Broomfield Parish Council

Dear Councillors

You are summoned to attend the **Environment Committee Meeting** of Broomfield Parish Council to be held on **Wednesday 21st October 2026 at 6.00pm** at Broomfield Village Hall for the transaction of business as set out below. Press and public are warmly invited to attend. Meeting packs for this agenda are available on the website www.broomfield-pc.gov.uk

Abi Wood, Clerk to the Council

Agenda

EC26/070 **To receive and approve apologies for absence**

EC26/071 **To receive Councillors declarations of interests and dispensation requests**

EC26/072 **To approve the minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 16th September 2026**

EC26/073 **Public Participation session**
The session will last for 15 minutes, and the time will be distributed between those wishing to speak.

EC26/074 **To discuss the 2027 NALC Climate Response of the Year Award (Cllr Bleet)**

EC26/075 **Green spaces in the parish**
a) To discuss the Oak Processionary moth issue in Essex
b) To discuss the Local Nature Recover Strategy webinar feedback (RCCE)

EC26/076 **Angel Meadow and surroundings**
a) To receive an update on the Pétanque and Pickle Ball project

EC26/077 **Church Green**
a) To receive a report on the War Memorial course attended by Mrs Hance

EC26/078 **Centenary Wood**
a) To discuss the installation of additional wildlife signage

EC26/079 **Allotment site and Association**
a) To receive any updates

EC26/080 **Environment Enhancement**
a) To receive a report on the dry garden course attended by Mrs Hance
b) To discuss bulb planting in the village

EC26/081 **To consider items for the budget for 2027/28**

EC26/082 **Items for inclusion in the next agenda**

EC26/083 **Chair to close the meeting**
The next Environment Committee meeting is on Wednesday 18th November 2026 at 6.00pm

Date of summons 15 October 2026

Broomfield Parish Council

Minutes of the Environment Committee meeting of Broomfield Parish Council held in Broomfield Village Hall on Wednesday 16th September 2026 at 6.00 p.m.

Members in attendance	A Faulds, M Bleet, G Garfield, C Taylor, D Howell (arrived 6.23pm), G Scott, N Kiddier
Members not in attendance	S Boreham
Others in attendance	A Wood, Clerk and RFO D Hance, Events and Fundraising Manager 1 member of the public

EC26/070 **To receive apologies for absence**
None were received.

EC26/071 **To receive Councillors declarations of interests and dispensations requests**
None were presented.

EC26/072 **To approve the minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 15th July 2026**
The minutes were approved and signed by Cllr Faulds as a correct record.
Proposed: Cllr Faulds
Seconded: Cllr Garfield
All Agreed.

EC26/073 **Public Participation session**
A resident requested an update on various matters raised in April. These were provided to him.

EC26/074 **Make Space for Girls Project**
Mrs Hance reported that the recent RoSPA report highlighted sharp edges on the pergola which have now been sanded. A branded planter has been purchased by Chelmsford City Council and will be installed in the next month. It is hoped that the official opening ceremony can then take place.

EC26/075 **Green Spaces in the parish**

a) **To discuss the invitation from RCCE to join the Community Led Environmental Action initiative**
It was agreed that members attend the advertised webinar to consider the possible level of council involvement, and this will be added to the October agenda for further discussion. Clerk to contact RCCE and obtain the link.
Cllr Howell arrived at this point.

EC26/076 **Angel Meadow and Surroundings**

a) **To consider the quote for Wildflower work in David Smith Memorial Field**
It was **RESOLVED that JCM be instructed to undertake this work at a cost of £2900+VAT.** The funds would come from Environmental Enhancement and Broomfield Times budgets. Clerk to progress.
Proposed: Cllr Bleet
Seconded: Cllr Kiddier
All agreed

b) **To receive an update on the Pétanque and Pickle Ball project**
Mrs Hance provided an update on the project and asked for the committee's permission to apply for grants for these facilities. It was **RESOLVED to grant permission on the basis that this be brought to full council if the application is successful.**
Proposed: Cllr Taylor
Seconded: Cllr Faulds
All agreed

EC26/077 **Church Green update**
Information was shared regarding the memorial soldiers and grass cutting before Remembrance Sunday.

