
Grange Park Tree Survey

Preliminary
inspection to
ascertain any
immediate safety
issues.

Completed on 07.09.14 by
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Key to Explain Abbreviations

Age Class

Y = Young, A tree less than ten years old.

SM = Semi Mature, A tree less than one third of its normal life expectancy.

M = Mature, A tree with ultimate crown proportions between one third and total life expectancy.

OM = Over Mature, A tree older than its natural life expectancy with crown proportions declining.

V = Veteran, A tree of biological, aesthetical and cultural importance.

Dead Wood Classification

Minor = Dead wood with a diameter of 2cms or less.

Moderate = Dead wood with a diameter greater than 2cms, up to 5cms.

Major = Dead wood greater than 5cms in diameter.

D B H

Diameter at Breast Height = The location at which the stem diameter is measured.

(D B H = 1.3m)

Condition – Describes briefly that the physiological and structural form of the tree is

Poor = Significantly compromised.

Fair = Showing evidence of functional disruption.

Good = Functioning as would be expected in normal conditions.

1.0 - Report Brief

1.1 - After receiving a phone call from Tracy Sampson, Parish Clerk at Grange Park Parish Council, a meeting was arranged for the 3rd July 2014. The meeting took place between me, Tracey Sampson and Wendy Shakespeare, Parish Councillor. We discussed what would be realistic content from a report on an area of so many trees where budget and timescale were key factors.

1.2 - Our conclusion was that the report should bring to light any immediate safety issues with attention being given to areas of high target zones. This for example would include verge areas where trees are in close proximity of the highway or walkways used to and from schools and other frequently used pedestrian routes.

1.3 - Trees around the perimeter of the Parish Council owned vegetation areas, including those to the rear of residents properties – overhanging or not –as well as those lining the primary footpaths throughout the wooded areas will also be observed for relatively immediate potential hazards.

2.0 - Report Limitations

2.1 - The trees within this report were viewed from ground level. Binoculars were used only when it was deemed that there was obvious reason to see into the crown for further investigation.

2.2 - No soil or root samples were taken from any of the areas visited within this report.

2.3 - This is not a report to determine any present or potential subsidence issues.

2.4 - The trees within this report were assessed using the VTA method (visual tree assessment). A soft mallet was used to aid investigation of any areas subject to obvious potential decay or differentiation in cambial density. No decay detection was carried out, neither was any probing or drilling to identify cavities or soft areas of timber.

2.5 - No investigative measures have been carried out to ascertain whether the trees fall within a Conservation Area or if they are protected by individual T.P.Os.

2.6 - No inspections have been undertaken to identify the presence of bats or other endangered species which may live/roost within or in close proximity of the trees.

2.7 - Information within this report is valid for a period of 18 months from the date it was carried out.

2.8 - It should be remembered that trees are natural living organisms which continually change their form having constantly changing effects on their surroundings.

2.9 - The findings of this report are discussed under what one would consider 'normal conditions'.

2.10 - This report stands true for 18 months. It is at this point that a new assessment of this area should be carried out.

3.0 - Introduction

3.1 - The tree covered areas within this report are mainly small woodlands of mixed species varying in size from approximately 0.5 hectares to 3.5 hectares.

3.2 - These woodlands form blocks of either amenity areas integrated within the residential housing estates or boundary perimeters dividing houses from industrial estates or parkland.

3.3 - There are several other areas of open space public park land which contain block or linear planting schemes throughout and in some cases boundary planting separating the parkland from highways.

4.0 - Findings

Wood 1. Wootton Brook Planting

4.1 - This is an area of open parkland of approximately 1.00 hectare. It is primarily grassland with a selection of trees planted individually around pedestrian walkways. The perimeter boundary consists of grouped blocks of trees and native hedgerow species.

4.2 - The trees here range from young to mature with the vast majority being nearer the younger end of the scale.

Wood 2. The Poplar Plantation

4.3 - This area of woodland, approximately 3.50 hectares, is made up of some of the largest trees on Grange Park.

4.4 - Along with understorey shrubs and smaller trees the majority of larger species consists of poplar and willow species, mainly *populus x canadensis*. These range between approximately 5m and 20m in height, and young to mature in their age class.

