

## 8. KENWYN AVENUE OAK TREES

<b>Officer responsible</b> Parks Manager	<b>Author</b> Walter Fielding-Cotterell , DDI 371-1630
Corporate Plan Output: Street tree maintenance and felling city wide	

The purpose of this report is to resolve a situation where large oak street trees at the south end of Kenwyn Avenue are causing leaf and twig litter problems to adjacent properties. The matter will be reported to the City Services Committee for a decision.

For some years the Parks Unit has been receiving regular complaints from some residents in Kenwyn Avenue about the large oak trees situated at the south end of the Avenue.

These complaints relate mainly to problems caused by leaf and twig deposits littering the street and adjacent private properties in particular. The residents claim that the leaves fall throughout the summer months as well as the autumn creating major problems of collection and disposal.

The complaints have included requests for the oaks to be “topped” to a height below the level of power lines. Apart from destroying the visual appearance of the trees, “topping” is very detrimental to the long term health of the trees and can significantly reduce a tree’s life expectancy.

As topping is not considered to be an acceptable arboricultural practice the Parks Unit has declined residents request to “top” these particular trees in the past. While we have declined to “top” the trees, we are still prepared to carry out judicious maintenance pruning of the trees to reduce the problems experienced by residents.

The alternative would be to remove the oaks entirely and replant with a smaller growing tree species.

To ascertain the view of the residents, a questionnaire was sent to all the properties in the street.

The residents responded to the questionnaire as follows: -

- *Retain oak trees* 21
- *Remove oak trees and replant with a small species* 7

The majority of residents in the street are therefore in favour of retaining the oak trees.

However, only six of the respondents actually have large oaks directly outside their properties, these residents responded as follows: -

- *Remove oak trees* 4
- *Retain oak trees* 1
- *Failed to respond* 1

The Parks Unit has always been of the opinion that the oaks make a significant contribution to the landscape of Kenwyn Avenue and the immediate locality and should only be removed where individual trees are dead, diseased or dangerous. All the trees in question are currently in a sound and healthy condition.

**Recommendation:** In view of the above considerations, it is recommended that the Board support the retention of the oak trees, and this information be referred to the City Services Committee.

**For discussion.**