# SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

At Chapel Tree Services we endeavour to maximise all opportunities for environmental enhancement while carrying out our business activities. We aim to protect wildlife and habitats, use resources efficiently, reduce waste and minimise any adverse environmental impacts of our activities. We are also committed to continual improvement in our work processes to ensure we find ways to reduce our impact on the environment and improve sustainability. We take our duty of care, under section 34 of the 1990 Environmental Protection Act very seriously and always ensure waste is properly managed and that we work within the guidelines and legislation designed to protect wildlife and habitats.

**Minimizing pollution**

We will ensure reduction of pollution by effectively operating and maintaining vehicles, plant and machinery. These are checked with a weekly check system for each vehicle so any issues that could cause leaks, spills or excess air pollution are identified and fixed immediately. We use bio-chain oil for our chainsaws on environmentally sensitive sites.

We carry fuel spill/pollution kits on all vehicles to ensure we properly deal with any incident on site. Our office building was insulated in 2021 and we fitted new double glazed window units in 2023 to reduce energy consumption for heating. We will be adding solar panels to the roof in 2026 to provide electricity from a sustainable source rather than traditional fossil fuels.

Our vehicles now all comply with the Euro 6 regulation and we are considering trialling an electric vehicle.

**Waste Management**

We recycle 99% of the waste produced by the work we do. All wood chip is taken to an organic farm and used as cattle bedding/for spreading on crops or left on site where garden owners will use it as mulch. Where possible we encourage customers to keep brash on site, stacked in habitat piles to improve biodiversity of woodland and rough areas. Wood is either left for land owner or taken and processed for firewood or biomass.

**Recycling**

Within our staff areas/office/workshop we currently recycle 75% of our waste. Recycling bins are now provided in all staff areas and emptied weekly, along with general waste bins (which now only need employing fortnightly due to reduced rubbish). We recycle all scrap metal, plastic, glass, cardboard, paper, tetra packs, cans at our local recycling centre. Any used oil or contaminated fuel is taken by a local Waste Carrier (Wye Valley group, Rotherwas, Waste Carriers licence BUS721858, Waste management licence number 30391).

**Waste Carriers licence**

Chapel Tree Services holds a waste carriers licence reg no: CBDL56352.

**Wildlife, habitat and tree protection**

When we initially visit any site we will check with the landowners if they are aware of any restrictions i.e. if the site is located in a conservation area or if any trees are subject to a Tree Preservation Order and also if they are aware of any protected species that are present on the site. This will include nesting birds (protected during nesting season from 1st March to 31st August), EPS such as dormice and bats and also badgers (protected by the 1992 Protection of Badgers Act).

If protected species are thought to be present at initial site visit, then we can arrange for an ecologist to assess the site and support us in a plan. This may mean a site inspection is carried out to formally establish if the species is present and working with the correct authorities to apply for a licence if the work must be carried out on the site where the wildlife is present.

If no protected species are thought to be present but during the course of works team members see signs of them, then work will stop until a proper assessment can be carried out. This may mean we cannot cut certain trees or areas. Teams are briefed in ‘tool box talks’ about looking out for signs of wildlife and what to do, particularly in times such as bird nesting season.

Our office team will also carry out a desk based exercise to check the local authority records for any restrictions. If a tree is located in a conservation area or is protected by a TPO, we will carry out a planning application, and tree works will only be carried out when and if planning permission is granted for the works.