

**EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL
LEAD MEMBER - TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT
POLICY SUMMARY**

PS 7/2

Highway Verges and Vegetation

Purpose of Policy

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) recognises the vital role played by the local highway network.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the standards for the maintenance of highway verges and vegetation to achieve a balance between statutory obligations, safety, serviceability and sustainability.

Policy Statement

1) Verge cutting

- a. The standards adopted for verge cutting throughout the County will be dependent upon the funds available in the maintenance budget.
- b. The County Council (or its duly appointed agents) will carry out the following cuts to verges. In this context, urban areas are, unless determined otherwise, defined as built up locations with a 20, 30 or 40mph speed limit. All other areas are rural.
 - i. In Rural Areas will receive either:
 1. Standard Service: two cuts per annum of a 1 metre wide swathe and visibility areas cut for visibility at junctions and for safety on the inside of bends where sight lines between road users may be obscured by vegetation
 2. Environmental Enhancement Service: one visibility areas cut for visibility at junctions and for safety on the inside of bends where sight lines between road users may be obscured by vegetation, at start of season and one standard 1 metre wide swathe cut and visibility areas later in the season. As requested by Parish or Town Councils.
 - ii. In Urban Areas will receive either:
 1. Standard Service: two cuts per annum.
 2. Extra cuts: additional cuts funded by Parish or Town Councils totalling 6 cuts per annum.
 3. Self Delivery: The Parish or Town Council takes on responsibility to deliver all urban grass cutting in their area, with a minimum of at least 2 cuts. Contribution of cost of 2 cuts from the County Council to the Parish or Town Council.
- c. Additional cuts may be carried out at junctions and sight lines where the County Council deem it to be necessary for safety reasons where visibility is reduced.
- d. Further cuts may be carried out where additional funding is available.
- e. Areas of verge listed and marked as being of wildlife interest, will be specially maintained according to the needs of the individual verge.
- f. A full cut back of the county verges to the highway boundary will be completed every four

years on a rotating schedule.

2) Weed Control - street furniture, paved areas and kerbs/channels

Where herbicides are used for the treatment of weeds, weeds will only be treated using herbicides from the Health and Safety Executive's Pesticides Register of UK Authorised Products suitable for use on highways

3) Hedge Trimming

- a. Hedges which are adjacent to the road/footway and are the responsibility of the County Council will be trimmed once a year.
- b. Where the County Council determine that there are special requirements in visibility areas, cutting will be undertaken when required.

4) Trees

- a. Highway trees should only receive maintenance at County Council expense for reasons of health and safety, access and visibility on the highway or where they are causing damage to property. Tree maintenance work shall be undertaken in line with the recommendations of BS 3998: 2010 ('Tree work').
- b. Third parties may be given the opportunity to become involved in the provision of new trees on the Highway where appropriate.

5) Siding

- a. In rural areas only the minimum amount of siding (trimming of verges along the pavement) should be carried out on carriageways, e.g. when needed before surface dressing and the renewal of edge markings, since in most cases the traffic keeps the carriageway clear.
- b. On footways, only the minimum amount of siding should be carried out to preserve an adequate width of footway for all types of pedestrian traffic where this is considered necessary on an ad-hoc basis.

6) Third parties

- a. The Highway Authority may authorise third parties to carry out the above services or additional works to highway verges and vegetation at their own expense. E.g.
 - farmers in the county wishing to use suitable verges for haymaking;
 - individuals and organisations wishing to manage verges for wildlife or amenity purposes.
- b. Any areas planted by third parties acting under licence will be maintained by the licensee unless otherwise agreed with the County Council (refer to PS 8/6 Roadside Sponsorship)

Supporting Information

Well-managed Highway Infrastructure, 2016, UK Roads Liaison Group

Version control

H&T Committee - 22 March 1974 22.03.1974
H&T Committee - 22 October 1980 - Agenda Item 5. 23 28.10.1975

Date of last review:

H&T Committee - 16 December 1980 - Agenda Item 6. 2 16.12.1980 H&T Committee - 11 December 1984 - Agenda Item 7 11.12.1984 H&T Committee - 31 May 1989 - Agenda Item 18. 31.05.1989 H&T Committee - 25 March 1975 - Agenda Item 8. 25.03.1975 H&T Committee - 16 September 1992 - Agenda Item 9. 16.09.1992 H&T Committee - 19 October 1994 - Agenda Item 19. 19.10.1994 T&E Committee - 10 March 1998 - Agenda Item 6. 10.03.1998 Lead Member for Transport and Environment – 21.05.2018	
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