EC26/078 **Centenary Wood**

a) It **RESOLVED that 9 hazel hurdles are purchased** for Centenary Wood at a cost of £47.99 each. Funds to come from the Village Events budget
Proposed: Cllr Faulds
Seconded: Cllr Scott
All agreed

b) A general discussion on projects for the wood took place and these will be included in next years budget. The Village Attendant will be asked to drill bug holes in tree stakes and dead trees when appropriate.

EC26/079 **Allotment site and Association**
Mrs Hance provided a report on the allotments.

EC26/080 **Environmental Enhancement**
The Clerk was asked to report overgrown hedges between Mill Lane bus stop and the library, along with the Chelmer cycle path near the school. Councillors are to provide photos of the sites so they can be submitted with the request.

EC26/081 **Items for inclusion in the next agenda**

- RCCE Community Led Environmental Action Initiative
- Bulb planting
- Pétanque and Pickle Ball project

EC26/082 **Chair to close the meeting**
Cllr Faulds closed the meeting at 7.26pm
The next Environment Committee meeting is on Wednesday 21st October at 6.00pm

Identifying OPM

1. They live almost exclusively in oak trees, which are identifiable by their distinctive leaves.
2. They move in nose-to-tail processions, in oak trees or on the ground, hence their name.
3. They often cluster together.
4. They build white, silken webbing trails and nests – usually dome or teardrop-shaped – on oak trunks and branches (not among the leaves).
5. The nests soon become discoloured.











If you see nests or caterpillars:

- Follow the advice in this leaflet for staying safe.
- Report it using our Tree Alert on-line reporting form at treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk; or
- e-mail it to opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk, or telephone it to 0300 067 4442.
- When submitting a report, please include photographs and location details.

But first, please:

- CHECK that they're in or near an oak tree – OPM caterpillars usually only attack other trees if they run out of oak leaves to eat.

For further information

For OPM tools and resources, visit **www.gov.uk/guidance/managing-oak-processionary-moth-in-england**

Tel: **0300 067 4442**
E-mail: **opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk**

Health information is available from NHS Choices at **nhs.uk/conditions/insect-bites-and-stings**

The Forestry Commission will consider all requests to make the content of publications available in alternative formats. Please **call 0300 067 4000**.

For more information on tree pests and diseases, visit **gov.uk/government/collections/tree-pests-and-diseases**

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Forestry Commission

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

Information for the public



www.gov.uk/guidance/managing-oak-processionary-moth-in-england

Key facts

Caterpillars of the oak processionary moth (OPM) are a pest which can be a hazard to the health of oak trees, people and animals in this area.

Their tiny hairs can be blown about by the wind and cause itchy skin rashes, eye and throat irritations and, occasionally, breathing difficulties in people and animals.

The caterpillars eat oak leaves. Large numbers can strip whole trees bare, leaving them vulnerable to other threats.

OPM is a native species of southern Europe which was accidentally introduced to England.

Left uncontrolled, it would spread across much of Britain.

Our precious oak trees could be at risk, people could be deterred from visiting or working in woodlands, animals could be exposed to suffering, and control could become prohibitively expensive.

The Forestry Commission, local authorities and landowners are working hard to control this pest so that we can continue to safely enjoy our parks, gardens and woodlands. You can help by reporting signs of OPM to us. See the section headed **'If you see nests or caterpillars'** overleaf for reporting details.

Human and animal health


Henry Kuppen

The caterpillars have thousands of tiny hairs which contain an irritating substance called **thaumetopoein**. Contact with the hairs can cause itching skin rashes and, less commonly, sore throats, breathing difficulties and eye irritations.

Controlling OPM

Caterpillars start emerging in April from eggs laid in oak trees the previous summer. The most effective control method is to treat affected oak trees with insecticide during the spring and summer while the caterpillars are about.

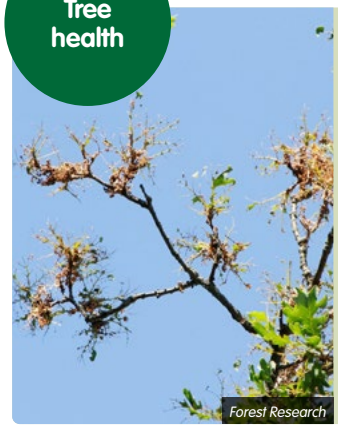
With careful timing and application, the treatment products have minimal effects on other species. The preferred product is not known to harm people, pets, livestock and other animals. Most spraying is done from the ground and is supplemented by removing caterpillars' nests. This is most effectively done with vacuum equipment when the caterpillars are inside them resting or pupating into adult moths.

