



AN INVENTORY OF TREES FOR WHICH REACH PARISH COUNCIL IS RESPONSIBLE

Summary

Inventory of 147 trees assessed to be the responsibility of the PC completed. No immediate threats to public safety. One tree identified as of particular significance. Six recommendations made to the PC.

Recommendations

1. Publish the inventory with a request to villagers for additions and amendments
2. Survey trees at the Clunch Pit to create a management plan once the PC's ownership of the land is clarified.
3. Regularly monitor for dieback the ash trees in the inventory and make financial provision for their felling.
4. Implement biennial pruning of high level epicormic growth on the lime trees in the cemetery
5. Commit to an annual inspection of the trees in the inventory
6. Take action to protect an elm tree of some significance on the playing field.

Background

1. An inventory and a map of trees considered to be the responsibility of the Parish Council is attached. Production of the inventory was commissioned by the PC in February 2020 so that it could establish the scale of its responsibilities, identify trees that present a safety risk to the public and as a means of developing a management regime to maintain the amenity and environmental value of the trees whilst minimising future risks to the public.

2. The inventory was undertaken by Steve Boreham and myself (particular thanks are due to Steve for the mapping of this inventory). Whilst Steve and I are not arboricultural professionals, Steve is an ecologist and we both have considerable experience of working with trees and have attended various training courses over the years. As such I think that we are able to identify a tree with significant disease and/or that presents a threat to public safety.

Scope

3. Determining ownership and responsibility of trees in a small rural community is not a precise process. There may well be trees that we have missed altogether and there are certainly a number of trees on the Hythe which we have excluded (because of uncertainty over the precise demarcation between our land and that of others) and which arguably should be included. We therefore suggest that the inventory is published and we invite villagers to identify trees that we have missed.

4. All of the trees on the current inventory meet our working definition of responsibility which is: • trees on land owned or leased by the PC • trees planted as a PC or other community initiative.

5. We have excluded the trees on the 24Acres Woodland and Orchard in the interests of manageability and because both collections of trees are already subject to their own management regimes. We have also excluded the trees on land owned by the PC in the

Clunch Pit because of its inaccessibility to the public. **We recommend that a tree survey is undertaken and management regime developed for the Clunch Pit** once the PC has confirmed the extent of its ownership of land in the clutch pit and decided on the extent to which public access to the site is improved.

6. Should the Drying Ground be successfully designated a Local Green Space as proposed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, then we will tag the two birch and three cherry trees planted on this land.

Findings

7. Overall there are 147 trees for which we believe the PC is responsible. **The number for each tree on the list corresponds to the numbered tag that each tree carries.** There are 19 different species of which two thirds are lime trees, most notably the Tilia cordata 'Greenspire' rows planted on Swaffham Road and on the 24Acres in 2012. These are establishing well.

8. The trees for which the PC is responsible form six clusters: • The Hythe and Drying Ground • Fair Green especially land fringing the Devil's Dyke • The Playing Field • Reach Cemetery • Swaffham Road • On the 24Acres immediately adjacent to the driveway.

9. All 147 trees have been inspected and tagged. We do not consider any tree presents an immediate threat to public safety. During our inspection we noted that the ornamental cherry tree outside the Village Hall (recorded as 148) is badly infected with canker and has two large dead branches and had recommended its felling. However we have subsequently learned that the tree is the responsibility of the Village Hall Committee. The Committee has been notified and we understand, is taking remedial action. Another cherry on the Hythe (11), was inspected by ECDC Tree Officer at our request because it too has a number of dead branches. The tree officer did not consider it a safety risk but we should continue to monitor it. The inventory contains eight ash trees. Some are showing early signs of ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) and will need regular monitoring. As all the ash trees are adjacent to roads and footpaths and may need felling at some point in the next few years, **we recommend that the PC makes financial provision for this.**

10. The avenue of lime trees in Reach cemetery show strong epicormic growth which can make access to the cemetery difficult and obscure some graves. Steve and I pruned most of this growth in mid 2021 but it will recur and as some of it is at height, **we recommend that a contractor is tasked to tackle this every other year.**

11. The great majority of trees in the inventory are relatively young, having been planted in the last 25 years or so. Virtually all are established and in good health so no replacement planting is likely. If the remedial action mentioned above is implemented then maintenance requirements will be negligible for the next few years. However **we recommend that the PC ensures that the inventory is reviewed annually by the Tree Warden.**

12. We have identified one particular tree as being of significance, namely a mature and healthy elm on the edge of the playing field (30). There are a number of sizeable healthy suckers around the tree too. We think it may be a hybrid of Field Elm (*Ulmus minor*) but lack the expertise to be certain. **We recommend that the PC seeks a tree preservation order for this tree and that we make contact with the conservation foundation for confirmation of identity and advice on its future management** <https://conservationfoundation.co.uk/elms-map/>.

Nick Acklam

Tree Warden

26 November 2021