4.5 - Dead-wood can be found throughout the crowns of these trees ranging from minor to major in size which one would expect of trees of this type and maturity. Their physiological and structural condition is generally good. Due to their close proximity planting, these trees have maximised upward growth in comparison to outward growth.

4.6 - The south-easterly side of this woodland runs alongside Bridge Meadow Way where there is a round-about and bus stop. Several areas along this stretch have begun to encroach towards the road and bus stop.

Wood 3. The North East Structural Planting

4.7 - This is a planting scheme that runs along the rear boundaries of residential properties within The Leys and Swift Close. An area of approximately 1.52 hectares, the planted species consists of birch, Leyland cypress, poplar, cherry, oak, ash, willow, hazel and hawthorn. Young to semi-mature trees they range in height from 5

to 10 metres. They contain minimal dead-wood of no significance and their physiological and structural condition is good.

4.8 - A result of mass planting, the trees are in very close proximity of one another. Some areas have been cut back from rear boundaries creating a divide between fence and woodland.

Wood 4. The Eastern Structural Planting (North)

4.9 - This is a similar area to wood 3, again to the rear of properties but dividing the playing fields from Harefield to Deer Close.

4.10 - Approximately 0.61 hectares, species include hawthorn, birch, willow, oak, ash, dogwood and hazel. Again, young to semi-mature in age class with a height range of 4 to 8 metres. Close proximity planting with minimal dead-wood and a condition which is generally good.

Wood 5. Foxfields Planting

4.11 - This is a large area of parkland with the trees covering approximately 1.52 hectares. Hedgerows around the perimeters and block planting in more central locations are made up of hawthorn, birch, willow, oak, pine, ash, dogwood and hazel.

4.12 - Large mature oak trees can be found in some of the boundary hedge lines. Pathways weave between some of the block planted areas of taller trees but generally meander across the open grassland.

Wood 6. The Eastern Structural Planting (South)

4.13 - Wood 6 is another planting scheme used to create a barrier between residents' rear gardens and the park land behind, which is the wood 5 area.

4.14 - Young to semi mature species range in size from approximately 4m to 10m in height, covering an area of approximately 1.10 hectares.

4.15 - The species consist of oak, field maple, hazel, Lawson cypress, aspen, willow, ash, hawthorn, birch and blackthorn. A small number of larger mature willows can be found within this area.

4.16 - Generally of good structural and physiological condition these trees are a product of close proximity planting. Of all the barrier/boundary planting sections of Grange Park, this area has trees growing closest to the fence-line of properties.

Wood 7. South Wood

4.17 - This is an area of amenity woodland approximately 3.30 hectares in size. The trees here range from semi-mature to mature in age class and are between 4m and 18m in height. Species included here are Lawson cypress, oak, cherry, hazel, ash, larch, pine, birch, sycamore and spruce.

4.18 - The trees here vary in form from typical woodland straight stemmed to trees with a much fuller crown around the outer perimeter. There are small clearings throughout this wood where thinning work has taken place in the past where the cut timber has been stacked to form basic habitat piles.

Wood 8. Western Structural Planting

4.19 - Wood 8 is another area of barrier planting designed to separate the industrial estate from the residential areas. With a total area of approximately 1.93 hectares, the species here are made up of goat willow, ash, field maple, crack willow, hawthorn, Leyland cypress, birch and alder.

4.20 - Young to mature in age class the trees range in height from 2m to 14m.

4.21 - Many areas within this section have been cut back from residents fence-lines, however there are also as many sections which have not with growth encroaching over boundaries into gardens.

Wood 9. Grange Wood

4.22 - This is the second largest area of woodland on the Grange Park site. Situated relatively central on the estate adjacent to the school, it appears to be the most used amenity woodland based on the amount of well-trodden paths and clearings.

4.23 - Approximately 3.00 hectares in size it is made up of pine, oak, laurel, sycamore, spruce, ash, hazel, field maple, cherry, Lawson cypress, elder, goat willow and birch. These trees range in age class from young to mature and vary in height from approximately 5m up to 18m. There is minor to major deadwood situated in the trees' crowns throughout this site but no more so than would be expected in such woodland.

4.24 - The two significant paths in this section run along the north edge (south of the school) and inside the wood along the eastern side. Both of these paths have trees which require attention. Fallen branches lie at the sides of the path and other limbs, still in the trees, are showing signs of potential failure. It would appear that squirrel damage which has lead on to further decay is the main cause for this.

