



Coney Weston Parish Council.

Time to trim your hedge?

The ideal time to trim your hedge is between 1st September and 1st February when the fledglings have left the nest.

How can a hedge be a hazard?

Overgrown hedges next to footpaths and roads pose a real hazard to people who are disabled or who are visually impaired and young children or other pedestrians who risk injury or damage to their faces or clothing from thorns and branches. If the pavement (footway) is narrow or the obstruction is excessive, they may be forced into the road. This is particularly dangerous for wheelchair users or for people pushing a pram or buggy.

On junctions and bends overgrown hedges may obstruct sight lines and the clear view of motorists. They may also obscure traffic signs or streetlights, increasing the risk of accidents.

What should I do?

Check your own trees and hedges. Are they overhanging the footpath or boundary of your property? Are they affecting visibility for road users? If so, cut them back (or arrange to have them cut back) as soon as possible.

I am not the owner but a tenant of the property. Surely it is not my responsibility?

So far as the law is concerned the occupier is usually responsible for this sort of maintenance and, in addition, tenancy agreements often include routine maintenance. Even if your tenancy agreement states that the landlord is responsible, you would be required to contact him/her and ensure that pruning is carried out as soon as possible.

Don't let your hedge become a hazard.

It is the wrong time of year to prune my tree. Can I leave it until later?

Most pruning to clear the highway is minor and will not damage the tree regardless of the time of year. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 states that pruning is to be carried out between 1st September and 1st February.

Trees and shrubbery should be regularly maintained to within your property boundary.

What will happen if I don't cut my hedge?

It is an offence under the Highways Act 1980 to allow trees, hedges, shrubs and so on to obstruct the highway. The Council will, after an initial formal request, serve a 14 Day Notice on you, the occupier, to cut back the offending vegetation. If you do not comply with the Notice, the Highways authority may carry out the work itself and recover its costs in doing so from you.

Good advice

- Cut back your hedges and trees etc to within your boundary.
- Regularly maintain them so they do not become an obstruction.
- Seek advice if you have any doubts. e.g. if a tree is subject to a preservation order.

“The Highways Authority has a duty to ensure that the highway is not obstructed.”