.

If a tree is protected by a TPO (or if any tree is in a Conservation Area), the council's consent is required before felling or pruning. Our office can give you information on protected trees and the location of Conservation Areas near you.

If you would like to carry out works to protected trees you must seek our consent by completing a Works Request Form available from our offices.

It is a criminal offence to cut down, lop, wilfully destroy or damage a protected tree without the council's consent. The council can prosecute, including fines up to £100,000. When deciding a fine, the court will consider any financial benefit which accrued or is likely to accrue due to the offence.

The Council holds a Register of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the District. In accordance with Section 242 of the Planning Act (NI) Order 2011, it is available for inspection by the public at all reasonable hours. There are currently 62 confirmed TPOs and 3 Provisional TPOs in this District. Most TPOs comprise groups of trees, rather than individuals. Specific TPO files are available for inspection on request, and these should detail the numbers, location, species, and health and condition of individual trees.

Please see the following former DoE documents for information.

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/trees-and-development-guide-best-practice>

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/tree-preservation-orders-guide-protected-trees>

Current legislation is here

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2015/84/contents/made>

For further details, please contact our Tree Officer **Kate Hegarty** or Senior Planning Officer **John Spottiswood** on 028 7125 3253.