Infested trees are found by professional and volunteer surveyors, tree- and ground-care professionals, and members of the public reporting sightings. We use pheromone trapping in late summer to find adult moths, which provides clues to where we should look the following year.



OPM gets its name from the caterpillars' habit of moving in nose-to-tail processions, as in this picture.

Tree health


Forest Research

OPM caterpillars can be a hazard to oak trees because they feed on the leaves. Large populations can strip trees bare, leaving them vulnerable to other pests and diseases, and less able to withstand events such as drought and flood.

Protecting yourself

KNOW HOW to recognise oak trees, caterpillars, and their nests and trails (see pictures overleaf);

KEEP AWAY from caterpillars and nests.

TEACH your children to keep away.

KEEP your pets away. Caterpillars and nests can be on the ground, and animals can suffer considerable distress from hairs in their mouths and noses.

DO NOT try removing nests or caterpillars yourself – report them to the Forestry Commission (see next page), and visit **www.gov.uk/guidance/managing-oak-processionary-moth-in-england** for guidance.

SEE A PHARMACIST if you need relief from a skin or eye irritation following possible OPM contact.

SEE A GP or consult NHS111 if you have a serious allergic reaction.

CONTACT A VET if your pet has been affected.

Further health advice is available at **nhs.uk/conditions/insect-bites-and-stings**

The greatest risk period is June to August, but nests should always be avoided because they can contain thousands of shed hairs.

Guidance

Managing oak processionary moth in England

Information on oak processionary moth (OPM) for those who own or manage oak trees, including private tree and woodland owners as well as local authorities.

From: **Forestry Commission (/government/organisations/forestry-commission)**

Published: 14 January 2022

Last updated: 13 August 2026 —

Applies to England

Guidance for Northern Ireland (https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/forestry/forestry-and-environment)

Guidance for Scotland (https://forestry.gov.scot/)

Guidance for Wales (https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/forestry?lang=en)

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Oak processionary moth (OPM) (Thaumetopoea processionea) is regulated as a quarantine pest known to be present in Great Britain. As a quarantine pest, it is under official control measures and cannot be introduced, moved, multiplied or released without prior authorisation.

If you own or manage oak trees, use this guide to identify and survey the OPM caterpillars and nests. If you find a nest or caterpillars, you must report it immediately via TreeAlert (https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/tree-alert/).

This guide details information on government management of OPM, and restrictions on the trade and movement of oak trees.

If you have oak trees on your land, or you work on oak trees, read how to plan and manage risks from OPM (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/oak-processionary-moth-plan-and-manage-risks). You should also refer to:

- Moving large oak trees within the OPM management zones (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moving-large-oak-trees-within-the-oak-processionary-moth-opm-management-zones)
- Updated management zones for oak processionary moth, March 2024



OPM caterpillars processioning up an oak tree trunk. Credit: Henry Kuppen

What is OPM?

The caterpillars of OPM infest oak trees. They eat the leaves, which weakens the tree and leaves it vulnerable to other threats.

The nests and caterpillars are also a hazard to human and animal health.

OPM was first identified in London in 2006 and spread to some surrounding counties in south east England. See the latest distribution map (https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c647b00b75d34647aeb5a9d07eca9785) and check the OPM management zones map with exclusion zone (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a7ca37874a4fffff664d0cc/2024_zones_with_10km_exclusion_zone.pdf) (PDF, 334 KB, 1 page) to see which management zone your trees are in.

The moths spread by flying from one tree to the next. Usually staying close to the tree they originated from.

How to identify OPM

Caterpillars

The caterpillars have black heads and grey bodies covered in long white hairs. See these example OPM caterpillar images (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/620fbbb5d3bf7f4f01909307/OPM_caterpillar_pictures.pdf) (PDF, 358 KB, 1 page).



An army of OPM caterpillars huddled on an oak leaf.

