SHARLSTON
Parish Council

Green, Open Spaces & Tree Management Policy

PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy and procedure is to set out how Sharlston Parish Council regulates the use of its open spaces.

2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy covers all open spaces managed or maintained by Sharlston Parish Council. Currently these are:

The Common
The Green
Trees included on the Common (see separate list)
2 x Heathers Land
Clifton Road Land

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 To encourage use of the Parish's open spaces whilst ensuring the safety of users and maintaining the beauty, tidiness and utility of the facilities. It is envisaged that the people of Sharlston will have the opportunity to lead longer and healthier lives, via access to a network of well-maintained and appreciated open spaces. The Parish Council wishes to support local and national policy in affording protection for important green spaces by identifying those that the community of the Parish value and wish to see protected. All are open spaces to which the public has access and which the public uses.

4. GENERAL RULES

4.1 Any parcels of land within Sharlston Parish that are managed or maintained by the Parish Council are accessible to the public for community outdoor use or environmental protection.
4.2 Sharlston Parish Council values these community spaces and will enhance and improve them where
possible.
4.3 Sharlston's open spaces welcome all residents and are appropriate for a variety of uses by people of all age groups, abilities and many recreational pursuits.
4.4 Bye-laws, where available, for any open space will be adhered to at all times. Details of bye-laws are published on the Parish website.
4.5 Use of the open space will be free of charge [except in specific circumstances as decided by the Council].
4.6 Open spaces remain public areas and cannot be cordoned off for a private event and will remain open at all times.
4.7 Dog fouling and all litter must be placed in the bins provided or, if cannot be accommodated by the bins, it MUST be removed.

4.8 The flying of Drones from Parish open spaces is NOT permitted. There are to be no fires including BBQs, no motorised bicycles, motorbikes, motorised scooters or vehicles without the express and written permission of the council.
No hard balls.

5. PROCESS
5.1 Residents of Sharlston Parish are encouraged to use the open spaces for recreation and leisure to include sports and picnics and other gatherings.

Neighbourhood (Parish) Plan
Neighbourhood (Parish) Plans can designate areas as local green spaces for special protection. The NPPF (paras 76-79) provides advice in respect of local green spaces, which are identified as green areas of particular importance to local communities. It states that designation as 'Local Green Space' will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land
  It goes on to advise that local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.

The designation of these green spaces is intended to keep the residential areas of Sharlston attractive and healthy places for local residents. It may be that these areas can be used for local events. The green spaces are smaller areas that serve their vicinities and are particularly appreciated by those living close to them.

Local Green / Open Spaces and Development
Unless very special circumstances are clearly established:

- No new buildings or structures shall be erected on any local green space other than (i) the provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation or (ii) memorials, information boards and play equipment that are appropriate to the space concerned.
- No engineering work shall be carried out other than drainage work and limited increase in the number of car-parking spaces and limited roadway improvements.
- Development immediately adjacent to local green space that would result in any harm to its character, setting, accessibility, appearance, general quality or amenity value will not be permitted.

SHARLSTON
Parish Council

The NPPF (para 76) advises that by designating land as Local Green Space, local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. This policy seeks to restrict development to that which would not harm the open character of the parish's important green spaces, unless it would involve essential drainage works, or would otherwise contribute to the use, enjoyment or other community value of these green spaces. Development adjacent to these green spaces which would adversely impact on the green spaces and the reasons for their designation as such, will not be permitted.

Trees

We are fortunate in Sharlston to have plenty of green open space and trees on our doorstep. However, large trees can cause concern to some residents.

Sharlston Parish Council commits to carry out a tree survey every three years (although trees are regularly monitored) on land we manage. We do not manage:

- Trees on the highway verges. These are managed by Wakefield Council.
- Nature reserves, these are privately owned.

We will always retain trees where we can, but our number one priority is public safety. A traffic light system will be used for prioritising tree work:

RED is essential works undertaken within 12 weeks of a job request and includes removing dead and fallen trees and significant deadwood.

AMBER is desirable works undertaken within six months of a job request and includes removing less significant deadwood and branches coming into contact with a property.

GREEN is classified as non-essential. The Council will not fell or prune trees solely for the following reasons: to increase light levels, interference with television/ satellite reception, minor disruption to fences, shed or paths or to alleviate problems caused by falling leaves, sap etc.

Please note: When trees are overhanging your property from land managed by the Council, you should cut the branches back to your boundary and place the branches over the fence. Our contractors are not able to enter your property to do this for you.

Policy first adopted by Sharlston Parish Council on 1st February 2021

Policy reviewed on 2nd February 2026

Signed: *Cllr P Belbin* *E King*
Chairman Clerk