



The Role of a Tree Warden – the Do's and Don'ts

The Tree Warden Scheme gives people who feel that trees matter an opportunity to champion their local trees and woods by carrying out or encouraging practical projects and involving their neighbours whenever possible. Community involvement is a central aim of the scheme.

Volunteer Tree Wardens work closely with local authority officers and conservation bodies, who are fundamental to the scheme's success – whether by coordinating local networks, offering practical advice, or providing training.

Always remember: Whilst all Tree Wardens are valued volunteers, Tree Wardens are not qualified tree experts, and you do not have any special powers or authority.

The range of Tree Warden activities includes:

- Championing trees in your local community
- Planting and caring for trees, and managing local woods
- Setting up tree nurseries using seeds collected locally
- Surveying trees and gathering information about them
- Providing early warning of threats, disease, decay, or vandalism
- Getting together with like-minded people for training and field trips
- Working with local groups and schools – supporting The Tree Council's schools orchard programme and Young Tree Champions
- Developing imaginative initiatives, such as tree adoption, to encourage others to value the community's trees – and so help to reduce vandalism
- Leading guided tree walks and giving talks to local groups
- Spearheading Tree Council initiatives and campaigns throughout the year
- Helping farmers to lay hedges or tag hedge trees for protection
- Recommend trees for protection under Tree Preservation Orders to your local authority
- Work with your tree officer or parish/town council to provide comment on applications for works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order or in Conservation Areas.



As a Tree Warden you should NEVER:

- Enter private land without the owner's agreement, even if this is to carry out simple tree maintenance activities such as removing tree ties or carrying out hedgerow or tree surveys.
- Advise whether a tree is safe: if it falls you would be liable, and you are not insured for this. This is the role of a professional arborist/tree officer.
- Undertake practical work without appropriate training and permissions or outside your physical ability.
- Attempt to handle tree disputes yourself or antagonise situations, trees can be an emotive subject and there are many reasons why people may not like trees just as there are many reasons why Tree Wardens love trees! Remember this is the local community in which you live so act reasonably and be willing to listen and compromise. If in doubt, refer to your local authority Tree Officer.
- Carry out chemical weed control without having completed the certificated training.
- Use a chainsaw without having completed the certificated training or without insurance.
- Carry out work on trees that could result in the disturbance of or destruction of wildlife during their breeding/nesting season.
- Bring your Tree Warden Network and/or The Tree Council into disrepute.