

St Leonard's Mound Closure & Tree Condition

1.0 Closure of the Area

The following decision was made at the last meeting:

485/22 ST LEONARD'S MOUND – TREE SURVEY

The survey report was received. The Deputy Clerk confirmed the tree that had been highlighted as the highest risk had been dealt with as a matter of priority and was due to be felled by the end of March. The survey report was produced as per the specification but further clarity of the disease position should be investigated. The medium risk trees should be further prioritised. Following a discussion concerning the risk to members of the public and staff concerned with maintaining the area

it was **Resolved** that:

The area be closed off to the public as soon as is practicable using Heras fencing and appropriate signage to indicate it's closure and the risk of falling trees and branches.

As a result of this the area was fully closed off with the use of Heras fencing, bespoke signage stating the area was closed by the Parish Council on health and safety grounds and standard 'keep out' signage. The area continues to be monitored by the Grounds Maintenance team to ensure the fencing is still in position and the signage still displayed.

2.0 Tree Condition

As reported at the last meeting, the one tree identified as high priority was felled as a matter of urgency.

Following closure of the area, the Deputy Clerk met with our current tree specialist contractor and considered the condition of the trees that had been identified as medium risk and particularly focussed on those that could fall into the main road through Richings Park and then those that could fall into the minor road (St Leonard's walk) where the church and some houses are located.

Of the 18 trees identified as medium risk, 17 were identified in the category as mentioned above.

Amongst these are 3 Sycamores, 7 Elms and 7 Ash. There is a mix of pruning back of trees and the felling of trees as the remedial work.

Following the review of these trees, the contractor provided a quote to carry out remedial works on all the trees. This cost was £11,900 ex VAT. The Tree Maintenance budget for 23/24 is £15,000.

Officers recommend that these trees need to have this remedial work carried out. However, the budget for the year covers all remedial work on trees that occurs throughout the year on a needs basis and there is a significant need for further tree surveys to be carried out across the Parish.

The officers seek authority to deal with the trees spread across the coming year managing the budget such that we have money always in the budget to carry out further tree surveys on areas of concern and to have enough to manage any incidents of tree management required. The priority will be to deal with the trees that could fall on the main road first whilst still noting the importance of the condition of the trees that could fall on the minor road. The pruning back / maintenance of trees should be the secondary priority.

The committee is asked to agree the next steps in the management of trees at St Leonard's Mound.

Jeremy Day
Deputy Clerk
18th May 2023