

Tree Risk Assessment and Management in Mistley

Trees provide wide benefits to society.

Trees are living organisms that naturally lose branches or fall.

The overall risk to human safety is extremely low.

Tree owners (Mistley Parish Council) has a legal duty of care.

Tree owners should take a balanced and proportionate approach to tree safety management.

In Mistley the Parish owns many trees that it cares for, including along The Walls and Furze Hill Wood.

Managing the risks and maintaining safety is our responsibility. We do that by having regular surveys in busy areas by experts and keeping a close eye on less used paths. Plus responding to parishioners concerns when they see something out of the ordinary. Managing the trees makes them healthier, and us all safer. Some of our trees need to be managed carefully - along The Walls where many people congregate, some less so as the footfall is much lower. Some we have to take special care of, like Old Knobbly and the other ancient oaks.

We do not have any trees that are likely to damage any property.

Managing the risk to your safety:

In areas of high footfall, such as along The Walls, we employ a qualified arborist who will make a yearly assessment of any work that needs doing. This could be removing/replacing a dead tree, raising the crown to promote access and safety, or taking down dead branches. All these works require appropriate planning consent.

In quieter areas such as Furze Hill this would likely be a yearly inspection of the main paths by our Tree Warden, or an extra inspection after a heavy storm.

Tree Planting Policy

Mistley is committed to planting trees wherever possible on its own land and encouraging others to plant as well.

Current proposed planting is on the new field behind the Rugby Club, near to the new Hopkins allotments, filling the gaps on The Walls and including two sites for community orchards.

We recently completed a thinning of the newer oaks in Furze Hill, this will enhance the growth of existing trees and help secure the future survival of the ancient oaks, some of which are 600 years old. We should be looking to do this exercise again in 15 years' time.

The risk of being killed by a tree is approximately 1 in 10m, much less if high wind incidents are excluded.

Hopefully we can all see trees as living beings that benefit our society and improve the air we breathe.

Summary of commitments

Annual Arborist Survey of high footfall areas (The Walls) and action plan agreed and implemented. Any other high footfall or areas with benches to be included.

Annual check of all footpaths through trees to be checked by the Tree Warden, and additionally after heavy storms.

Mistley commits to caring for its trees and planting more where at all possible.

Review Body: Annual Parish Council. Review Period: Annually - May Annual Parish Council. Meeting. Adopted 18/12/23. Last Reviewed 19/05/2025. Next Review Date May 2026.

