Tree Wardens: Frequently Asked Questions

For our contact details and further information about tree wardens in West Sussex, visit our website: www.westsussex.gov.uk/treewardens.

What is the Tree Warden Scheme?

The Tree Warden Scheme is an initiative that enables people to play an active role in conserving and enhancing their local trees and woods.

How is the scheme run in West Sussex?

We coordinate the scheme at a county level, providing resources, training, advice and guidance. We have also set up a Tree Warden Steering Group whose members help us develop the scheme in West Sussex. The parish, district, borough, town and city councils appoint tree wardens and work with them for the benefit of the local environment and local community.

How do I become a tree warden?

Contact your parish council or equivalent organisation. If you are appointed as a tree warden, they will inform us and we will send you a membership pack full of useful information and guidance.

Can a parish (or equivalent organisation) have more than one Tree Warden?

Yes. There is no limit on the number of tree wardens.

Do I have to pay for membership?

No, membership is free.

Will I be working on my own?

This depends on the number of tree wardens in your area, the appointing organisation and how you all wish to work. Some tree wardens like to work as a group, whilst others work within different areas of their parish or on different projects, but come together to provide support when needed.

What is the role of a tree warden?

This varies according to the needs of the local area, the tree warden's own interests, and any programme your fellow parish tree wardens may have. Examples include surveying local trees, liaising with and involving the local community, and organising practical activities.

As a tree warden, am I insured?

Yes, once you have been appointed as a tree warden, you will be covered by public liability insurance for the work you are likely to undertake. Contact us for more details.

Is there any practical work such as cutting down trees?

This will depend on the tree warden's own interests, their capabilities and the needs of the local area. As a tree warden, for example, you could survey the

trees in your local area, set up a 'friends of …' woodland group undertaking conservation work or hold a planting project in your local area.

How many hours do I have to volunteer?

Time commitment is not specified and varies according to local needs. It may vary seasonally, with more time needed at certain points in the year, or you may be able to give a couple of hours a week – perhaps combining it with regular daily activities such as walking the dog. Whatever time you feel able to give will then prescribe what you may be able to do.

Do you need any experience to become a tree warden?

A prospective tree warden does not need to be a tree specialist, the main criterion is that they are passionate about trees and their local community. You will be provided with free training as part of the scheme.

Is there any training?

Yes, there is an ongoing training and events programme for the year. Examples are orchard surveying, pests and diseases, trees in parklands, tree law, and planting hedges for food.

How do I get in touch with my local tree warden/who is my local tree warden?

Contact the parish, town or city council or district or borough council as they have details of their current tree wardens. Contact details for the councils in West Sussex are available on our website: www.westsussex.gov.uk.

What powers do tree wardens have?

Only those of an ordinary person - Tree Wardens are there to help and offer information/advice, and cannot legally enforce specified action.

Who or what is the Tree Council?

The Tree Council is the UK's lead tree campaigning partnership, and works with its member organisations, tree wardens and others:

- for more trees, of the right kind, in the right place;
- for better care for all trees, of all ages; and
- to inspire effective action for trees.

Its goal is to make trees matter to everyone – and Tree Wardens are key to achieving this.

*   *   *