The caterpillars are about 2mm long when they emerge in spring, and tend to remain high in the trees until they are older and larger. When they reach 1cm long they develop the irritating hairs. They're fully grown at 2cm long.

They usually move nose-to-tail in a procession, like their name suggests. You may be able to see them on all parts of the tree, on the trunk, branches and leaves, and occasionally on the ground.

Nests

Nests are usually found in early summer, in the trunks and branches of oak trees. A tree or branch can contain many nests. They can appear at any height, from the ground to the top of the tree.

You are unlikely to find nests on any other tree or shrub species, fences, walls or other similar structures (apart from structures supporting the tree).

They are typically dome or teardrop-shaped, and range from the size of a golf ball to a rugby ball. When fresh, the nests are white with white silken trails made by the caterpillars along the branches and leaves. But the nests soon become discoloured and brown, making them harder to spot.

Nests stay attached to the tree for many months after the adult moths have emerged.



A white and fluffy OPM nest on an oak tree branch.

When to look for OPM

Late spring and early summer are the best times to spot OPM caterpillars and their new nests in your oak trees. You can look for evidence of OPM from the ground. Check the tree from several angles. Using binoculars for this is recommended.

Spring and summer

The OPM caterpillars emerge from late March to May. They'll move down trees as they get older and bigger and build nests.

Look for new nests in late spring and early summer when the caterpillars are active. Focus on the branches and trunks at all heights, and the ground for fallen nests later in the summer and into autumn.

From late June to early August, the caterpillars retreat into the nests and form a pupa (cocoon). The pupae remain in the nests until they emerge as adult moths.

Autumn and winter

You can find used nests at any time of year, but they are easiest to spot in winter when there are no leaves on the oak tree or on the ground.

Species commonly confused with OPM

We often receive reports of caterpillars that are not OPM.

Check the guide species commonly confused with OPM (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66b603b949b9c0597fdb0d8f/FC_Poster_Oak_processionary_moth_web.pdf) (PDF, 9.23 MB, 1 page) for distinguishing between OPM caterpillars and other species before reporting a sighting.

How to report sightings of OPM

Report sightings of OPM via:

- TreeAlert (https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/reports/oak-processionary-moth) (preferred)
- email opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk

Find out what to include in your OPM report on the OPM resource hub (https://opmhub.fera.co.uk/).

We may issue a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) asking you to take action.

We'll take charge of treating infested trees in the buffer zone and the area free from the pest. You can view these areas on the management zones map with exclusion zone (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a7ca37874a4fffff664d0cc/2024_zones_with_10km_exclusion_zone.pdf) (PDF, 334 KB, 1 page).

> Removing nests and caterpillars is a hazardous operation. We recommend that a professional does this work. Find an OPM management professional at the Arboricultural Association (https://www.trees.org.uk/News-Blog/Latest-News/Oak-Processionary-Moth-Management-Specialists).

Risks of OPM

Do not touch or get close to the caterpillars or nests.

OPM caterpillars and nests affect the health of people and animals, as they contain hairs which can cause itchy rashes, eye and throat irritations and occasionally breathing difficulties in both people and animals.

In rare cases the hairs may cause an allergic reaction. You can become sensitised by repeated exposure to the hairs, worsening your symptoms.

People or animals can come into contact with OPM hairs when they brush past an infested oak tree or if the hairs are blown onto them by the wind from nearby infested trees.

Animals can get hairs on their paws, and hairs can also get into their mouth and nose by sniffing, licking and picking up caterpillars or nests. Livestock and horses can come into contact with hairs on the grass or other plants they eat, and by grazing close to a fallen nest.

The greatest risk is between May to July when the caterpillars are active. The risk is possible at any time of year due to residual hairs from old nests.

Read the Oak processionary moth – public information leaflet (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6278d2a98fa8f5206c75d3ed/FC_OPMoth_Leaflet.pdf) (PDF, 469 KB, 2 pages) for more safety information and details on identification and control of OPM.

Reduce risk to people and animals

Make sure you, and people or animals in your care, do not touch or go near nests or caterpillars.

If you work on or close to oak trees in the affected areas, you need to take care and use protective measures, such as personal protective equipment (PPE). Read the guide on how to plan and manage risk of OPM (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/oak-processionary-moth-plan-and-manage-risks) for more information on controlling it and the PPE you need.

