

REPORT SUBJECT:	<i>South Bucks District Council – TPO Statistics and prosecutions</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Cllr John Read - Portfolio holder for Planning and Economic Development</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Mark Jaggard – Head of Planning and Economic Development</i>
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WARD(S) AFFECTED	<i>Report applies to whole district</i>

1. Purpose of Report

This report sets out the volume of complaints received by Planning Enforcement in relation to alleged unauthorised works to TPO trees and details of any subsequent legal actions taken.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note the volume, process and outcome of cases investigated.

2. Executive Summary

Due to the manner in which planning enforcement cases have been historically logged on the database, specific case information and case numbers beyond 5 years is difficult to extract at this present time. The content of this report therefore predominantly refers to data over the past 5 years unless it states otherwise.

Within that 5 year period, the South Bucks District Council has received and investigated 62 allegations of unauthorised works to trees. These cases include alleged unauthorised works to TPO trees, trees in Conservations Areas, Protected Woodlands and Hedgerows.

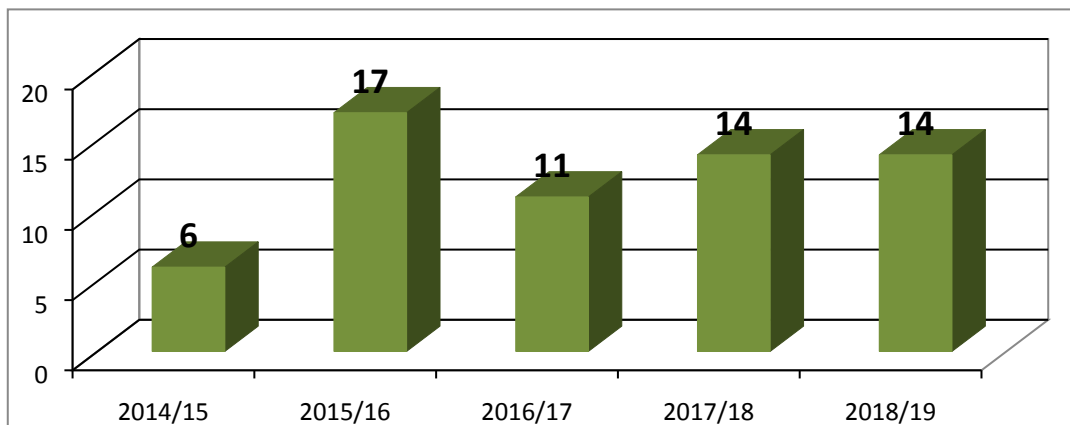
Of those 62 allegations 0 cases were pursued to legal action.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

The allegations of unauthorised tree works received over the past 5 years have been investigated and expertly assessed accordingly with an appropriate decision made taking into account the expediency, appropriateness and justification of further formal action.

4. Key points to note:

The chart below provides information on the volume of allegations received and logged per year on the database over the past 5 years.



Members should note that all allegations of unauthorised tree works are investigated by Officers in the Planning Enforcement team with expert advice provided by the Councils Tree Officers.

When considering formal enforcement action, Officers take into consideration the likely outcome of an application for the work undertaken, should an application have been submitted prior to works to the tree. In all the alleged tree cases investigated over the past 5 years the matters have been closed without formal action. Data about the specific reasons for closure is also not easily obtainable by these reasons include '*no breach occurring*', '*works approved by a permission*' and '*not expedient to pursue action*'.

Whilst there have been no legal actions pursued in relation to Trees in at least the last 5 years, members should note that the process for closing the allegations required (where appropriate) the matters to be investigated and expertly assessed and a decision made accordingly.

Going forward, allegations of tree works will continue to be investigated by planning enforcement officers with expert advice provided by the Council Tree Officer as to the appropriateness of the works undertaken. Inappropriate and unacceptable works will be pursued accordingly.

5. Options

Not applicable.

6. Corporate Implications

Not applicable

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

Not applicable

9. Next Step

Once approved, this report and appendices will be published on the website.

Background Papers:	N/A
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