4.25 - Along the western perimeter of this section is a small group of much larger trees. This group consists of ash, scots pine and hybrid poplar.

Residents I was asked to liaise with.

49 Swift Close, Grange Park

4.26 - This property backs on to Wood 3. The majority of trees running along the fence line of 49 Swift Close are oak, silver birch and field maple all of approximately 7m. There is however one large poplar specimen in relatively close proximity of the adjacent garage.

4.27 - Substantial roots can be observed close to the surface at various locations within the garden and along the edge of the paved area.

4.28 - The residents of the above address had expressed a concern over the amount of roots visible at ground level and the amount of raised slabs that were also present.

6 Pine Close, Grange Park

4.29 - Located at the south-east corner of Wood 9, this property has considerable overhang from the adjacent woodland growth. Lime, hawthorn, blackthorn and bramble are growing over the fence and onto the tiles, soffits and guttering of the house and garage.

4.30 - The residents at this property were concerned about the damage that was being done to the roof and surrounding gutter, and also the amount of vegetation pushing against their fence panels.

32 The Spinney, Grange Park

4.31 - The side and rear of this property are adjacent to Wood 8. An extension has recently been added to the rear elevation of the house.

4.32 - Within a 5m radius of this extension are 4 mature poplar trees and a linear group of cypress trees which form a dense hedge.

4.33 - The residents at this address were worried about the size of the trees in such close proximity to their house, and the fact that the conifers were growing well over their boundary.

53 Woodlands, Grange Park

4.34 - This property backs onto Wood 7. On the perimeter of this wood is an ash tree which is in physiological and structural decline. It appears to be partially held up by the smaller trees which surround it, but it does lean significantly towards the above property. I did not meet with the residents of this property.

5.0 - Conclusions

5.1 - Based on what I have seen at the above locations, there are some areas in need of immediate attention, but nothing on a particularly grand scale at this present time. This includes the removal of fallen branches, some remedial pruning works and the felling of some trees, which in my opinion are going to be an issue sooner rather than later if not rectified.

5.2 - Each site specific course of action can be found in Recommendations.

5.3 - On a site such as Grange Park, a pro-active approach to tree work is a nice idea but in reality an impossibility. If the site had been managed from day one, - when the construction contractors ordered the planting work to go ahead – programmes could have been in place for thinning work to prevent suppression and over-crowding between trees. Work to cut back growth encroaching on to properties could also have been planned for, along with the removal of problem species as they grew into more mature specimens.

5.4 - However as the Parish Council adopts these areas it is more often the case that they are handed already problematic segments of land. And as budgets play a key role in what can actually be done, the management of such an area can only be, within reason, controlled re-actively.

5.5 - It can never be practical or cost effective to walk a site of this size inspecting every tree for potential failure. Areas with a higher volume of pedestrian traffic have been looked at in this report with greater scrutiny than those 'off the beaten track' to reduce the probability of injury.

5.6 - On sites such as Grange Park where housing is designed around wooded areas there will always be encroachment from foliage whether it is over fences or into properties. To continually monitor such growth would simply not be viable or practical. For the Parish Council, there is no legal obligation to cut back to source, however it would be prudent to do so if the invading growth is likely to cause foreseeable damage in the near future. (eg tile displacement or pushing over fences). Once damage has occurred directly it then becomes the responsibility of the tree owner. In my experience, residents of such an area are generally quick to put forward a complaint regarding encroaching foliage before damage has actually occurred.

5.7 - Dealing with problems that have been brought to light by local residents to the most part is the most realistic way of dealing with such issues. This is not to say that all other areas can be forgotten about, but where there are people in close proximity to the trees is where the most likely issues will occur. Trees further out in the woodlands are rarely an immediate concern to residents.

5.8 - From this I conclude that problems that are brought to the Parish Council's attention can be dealt with through remedial work or explanation to the resident that said problem is not an issue, in between site inspection intervals. The site inspections can then be used to ascertain any issues of a grander scale or those which may not be immediately obvious to the residents of Grange Park.

49 Swift Close

5.9 - This poplar will reach a considerable size and in my experience cause issues in the future.