What to do if exposed

If you or someone in your care has a serious allergic reaction, get medical help. For less severe reactions, a pharmacist can provide advice on relief from skin or eye irritations. Get further advice from the NHS website (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/insect-bites-and-stings/treatment/).

If an animal in your care is seriously affected, get advice from a vet. Read more at Blue Cross for pets (https://www.bluecross.org.uk/pet-advice/dogs-and-toxic-oak-processionary-moth-caterpillars).

Tell the medical professional or vet you suspect it is due to OPM contact.

You should report OPM via TreeAlert (https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/reports/oak-processionary-moth), and let your neighbours who have oak trees know that they might also have an OPM infestation.

Management in the OPM zones/areas

Zone/area boundaries were introduced to help landowners and authorities manage OPM. Management actions vary depending on location.

Firstly, check what zone/area your site is in, then check what management steps you need to take depending on the zone/area. Check your area by opening the:

- management zones map with exclusion zone (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a7ca37874a4fffff664d0cc/2024_zones_with_10km_exclusion_zone.pdf) (PDF, 334 KB, 1 page)
- Forestry Commission interactive map (https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c647b00b75d34647aeb5a9d07eca9785)
- list of postcodes in the OPM management zones (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/667d4005aec8650b100900c5/Postcodes_in_OPM_Management_Zones_2024.ods) (ODS, 2.25 MB)

It's also important to check the list of local authorities and wards (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e4d1038fa8f50512948cd7/Oak_Processionary_Moth_Local_Authority_list_GOV_UK_06_February_2023.odt) (ODT, 62.6 KB) that fall into the buffer zone and established area. Some wards may be included in the management zones, but not the entire local authority area.

Area free from the pest

This area is officially designated free from the pest and covers most of the country. In this area government funds an extensive programme of surveillance to monitor for OPM.

If OPM is found in the area free from the pest, the government will take robust actions to eradicate it.

Buffer zone

This area has an annual OPM programme of surveillance and control led by the Forestry Commission. This programme involves detecting the pest and treating infested oak trees and trees in close proximity.

If you own an infested oak tree in the buffer zone, you may be issued with an SPHN asking you to take action. You could get support from the Forestry Commission for treatment of trees within this zone. The SPHN will explain what action is needed.

Exclusion zone

The buffer zone includes an exclusion zone. The exclusion zone is a 10km wide strip on the outer ring of the buffer zone where additional movement restrictions apply.

OPM ‘established area’

This is the area where OPM is known to be present (established) in the south east of England.

Landowners are responsible for the management of OPM on their land. Read about management options, including management plan templates, on the OPM hub (https://opmhub.fera.co.uk/).

If you own infested oak in this area you should find a professional on the Arboricultural Association website (https://www.trees.org.uk/News-Blog/Latest-News/Oak-Processionary-Moth-Management-Specialists) to treat and remove any hazardous nest material, if necessary. You should still check for OPM every year.

Restrictions on trade and movement of oak trees

Imports of oak trees

To protect the country against OPM through movement and imports, OPM is regulated as a quarantine pest and legislation is in place to protect oak trees against the pest.

> No imports of oak trees from outside the EU are currently permitted.

The legislation requires that imports into Great Britain from EU countries can only take place if the oak trees have been grown throughout their life:

- in places of production in countries in which OPM is not known to occur
- in a Pest Free Area for OPM, established by the national plant protection organisation in accordance with ISPM number 4

- in a site with complete physical protection against the introduction of OPM and has been inspected at appropriate times and found to be OPM free

The legislation applies to oak trees (Quercus L), with a girth (circumference) at 1.2m above the root collar of 8cm (2.55cm diameter approx.) or more as these trees represent the greatest likelihood of introducing OPM.

Movement of oak trees in Great Britain

Restrictions on moving large oak trees (Quercus L), with a girth (circumference) at 1.2m above the root collar of 8cm (2.55cm diameter approx.) in Great Britain vary dependent on what OPM management zone the trees are in.

