

Otterton Parish Council - Review of Parish Owned Trees.

Introduction

Following the progress of Ash Dieback into Otterton the trees owned by Otterton Parish Council were inspected in 2020. As a result a number of Ash trees at Stantyway were removed during winter 2020 / 21. The Parish Council authorised a follow up inspection for this year. A brief look at The Green and Behind Hayes playing field was also carried out.

Inspection

On 30th July 2021 the Parish trees were inspected by Toby Taylor (contractor) and Iain Ure (Tree Warden), this was by means of a walk through. Progress of ash dieback continues but the good news is that progress is relatively slow and only a few trees are significantly impacted.

Stantyway

There are a significant number of Ash trees at Stantyway – at least 40 within the playing field and a significant number alongside Stantyway Road and is part of the playing field's ownership.

Starting at the vehicular entrance and proceeding clockwise;

1. The second ash tree has around 25% loss of canopy – keep under surveillance
2. Horse Chestnut has 2 large limbs that have died and the tree has bark coming away. – remove these 2 branches only but keep under review.
3. Ash trees in NW corner – some loss of canopy but OK for present.
4. Ash tree on north boundary that stands alone at NW corner of football pitch. 25%+ loss of canopy. Does this boundary belong to the Parish Council? This tree needs to be removed.
5. Stand of 20+ semi mature ash trees in NE corner – 2 trees are dead, 3 more have 25% to 50% loss of canopy and need to be removed. The good news is that other tree species are establishing themselves and will fill the spaces left. Monitor rest annually.
6. Eastern boundary (alongside Piscoombe Lane) – at least 7 dead elms need to be removed.
7. Stantyway Road – 6 large ash trees with about 25% loss of canopy – leave this year but monitor.
8. All trees removed to leave usable wood for residents to take away, brash to be made into habitat piles and left insitu.
9. This is a review of those trees with significant issues and most others have some early signs of disease.

Behind Hayes Playground

10. South east corner – dead twin stem elm – remove but cut at waist level, wood and brash to be left neatly as habitat pile behind existing vegetation. Saplings are naturally regenerating and will replace loss.

The Green

11. No Ash trees
12. Due to storm Evert last night 2 branches have come off the lime tree T1630, a smaller one is hanging.
13. Horse Chestnut T 1633 seems OK at present but keep under review – note Rowse report dated May 2019 stated this tree would need to be removed in the near future due to decay.
14. Trees seem OK but need to be kept under annual review.

Strategy

Providing the deterioration of the Ash trees remains slow then a strategy of modest annual removal is recommended. Natural regeneration of both new ash and other species is being observed thus minimising any visual impact.

Should the dieback become more aggressive, which has happened elsewhere in the Parish , then an alternative strategy will be developed.

An annual inspection is essential.

Iain Ure

July 2021