5.10 - As previously mentioned in this report, I have not taken soil samples which, depending on soil type, could lead me to suspect the likelihood of subsidence issues. This aside, the roots from tree appear to be making considerable advances under patio slabs, around garage footings and in many areas along the surface of the garden.

5.11 - I feel this tree will cause serious issues for the P.C. if not removed sooner rather than later.

6 Pine Close

5.12 - The encroachment of this vegetation is severe and I feel that if not dealt with soon, then foreseeable damage will occur to the fence line and to the roof of the property.

32 The Spinney

5.13 - These 4x poplar trees will reach a considerable size and in my experience cause issues in the future.

5.14 - As previously mentioned in this report, I have not taken soil samples which, depending on soil type, could lead me to suspect the likelihood of subsidence issues.

5.15 - Action should be taken to remove these trees while they are at a size that is reasonably simple to deal with, before they get any larger and become greater expense.

53 Woodlands

5.16 - If this tree is left standing for much longer I feel the probability of the tree collapsing through the residents' fence is extremely likely.

6.0 - Recommendations

Wood 1.

6.1 - No action at present.

Wood 2.

6.2 - Cut back from edge of Bridge Meadow Way by approximately 2 metres. Cut back to give clearance of bus stop and surrounding area by approximately 2 metres to give better visibility of pedestrians to road users.

6.3 - Remove major deadwood from trees over primary footpath.

6.4 - This should be carried out within 6 months of the date of this report.

Wood 3.

6.5 - Cut back growth from fences by approximately 3 metres to create a perimeter that can be maintained more cost effectively before issues occur.

6.6 - This is not urgent and could be carried out over the next 2 years from the date of this report.

6.7 - See 49 Swift Close recommendations.

Wood 4.

6.8 - No action at present.

Wood 5.

6.9 - No action at present.

Wood 6.

6.10 - No action at present.

Wood 7.

6.11 - No action at present.

6.12 - See 53 Woodlands recommendations.

Wood 8.

6.13 - No action at present.

6.14 - See 32 The Spinney recommendations.

Wood 9.

6.15 - Remove damaged and decaying branches along with deadwood from trees which line the path running south from the play area.

6.16 - Remove damaged and decaying branches along with deadwood and remove fallen branches from 1x Prunus avium and 1x Acer psuedoplatanus which are situated on the path running east to west, located south of the school.

6.17 - This work should be carried out within 1 month of the date of this report.

6.17 - See 6 Pine Close recommendations.

49 Swift Close, Grange Park.

6.18 - Remove poplar down to ground level, poison stump and surrounding poplar stumps (from previously felled trees) to prevent re-growth.

6.19 - Branch wood should be chipped on site and lengths of timber should be stacked into habitat piles.

6.20 - This work should be carried out within 3 months of the date of this report.

6 Pine Close, Grange Park.

6.21 - All vegetation which includes hedgerow and tree species should be cut back from fence boundary and property by approximately 3 to 4 metres.

6.22 - This work should be carried out within 2 months of the date of this report.

32 The Spinney, Grange Park.

6.23 - Remove 4x poplar trees down to ground level and poison stumps to prevent regrowth.

6.24 - Branch wood should be chipped on site and lengths of timber should be stacked into habitat piles.

6.25 - This work should be carried out within 2 months of the date of this report.

6.26 - It should be noted that I recommended to the resident of this address that the conifers should be reduced in height and trimmed back from the boundary. At the time of discussion the resident was happy arrange this work to be carried out at their own expense on the provision that Grange Park P.C. would deal with the removal of the poplars.

53 Woodlands, Grange Park.

6.27 - Remove 1x ash tree to ground level.

6.28 - Branch wood should be chipped on site and lengths of timber should be stacked into habitat piles.

6.29 - This work should be carried out within 1 month of the date of this report.

6.30 - Any tree work undertaken should be done so to B.S.3998 and be carried out by experienced Arborists with appropriate qualifications.

Wootton Brook Planting
Wood 1 - approx. 100 hectare

WOODLAND AREAS

The Poplar Plantation
Wood 2 - 3.50 hectare

The North East Structural Planting
The Leys & Swift Close
Wood 3 - 1.52 hectare

Grange Wood
Wood 9 - 3.00 hectare

The Eastern Structural Planting (North)
North Foxfields (Harefield to Deer Close)
Wood 4 - 0.61 hectare