The Great Britain OPM management zones map with exclusion zone (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a7ca37874a4fffff664d0cc/2024_zones_with_10km_exclusion_zone.pdf) (PDF, 334 KB, 1 page) was updated for the start of the OPM 2024 season. You can also see a list of local authorities and wards (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63e4d1038fa8f50512948cd7/Oak_Processionary_Moth_Local_Authority_list_GOV_UK_06_February_2023.odt) (ODT, 62.6 KB) that fall into the buffer zone and established area.

To see what zone the large oak trees you want to move are in, and what zone they would be moved to, you can use the Forestry Commission interactive map (https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c647b00b75d34647aeb5a9d07eca9785) or download the full list of postcodes in the OPM management zones (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/667d4005aec8650b100900c5/Postcodes_in_OPM_Management_Zones_2024.ods) (ODS, 2.25 MB) (buffer zone, established area and 10km exclusion zone).

Legislation came into force on 24 May 2023 that establishes a demarcated area and enables a risk-based approach to moving large oak trees within the buffer zone and established area.

This is summarised in the guide: Moving large oak trees within the oak processionary moth (OPM) management zones (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moving-large-oak-trees-within-the-oak-processionary-moth-opm-management-zones).

You can also watch our video which explains the policy changes (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmyGbL-SMvo).

Professional operators growing or moving large oak trees who are impacted by the movement restrictions should consult with their local plant health inspector or the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate

(https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/animal-and-plant-health-agency/about/access-and-opening#plant-health--seeds-inspectorate) for further advice.

Moving large oak trees from the area free from the pest

Large oak trees in the area free from the pest can move anywhere in Great Britain.

Moving large oak trees into the area free from the pest

Movement of large oak trees from the buffer zone or established area into the area free from the pest is prohibited unless they have been grown throughout their life in a site with complete physical protection against the introduction of OPM and have been inspected at appropriate times and found to be free.

Moving large oak trees within the buffer zone and established area

No movement of large oak trees are permitted from the established area into the buffer zone.

No movement of large oak trees are allowed from the established area or buffer zone into a 10km exclusion zone at the outer edge of the buffer zone boundary to protect the area free from the pest see: management zones map with exclusion zone (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a7ca37874a4fffff664d0cc/2024_zones_with_10km_exclusion_zone.pdf) (PDF, 334 KB, 1 page) or download the full list of postcodes in the OPM management zones (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/667d4005aec8650b100900c5/Postcodes_in_OPM_Management_Zones_2024.ods) (ODS, 2.25 MB) (buffer zone, established area and 10km exclusion zone).

Large oak trees can be moved by professional operators within the established area, or into the established area from the buffer zone, provided the following 2 biosecurity requirements are met:

1. Biosecurity competence: professional operators must demonstrate that they meet the Plant Health Management Standard (https://planthealthy.org.uk/resource-topics/sector-guidance-documents), evidenced through membership of the Plant Healthy Certification Scheme (https://planthealthy.org.uk/) or provision of a Ready to Plant (https://readytoplant.fera.co.uk/) approval from Fera Science Ltd for each consignment to be moved, as well as evidence of ongoing on-site monitoring for OPM and inspection of trees for OPM prior to movement.

2. Official inspections: professional operators must keep accurate records of the contact details of those receiving large oak trees, including the delivery address and contact details, and store this information for a minimum of 3 years to ensure traceability of movements. This information can be recorded using the Post planting inspections form (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/642d97bbddf8ad000cac0eb2/Post-Planting_Inspections_form_2023.xlsx) (MS Excel Spreadsheet, 50.2 KB).

Large oak trees can be moved within the buffer zone if they meet an additional 2 biosecurity requirements. These are:

1. Applying phytosanitary treatments: professional operators must have a robust control regime in place with appropriate application of phytosanitary treatments in line with Defra's technical guidance on the application of Plant Protection Products for phytosanitary treatment of OPM (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/phytosanitary-treatment-of-oak-processionary-moth). Registration is required for professional users of plant protection products under the Official Control (plant protection products) Regulations. Records of all treatment applications must be kept for a minimum of 3 years.
2. Post planting inspections: a proportion of high-risk large oak movements within the buffer zone will be subject to post-planting inspections by the plant health inspectors. Therefore, professional operators must disclose the potential for post-planting inspection as part of the new legislation to buyers at the time of purchase.

