

[kent.gov.uk/highways](http://kent.gov.uk/highways)  
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This leaflet is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages.



Cutting back vegetation  
**on bus routes**  
your duty of care

Buses are an important part of Kent's transport network. Under the Highways Act, property owners have a responsibility to keep vegetation on their property under control, to ensure safe passageway for buses and other vehicles.

## Vegetation cutback requirements

There should be a **minimum clearance height of 5.2m (17ft)** above the road

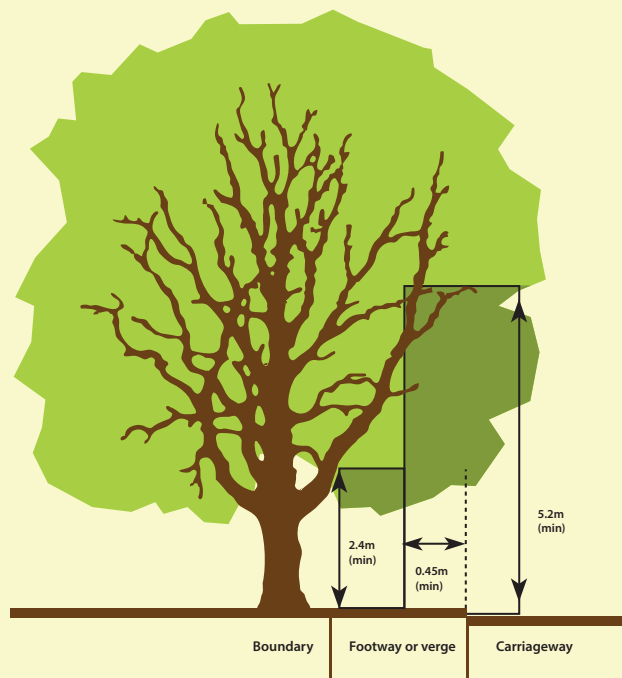
A minimum **clearance width of 0.5m (1.6ft)** is required past the edge of the road

A minimum **clear height of 2.4m (8ft)** is required above the footway (if applicable) Vegetation must be cut back to the boundary so that the full width of the footway is revealed.

**Please note: the clearances specified above are minimum requirements; for better long term value we recommend cutting back further.**

If you are unable to carry out the work yourself, contact three reputable local contractors and ask them for quotes showing them this leaflet to clarify what is required.

If you live near a busy road and require traffic management, your contractor will arrange for a permit from the highways authority for permission. The costs of this will be included into the overall price of the work.



To identify overhanging vegetation; when safe to do so, walk or drive along the roadside boundary of your property identifying any overhanging vegetation that does not meet the specified requirements above. Alternatively contact a local contractor that performs tree and hedge cutting work along highways and they will identify this for you and provide a quote for the required work.

**Tip: If you are unsure if your hedge/trees meet the clearance requirements, construct a 5.2m measuring stick by taping or tying together runner bean canes; this makes an effective DIY measuring tool.**

## Vegetation Survey Process

1. Enquiries logged by bus operator on KCC fault reporting web form
2. Chartered bus journey taken on vehicle affected by vegetation (usually double deck bus)
3. Pictures taken whenever vegetation is struck or believed to be encroaching into the highway
4. Desktop exercise undertaken using Google Earth and Land Registry Portal to determine adjacent owners
5. 1st batch of letters issued providing 28 days to respond / undertake works
6. Repeat chartered bus journey
7. Repeat desktop exercise to identify outstanding vegetation issues
8. 2nd letters sent with Section 154 Notice under Highways Act providing 21 days to respond / undertake works
9. Repeat chartered bus journey
10. Repeat desktop exercise to identify outstanding vegetation issues
11. Start enforcement proceedings on outstanding vegetation issues

**Please note: If you no longer own or have any involvement with a property you'll need to contact the land registry so your details can be removed from the land title. Otherwise you will be identified as the responsible legal owner of the property whenever a land registry search is performed by government agencies, local authorities, UK planning, utility companies, land and property agents etc.**