

# [Detailed guide: Tree felling: overview](#)

## **Tree felling licence**

It's an offence to fell trees without a licence if an exemption does not apply. Full details are available in the booklet

[Tree felling – getting permission](#)

(PDF, 1.69MB, 8 pages)

Everyone involved in the felling of trees, the owner, agent and timber merchant or contractor must ensure that a licence has been issued before any felling is carried out, unless they are certain that one of the exemptions apply. If there's no licence or other valid permission, or if the wrong trees are felled, anyone involved can be prosecuted.

You're advised to engage with neighbours to make them aware of your tree felling plans.

## **UK Forestry Standard**

The [UK Forestry Standard](#) sets out the UK government's approach to sustainable forestry and woodland management, including standards and requirements, regulations and monitoring, and reporting. It applies to all woodland and woodland operations, regardless of who owns or manages it.

## **Register of Woodland Planting and Tree Felling**

The Forestry Commission's Register of Woodland Planting and Tree Felling gives details of proposed tree felling projects.

You can request more information on tree felling proposals that we're consulting on, and you can submit comments on how the proposals may affect you during the consultation stage.

We also publish details of licences that have been issued.

## **Tree preservation order (TPO)**

When you apply for a tree felling licence, you must inform the Forestry Commission if the trees to be felled are covered by a TPO or are in a conservation area.

A TPO is made by the local planning authority (LPA), usually a local council, to protect specific trees and areas of woodland from deliberate damage and destruction. You can contact your LPA to find out if a TPO applies to your proposed project, or if you're in a Conservation area.

Find out more about when to contact the Forestry Commission about a TPO.

## Woodland management plan

As a woodland owner or manager, you may need to consider creating a detailed woodland management plan that meets the standards and requirements set out in the UK Forestry Standard (see above). Within this plan you can detail long-term tree felling proposals and use the approved plan to apply for a felling licence for up to 10 years.

A woodland management plan will also support your applications for [woodland funding under the Countryside Stewardship \(CS\) scheme](#) and other grant funds as well.

Find out how to write a woodland management plan to support sustainable management of your woodland and apply for funding.

## Environmental information map browsers

The Forestry Commission's Land Information Search (LIS) is a map-based tool that allows you to search for information about land designations or features that might already apply to your land or affect your woodland management proposals. It also shows basic details of approved felling licenses and grant schemes.

Find out more about how to [use the Land Information Search](#).

[Natural England's MAGIC map browser](#) contains a greater range of environmental data and can provide further information on designations and issues that might affect your woodland or woodland management proposals.

## Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI)

Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) are protected by law to conserve their wildlife, habitat or geology. Natural England can help identify if woodland you own or occupy is an SSSI – this is called being designated.

If you're proposing tree felling on or near an SSSI and will need to apply for a felling licence, you should also complete a [Supplementary Notice of Operations \(SNO\)](#) to provide detailed information on how you will protect the SSSI interest while undertaking the tree felling.

Find out [what you can do on or near an SSSI](#), when you'll need consent for an activity and how Natural England and the Forestry Commission help you manage your woodland site of special scientific interest.

## Scheduled monuments

If you plan to carry out work to any trees on a scheduled monument, you may need to obtain scheduled monument consent before you start works. [Find out more about the licence you need](#).

You can use the Forestry Commission's [Land Information Search](#) or Natural England's [MAGIC map](#) to check if a scheduled monument restriction applies to your proposed project.

## **European protected species (EPS)**

An EPS mitigation licence may be required from Natural England under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) if felling operations could adversely affect any EPS.

The majority of felling operations will be able to proceed without a mitigation licence even in the presence of EPS, providing that good practice guidance is followed.

Find out more about European Protected Species (EPS) restrictions in the guide on [how to protect wildlife and habitats and apply for wildlife licences so you can legally operate in woodlands and forests.](#)