The biosecurity requirements do not apply if the large oak trees are in transit for less than 48 hours before moving to the final planting site. You must still record the final destination of the large oak trees for tracing purposes.

The biosecurity requirements also do not apply if the large oak trees you want to move have been grown throughout their entire life with complete physical protection against the introduction of OPM and have been inspected at appropriate times and found to be free.

Handling 'oak material' in OPM affected areas

Oak material is material arising from tree works, or cut branches. This excludes movement of live oak trees.

OPM-affected oak material should be carefully handled to avoid further distribution of the pest:

- it is important that before starting work on any oak tree in the OPM affected areas you visually assess it to determine whether OPM is present

- smaller oak material, such as branch and brash wood, is most likely to harbour OPM eggs, this must not be moved outside the area of OPM infestation unless absolutely necessary. It should be retained on site if possible for example as wood chip
- larger oak material, such as logs are more likely to have OPM nests attached, they pose less risk of spreading OPM but could be a risk to those working on the oak tree
- if arisings from a tree are to be moved outside the known area of OPM infestation, all small material must be thoroughly chipped on site before being moved to an approved incinerator
- oak material being transported must be contained within an enclosed vehicle which prevents any material from escaping. The transporting vehicle must be washed down afterwards in a designated area with provision for preventing washings from entering any watercourse
- storage of affected oak material before transport to an incineration or processing plant must last as short a period as possible

Funding and support for oak with OPM

The following schemes are for those within the OPM established area.

Find out if you're within the established area on the latest OPM distribution map (https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c647b00b75d34647aeb5a9d07eca9785).

Tree Health Pilot (local authorities only)

The Tree Health Pilot scheme offers a local authority grant for oak with OPM (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-health-pilot-scheme-2024/grants-for-oak-with-oak-processionary-moth-opm). It supports local authorities in the OPM established area to organise surveying of oak trees for OPM and create an OPM management plan and communications strategy to understand the risks and appropriate management of the affected area.

The grant also offers funding for communications materials, such as leaflets and signage and biosecurity items including boot cleaning equipment and red tape/posts for cordoning off areas.

Read the Tree Health Pilot case study (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-health-pilot-case-study-haringey-council) and learn how Haringey Council used funding from the scheme for proactive management of the pest.

Private residents' scheme (currently closed)

This funding supported the cost of treatment of a small number of oak trees. To be eligible, you must:

- live in the OPM established area
- live in a residential property, such as a house or flat, as a private resident
- have 4 or fewer oak trees, at least 2m tall, in your garden

The grant helps to fund the spraying of trees in spring as part of the government's wider control programme. Forestry Commission control contractors arrange and carry out the spraying.

This offer closed on 30 January 2026.

Apply for a grant as a group
If you, someone you know, or an organisation are interested in applying to lead a group application, email thpilotenquiries@forestrycommission.gov.uk.

Specialist advice is available to help you with your application and to advise on managing oak trees with OPM, the risks they pose, and any related questions you may have. Experience of working with and knowledge of the pest may be helpful, but is not necessary.

Further information about OPM

Read OPM: plan and manage risks (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/oak-processionary-moth-plan-and-manage-risks).

Read the Tree Council guidance (https://treecouncil.org.uk/science-and-research/oak-processionary-moth/) for local authorities and larger landowners on preparing an action plan to manage OPM.

Protected sites

If your site is subject to a designation such as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), or might contain European Protected Species, additional rules apply.

Read guidance from Natural England (https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england).

Latest resources:

- Tree Health Pilot case study (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-health-pilot-case-study-haringey-council)
- management zones map with exclusion zone (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a7ca37874a4fffff664d0cc/2024_zones_with_10km_exclusion_zone.pdf) (PDF, 334 KB, 1 page)
- latest OPM distribution map (https://forestry.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c647b00b75d34647aeb5a9d07eca9785)
- Moving large oak trees within the OPM management zones (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/moving-large-oak-trees-within-the-oak-processionary-moth-opm-management-zones)
- OPM caterpillar images (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/620fbbb5d3bf7f4f01909307/OPM_caterpillar_pictures.pdf) (PDF, 358 KB, 1 page)
- species commonly confused with OPM (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66b603b949b9c0597fdb0d8f/FC_Poster_Oak_processionary_moth_web.pdf) (PDF, 9.23 MB, 1 page)
- Oak processionary moth – public information leaflet (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6278d2a98fa8f5206c75d3ed/FC_OPMoth_Leaflet.pdf) (PDF, 469 KB, 2 pages)
- Sign up to Plant Health Forestry News for OPM updates (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sign-up-for-updates-from-the-forestry-commission#sign-up-to-plant-health-forestry-news)
- the OPM information hub (https://opmhub.fera.co.uk/) has tools to help manage OPM including how to develop an OPM management plan, general information and advice, and an interactive map showing where OPM is present

