

## FORM FOR PROPOSALS FOR DAPTC AGM

To be submitted by 12 noon Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021

NAME OF COUNCIL Wimborne Minster Town Council

Please note that the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) requests this information and careful completion of the form will increase the chances of a proposal being accepted by NALC

1. Please give the motion your Council would like considered at the DAPTC AGM

Whilst the Environment Bill is in Parliament and nearing royal assent, Wimborne Minster Town Council (WMTC) would like to propose that the Government further strengthens the tree protection measures within the Bill. There is a *blanket policy* contained within the Bill to allow the felling of trees for the purposes of carrying out development.

Whilst it might be too late to amend the Environment Bill in its latter stages, the Town Council would like to see the inclusion of enhanced tree protection measures in subsequent legislation (e.g. more stringent protection for trees and hedgerows compared to Tree Protection Order).

2. Please give the reason (as thoroughly as possible) why your Council is submitting this motion.

Trees have a valuable and important role to play in the social, economic, environmental, health and wellbeing aspects of life. They contribute to the rural and urban environment in a variety of ways. This is recognised in the Environment Bill.

As part of the green infrastructure that combines with the grey and blue infrastructure around us, they help connect ecological networks and provide essential ecosystem services. By doing this, trees provide a natural capital and important asset as well as contributing significantly to the aesthetics of an area.

There is growing evidence to suggest that mature, well-established trees store more carbon and so, the presence and retention of these trees is essential to achieving any climate goals. Re-forestation and the planting of young saplings are great things to do for the environment, but they will not offer a significant contribution to the reduction in carbon emissions for two or three decades (little trees do not store much carbon.)

Further to this, younger trees do not offer the range of habitats for wildlife that older trees do. The retention and further provision of habitats is also a major concern along with climate issues and this matter is covered within the Environment Bill.

Enhanced tree protection measures should apply to any mature and healthy tree, not just those with Tree Preservation Orders applied to them.

All Government legislation needs to be consistent in explicitly recognising and protecting the environment.

3. Please state how this issue is affecting parish and town councils in Dorset (with case study evidence please) and try not to duplicate answers from previous questions please.

The town of Wimborne Minster has seen a potential increase in population of approaching 20% in the last six years and this has been at the expense of Greenbelt, the loss of trees and the subsequent reduction in habitats and character of the area. Other Parish and Town Councils will have experienced similar circumstances.

An avenue of significant mature trees on entry to the west of the Town has been unnecessarily lost as a result of new housing development as have numerous TPO'd specimen trees. Tree Preservation Orders do not provide the protection status for mature trees when development is involved.

In addition to this, hedgerows have been removed in anticipation of any development and far in advance of its execution. This also has a detrimental impact on nature and wildlife habitats.

4. If you have information on how this issue is affecting parish and town councils nationally and why this is a national issue please give this and try not to duplicate answers from earlier questions please.

Over 1,900 local governments in 34 countries have made climate emergency declarations (as of June 2021).

The Private Members' Bill on Climate and Ecological Emergency is in the early stages of readings in Parliament with the objectives to ensure that the United Kingdom 'halts and reverses its overall contribution to the degradation and loss of nature'.

The Town Council is also submitting a separate motion that this Bill be supported.

Climate change is inextricably linked to the degradation of nature.

5. If relevant, please tell us exactly what aspect of national parish policy your Council would like NALC to lobby Government on (with case study evidence please).

Recognition of the importance of trees in the natural environment and their role in reducing carbon emissions.

All Government legislation needs to be consistent in explicitly recognising and protecting the environment given the urgent need to reverse climate change.

6. If you have the information, please tell us exactly which part of primary or secondary legislation (or secondary regulation/statutory instrument) your Council would like to be changed as a result of NALC/local lobbying.

All Town and Country Planning Acts, the Highways Act and soon to be Environment Act.

Support to be given to the draft Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill.

7. If relevant, please state what other action your Council would like NALC and its Policy Committee to take if this motion is adopted.

Town and Parish Councils to have a greater say in the decisions by the Local Planning Authorities and Highway Authorities on tree felling.

8. If you have the information, please confirm the names of any other organisation or local council that formally support your Council's motion.

**If you have any supporting documents to be jointly considered with your Council's motion – please e-mail them with this form to DAPTC.**