



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

### SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Miss Laura Nuttall MLA

### ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked By: Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City Services

Reference: City Services - verges

Hearing Date: 24/07/2024

In relation to: Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate and Verges and Nature Strips

QON lodgement Date: 25/07/2024

Answer Due date: 02/08/2024

Residents are often told they must maintain the verges of their residential blocks to maintain the look and feel of the city.

- (1) Under what legislation are residents required to maintain the verges of their residential blocks to maintain the look and feel of the city?
- (2) If it is just accepted practice where and how did this start?
- (3) If it is just general practice, will the government maintain the verge if the resident does not or can not?
- (4) If the resident must maintain the verge, why can't they undertake light pruning of street trees as needed?
- (5) If the resident is not allowed to maintain the street trees, why are they responsible for clearing leaf litter from trees on their nature strip?

**Minister Tara Cheyne MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:**

- (1) There is no legislation that requires residents to maintain nature strips adjacent to their residential block.
- (2) While many aspects of nature strips maintenance are the responsibility of the ACT Government, it is accepted practice that the adjacent landholder is responsible for basic maintenance such as mowing and removing debris. This is a long standing and commonplace arrangement in municipalities across Australia and in the ACT.

- (3) If a resident needs assistance with household or garden maintenance, there are a range of services available. Further information can be found at [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au) or by calling 1800 200 422.
- (4) Residents are discouraged from pruning street trees as incorrect pruning may increase the risk to other members of the public by damaging or destabilising the tree or through leaving cuttings in an unsafe situation.  
City Services is the ACT Government agency responsible for managing Canberra's urban trees and employs a team of suitably skilled and experienced staff to carry out this task. Ensuring that public safety is not compromised by the presence of trees within the urban area is a high priority and decisions relating to the management of urban trees are generally based on this objective.
- (5) The removal of leaf litter from around street trees on nature strips is considered to be general maintenance, which does not require specialist skills, and residents are encouraged to undertake this task. More information about nature strips is available here [https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1392088/Nature-Strip-Guidelines-2019.pdf](https://www.cityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1392088/Nature-Strip-Guidelines-2019.pdf)

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2024-2025

Signature: 

Date: 1/8/24

By the Minister for City Services, Tara Cheyne MLA