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7th September 2026

Dear Chair and Clerk

Community Led Environmental Action

The Rural Community Council of Essex has been awarded a grant by the National Lottery Fund under the 'Awards for All' programme to provide support to Parish and Town Councils for Community Led Environmental Action. We have also secured some funding from Essex County Council, specifically to support parish level Local Nature Recovery Plans.

The Community Led Environmental Action initiative is being led by Nicky Joshua, a former Chartered Landscape Architect. Nicky has been with RCCE since March 2024 and has primarily supported parishes to create Neighbourhood Plans. Nicky will continue to support neighbourhood planning as well as delivering this new initiative to support environmental action, which will include the following:

- **A Nature Recovery Action Plan for your parish** - support to undertake an appropriate level habitat survey, familiarisation with the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), facilitation of community workshops, attendance at key working group meetings, email and telephone advice and signposting to information, support with grant funding applications to enable projects to be realised.

- **Resources** to enable you to identify opportunities for local nature recovery, including guidance notes for different types of environmental improvement project, potential sources of funding to deliver projects, and connections to organisations and experts to support and guide you.

- An open invitation to join the **Environmental Collaboration Essex** (ECE) monthly networking webinars. This will give you access to a range of presentations across a variety of environmental topics throughout the year. Hear what other parishes and groups have been up to, and have access to the ECE Hylo messaging board that is regularly updated with news and events as well as providing a platform to ask questions and look for support from other members.

- **Nature Discovery Days** in collaboration with Essex Local Nature Partnership's Community Group, visiting environmental improvement projects across the county to provide inspiration. Discovery Days already organised include trips to Wildfell Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Bank and Brightlingsea Nature Network. Future ones in the pipeline include Wooded Dams to control the flow of flood waters within rural areas and the restoration of Chalk Streams.
- We are hoping to be able to offer **Free access to an online GIS mapping** software with additional Essex LNRS data layers **for one year**. This would be a fantastic opportunity for you to try this well established and nationally available mapping service for yourselves for the year if you don't already use it. Free training will be available to use the software for all of the standard tools and layers and also for those specific ECC LNRS layers that will be imported especially for this programme. These additional layers of information will support you in understanding what you have in terms of habitats, enable you to work with landowners, develop projects to enhance, increase and connect natural habitats in your parish and to deliver the aims of the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The additional functionality for this project will also enable you to share specific layers with neighbouring parishes and with District and County Councils so that data is captured and shared to relevant stakeholders and not lost.

If your parish council would like to receive RCCE support for Community Led Environmental Action under this initiative, **please complete and return the Expression of Interest Form** to enable us to plan our work.

It is important to stress the 'community led' element of this initiative, and that by registering your wish to be supported, your council is also committing to devoting some time resource to this work. Depending on the level of response to the EOI, we may also ask for a contribution towards the costs of expert ecological studies as the amount included within our available funding is limited; our RCCE staff time is fully covered and therefore free to parishes but limited to 2 days a week in total.

We will be hosting a Webinar on **Monday 19th October at 7pm** to provide more details about this initiative and to answer any questions. This will be repeated on **Thursday 22nd October at 2pm**. The recording of the presentation will be available on our website in due course. The webinar is open to clerks, councillors and members of your community should you wish to involve others who may be interested. **Please email: enquiries@essexrcc.org.uk with the name and email address of those who wish to attend, stating preferred date.** A link to the webinar will be sent out to those registered in due course.

We have created an Environmental Action page on the RCCE website which will host information and resources related to this initiative. In the meantime, if you would like any further information please email nicky.joshua@essexrcc.org.uk

Yours sincerely,



Nick Shuttleworth, Executive Director