



WILDLIFE & ECOLOGY POLICY (UPDATED 2024)

Deadwood Arborists establish and commit to applying this policy to all operations and worksites we manage.

This policy outlines the procedures and best practices to ensure compliance with the **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981** and the **Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000**. It aims to protect wildlife and their habitats during tree management activities.

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

This Act provides protection for wildlife, including birds, animals, and plants, and regulates activities that may disturb their habitats. Key aspects include:

- **Protection of Birds:** Most wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected. It is an offense to disturb or destroy them.
- **Protected Species:** Certain animals and plants have protection from disturbance or harm.
- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs):** Special protection is afforded to designated sites to conserve habitats and species.

Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000

This Act focuses on access to the countryside and the protection of rural areas. It impacts tree management through:

- **Access Rights:** Ensuring that public access is not unduly restricted by tree management activities.
- **Conservation:** It encourages sustainable land management practices and the protection of natural landscapes.

1. Pre-Work Assessment

1. **Ecological Survey:** Prior to any tree surgery or deadwood removal, an ecological survey should be conducted by a qualified ecologist to identify the presence of protected species, especially bats, birds, and nesting sites.
2. **Habitat Evaluation:** Assess the tree and surrounding area for signs of protected species and important habitats. This includes checking for bat roosts, bird nests, and other wildlife indicators.
3. **Permit Requirements:** If the presence of protected species is identified, obtain the necessary licenses or permits from relevant authorities. This may include

Natural England, the Scottish Natural Heritage, or other local conservation bodies.

2. Work Practices

1. **Timing of Work:** Avoid tree work during critical periods for wildlife, such as nesting seasons (March to August) or winter months when bats may hibernate. Plan activities to minimize disruption.
2. **Tree Inspection:** Inspect trees thoroughly before any work is carried out. Look for signs of wildlife, such as nests or bat roosts, and adjust work practices accordingly.
3. **Handling Deadwood:** When dealing with deadwood, handle it carefully to avoid disturbing wildlife that may be using it for habitat. Consider leaving deadwood in situ or relocating it to a suitable location where it can continue to provide habitat.
4. **Protecting Wildlife:** Implement measures to protect identified wildlife, such as using exclusion zones around active nests or roosts. Ensure that no harm comes to wildlife during operations.
5. **Emergency Procedures:** Have protocols in place for unexpected wildlife encounters or discoveries during work. This includes halting work and contacting a qualified ecologist if protected species are found.

3. Training and Awareness

1. **Staff Training:** Ensure all personnel are trained in wildlife protection and the relevant legislation. This includes recognizing protected species and understanding their habitats.
2. **Ongoing Education:** Stay updated with changes in wildlife protection laws and best practices through continuous professional development and regular reviews of policy and procedure.

4. Documentation and Reporting

1. **Record Keeping:** Maintain detailed records of pre-work surveys. Document any wildlife encountered and the actions taken to protect them.
2. **Reporting:** Report any incidents of wildlife disturbance or non-compliance with the policy to the appropriate regulatory authorities and take corrective actions.

By adhering to this policy, **Deadwood Arborists** will contribute to the conservation of wildlife and their habitats, ensuring that tree management activities are carried out in an environmentally responsible manner.

In our position as management of **Deadwood Arborists Tree Care Specialists Ltd**, we **Liam Hughes** and **Thomas Hughes** swear to uphold, enforce and review this policy.

SIGNED

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