

# Tree Survey & Report Prince of Wales Park, Bingley

Report Prepared for

City of Bradford MDC

*By*

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11/04/2014

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## Report Summary

The purpose of this arboricultural report is to identify trees within a limited area of Prince of Wales Park, Bingley, which present an unacceptable risk of harm to users of footpaths within the area, and adjacent property.

A walk-over survey was conducted over the area, as described in the agreed scope, and sixteen trees and one tree group were identified as requiring individual assessment. Of these, nine trees have been recommended for removal. One tree, plus the tree group, has been recommended for pruning, whilst further investigations are recommended to five trees.

Four 'Character Areas' have also been identified, and general comments and recommendations for the management of trees in these areas have also been made.

I recommend trees within failing distance of the surrounding roads be assessed by a competent person at least annually. For other trees within the park, I consider the maximum assessment period could be extended to three-yearly.

Trees may be legally protected. It is therefore essential, that prior to any tree works, whether recommended in this report or not, contact is made with the Local Planning Authority to enquire if such protection exists, and to seek any necessary permission that may be required.

Tree Survey & Report – Prince of Wales Park, Bingley

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 I am instructed by Malcolm Wright of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) to survey and report on trees within a specific area of Prince of Wales park (see site plan). This specific area is here after referred to as 'the subject site' in this document.
  - 1.1.1 Background: I was contacted by telephone by Malcolm Wright, CBMDC, with regard to a tree survey of the subject site in November 2013. A site meeting was arranged, and at the meeting a verbal agreement of the scope of the survey, and fee, was agreed. A formal order was received 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013. On 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014 I again met Malcolm Wright and was provided with two plans of the park for use in the survey; we marked one copy with the approximate boundary of the subject site, as previously agreed. A fee proposal was sent by email the same day and accepted by email on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2014.
- 1.2 This report and all assessments contained within are based on my observations on site and my knowledge and experience in arboriculture. A summary of my experience and qualifications in arboriculture can be found in the section 'About the Author'.

## 2 Limitations

- 2.1 This survey and report is for the recipient(s) named in the Introduction only; any third-party relying on the contents of this report does so entirely at their own risk.
- 2.2 Trees are living and dynamic structures and are therefore subject to ongoing changes to their condition. In addition, extreme weather, physical or chemical damage and biological agents can quickly have a significant impact on a tree's condition. Whilst all reasonable effort has been made to accurately assess the current condition of the trees, and provide an opinion on likely future developments, no absolute assurances can be given as to the future condition of any tree. Attention is drawn to the periodic re-assessments noted in paragraph 7.3.
- 2.3 This report is based on a general survey and is not a detailed assessment into the condition of any tree.
- 2.4 Trees have been assessed in their current context; any change of use will necessitate a further survey.

- 2.5 Tree rooting characteristics and soils are both highly variable, and their interactions complex. This makes attempts to accurately quantify subsidence risk impossible. No attempt has been made to assess subsidence risk potential, nor should any be construed.
- 2.6 Whilst Ivy has been removed from many trees in recent months, it is still a constraint to a full assessment of a number of trees in key areas.

### 3 Brief Description of Site

The subject site forms part of Prince of Wales Park, in Bingley, West Yorkshire.

To the south lies the principal road from Bingley to Eldwick, known as Parkside; to the west is Lady Lane, and houses off Fern Hill. To the north and east of the subject site the park continues, predominantly as woodland.

The park as a whole is a mix of woodland and semi-open areas. The lower slopes being generally the more open and appear to be landscaped as park land in Victorian times.

The approximate boundary of the subject site is marked on the site plan.

### 4 Scope of Survey and Report

- 4.1 *The scope of the survey is as set out in my fee proposal dated 24th March 2014, and has been copied below for reference.*

*To conduct a 'walk-over' assessment of trees within an agreed area\* of the park, and make recommendations for tree / woodland management.*

*For the 'walk-over' survey, I would walk the boundary of the agreed area\* and all significant paths within that area to visually assess all trees within 'failing' distance of the path / boundary. This assessment will seek only to identify trees with significant and current defects which, in my opinion, present an unacceptable risk of harm being caused to users of the paths or adjacent property at the time of assessment. Any such trees found will be surveyed and reported as per schedule detailed below and recommendations for remedial works made. No other trees will be individually recorded; however a record of the assessment would be included in the report.*

*In addition to the above, the agreed area\* would be sub-divided into 'character areas' or 'compartments' using features such as boundaries and paths; these compartments would be plotted on supplied site plan and general observations & recommendations for the trees within the compartment would be made within the report.*

*Each tree individually assessed would have an aluminium numbered tag attached (by single nail) and its approximate location would be marked on to the supplied site plan, for identification purposes. A 'Tree Survey Schedule' would be produced and tree reference number(s) will cross refer with the site plan.*

*The report will be based on my observations, knowledge and experience and no attempt will be made to assess subsidence risk potential of any tree or woodland within this report.*

*\*The agreed area of the park is as per our site meeting in November 2013, and re-confirmed today at our meeting in Menston, where the supplied plan (dated 23/12/2013) was marked to indicate the approximate boundary of the area.*

## 5 Materials Provided

- CBMDC Order No. 4500376700 dated 21/11/2013
- Two hard copies of a site plan at 1:700 scale, dated 23/12/2013
- Emailed acceptance of Proposal dated 25/04/2014

## 6 Site Visit:

6.1 The assessment of the trees was carried out over 3 consecutive days. (2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April) On each day the weather was dry and foggy, however visibility was adequate for the purposes of the report. I also returned on the 11<sup>th</sup> April to attach tree tags to the individually surveyed trees.

