

# National Tree Safety Group

## Terms of Reference

### Objective

The National Tree Safety Group's [NTSG] aim is to develop a nationally recognised approach to tree safety management and provide guidance that is proportionate to the actual risks posed by trees.

### Membership

Membership shall be open to all interested stakeholder organisations and groups. Individuals are not eligible to become members of the NTSG.

### Scope

The group shall identify as far as possible and consider all matters relevant to the development of nationally recognised guidance with the widest possible support. These include:

1. Quantifying the risk posed by trees, both actual and perceived
2. The social and political context including understanding the benefits provided by trees
3. Communication of and viability of guidance
4. The legal context: understanding the differences between criminal and civil law in relation to tree risk
5. Insurance
6. A study of existing guidance documents
7. Any difference that may exist or need to be considered between trees in urban and rural settings; and between public and private owners
8. This guidance should be defensible rather than defensive

### Outcome

The NTSG will :

- carry out research into tree risk; this will entail communication of preliminary and interim findings to inform its final report
- produce a set of basic principles as a framework for considering and managing tree safety in the public interest
- through the above, produce a widely-accepted, broad guidance document on tree safety management for landowners and managers with responsibility for trees

### Management Committee

The NTSG shall be directed by a management committee:

- (1) **Membership:** The Management Committee shall consist of a chair and no more than 12 representatives from across the interests represented within the NTSG. The initial membership of the management group is given in appendix 2. They shall have the right to co-opt further members to the group to ensure broad representation. The chair may also co-opt additional members on specific subjects.
- (2) **Chair:** The Chairman of the management committee shall be elected by members of that committee. In the absence of consensus the chair shall have the casting vote.

- (3) **Conflicts of Interest:** Members shall be required to declare relevant outside interest prior to taking up an appointment and when an additional potential conflict of interest arises in relation to particular business.
- (4) **Sub Committees etc:** The management committee shall form sub committees and use expertise from within and outside its membership to most effectively achieve the objective of the NTSG.
- (5) **Secretariat:** The secretariat shall be provided by the Forestry Commission. In the first instance no charge is to be levied for this service.
- (6) The management committee shall endeavour to ensure that the widest possible range of views is represented and that all group members have the opportunity to express their views to the management committee.
- (7) The management committee shall be unremunerated. The NTSG will not be able to reimburse expenses unless the membership provide funds to do this.

## Communication

The NTSG shall be open to all methods of communication to achieve the objectives of the group. These will include:

- (1) Email circulars both to the membership of the group and to any parties with a registered interest
- (2) Where necessary conferences and other public meetings
- (3) To maintain the development of a website (if cost effective)
- (4) **Freedom of Information:** The names of members of the Group, and the agenda and minutes of meetings will be available upon request. Commercially or personally sensitive material will be excluded from publication and remain confidential to members. The committee will not be expected to have unanimity of views and significant diversity of opinion or the existence of a range of views will be recorded.

## Finance

The NTSG is a loose grouping of organisations and has no incentive to hold money other than to achieve its objectives. It will look to its membership, and other sources, to fund the activities necessary to achieve its objectives. Such funds will be held on behalf of the NTSG by a member with the necessary accounting capacity (currently the Arboricultural Association) as agreed by the management committee. Payments shall be made only on the express authorisation of the Chairman. Individual payments of more than £1000 shall require the approval of the management committee. A treasurer will be appointed to maintain records of funds held on behalf of members.

## **Appendix 1**

Membership of the National Tree Safety Group

Forestry Commission

Arboricultural Association

Country Land and Business Association

Woodland Trust

Ancient Tree Forum

ConFor

English Heritage

National Farmers Union

Institute of Chartered Foresters

British Standards Institute

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

London Tree Officers Association

Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group

National Trust

## **Appendix 2**

Membership of the Management Committee

Sir Harry Studholme (Chairman)

Forestry Commissioner

Simon Wallis/Emily Ramsay\*

Forestry Commission

Simon Richmond

Arboricultural Association

Mike Seville

CLA/NFU

John Lockhart

RICS

Andy Tipping

London Tree Officers Association

Rebecca Haskell\*

Woodland Trust

Caroline Harrison

ConFor

Neville Fay

Ancient Tree Forum

Shireen Chambers

Institute of Chartered Foresters

Mark Daniels\*

National Trust

\* Also members of the Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group