### 6.2 Methodology:

6.2.1 For the purposes of this survey, I have assumed typical usage of the site to be similar to that observed during site visits. (ie the “Friends of” group were working one day and a school group running the next – other than that it was just occasional people walking along the main paths). Should actual usage be significantly different, this report may require revision.

6.2.2 The boundary of the subject site (coloured red on plan) was walked, as was all significant paths (coloured blue on plan) within. Where significant targets\* were observed, all trees within falling distance were assessed for defects. Where the defects were observed to be (or likely to be) significant, the trees were individually surveyed and recorded on the survey schedule.

6.2.3 Lesser paths (coloured orange on plan) were also walked, but as these paths appear to be much less used, I applied a stricter criteria for reporting on trees; only commenting where an immediate risk of major failure onto the path was observed.

6.2.4 No other paths were walked, and therefore trees away from the boundary, significant or lesser paths were not assessed in any way.

6.2.5 All individually surveyed trees were assessed by Visual Tree Assessment techniques at ground level. No climbing or excavations were undertaken. However, some basic diagnostic tools (long 450mm screwdriver & nylon mallet) were used on some trees, including T2, T3, T12 and T13, to better assess observed defects.

6.2.6 Further details of the methodology may be found in the Key to Survey Schedule section.

\*people or property that a tree (or tree part) might contact and damage should it fail.

## Appraisal

6.3 All individually surveyed trees are included in the Tree Survey Schedule (Appendix A) and brief notes on significant features / defects observed for each individual tree has been included there.

### 6.4 Assessment of the remainder of the Subject Area

6.4.1 General: At the time of my assessment there was sufficient clearance, both overhead and from the sides, for people to walk along the main paths (coloured Blue on plan) without significant hindrance, or undue risk of injury from contact with branches. Such clearance should be maintained.

6.4.2 To enable me to comment on the general management of trees within the subject site, I have divided it into four 'Character Areas' based on current landscaping. I understand there is considerable current discussion into the future management of the site, and have therefore kept this section brief. I am however, happy to discuss such issues further upon request. The Character Areas are marked on the site plan, and each is bounded by the boundary of the subject site (red) and / or the significant (blue) paths.

6.4.3 It should be noted that this work is by no means required from a safety perspective, and is simply discussed as a potential broad outline for future tree management.

Area 1 is fairly open except for its western end, close to the houses, where several mature trees and a dense understory has grown, creating a 'mini-woodland' feel. I would suggest removal of selected mature trees to re-space them at an average of 12 metre centres with a few smaller ornamental trees /shrubs below to create an area with an open tree canopy above mown grass.

Area 2 is currently the most open area, with elements of a 'picturesque' style. Despite being the most open area, I would suggest it is still over-stocked with trees and there is scope to remove perhaps 25% of them to open up views and make the character of the area distinct from the woodland that surrounds it.

Areas 3 and 4 are both woodland areas, and I consider it desirable to keep them as such. I would suggest removal of the laurel and rhododendron, together with a significant proportion of the ivy, to increase space / light so that a broader mix of predominantly native understory might establish, thereby increasing conservation value and maintaining the visual and acoustic barrier from the road.

## 7 Legal and Environmental Considerations

### 7.1 Trees subject to Statutory Controls

7.1.1 Trees can be subject to legal protection through Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), being located within a Conservation Area or subject to planning conditions from previous development. Therefore, prior to any tree works, whether recommended on this survey or not, a check should be made with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to establish if any of the trees on site are legally protected, and any necessary permission obtained.

7.1.2 Most tree works, no matter how minor, undertaken on protected trees without consent are offences under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and severe penalties may be applied. It should be noted that roots have just as much legal protection as stems and branches.

### 7.2 Trees and Wildlife

Tree work contractors undertaking pruning or felling of trees should assess the likelihood of bat roosts prior to any work being undertaken. Bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Most birds' nests are also protected and pruning or felling should be avoided or delayed, wherever possible, if birds are nesting in trees that require work or removal.

### 7.3 Ongoing inspections/ Assessments

Current arboricultural 'best practice' recommends trees are inspected by a competent person at regular intervals, and after extreme weather or significant changes to the growing environment. The responsibility for the safety of trees, and therefore a suitable program of inspection, would usually lie with the owner or occupier of the land on which the tree stands.

## 8 Recommendations

- 8.1 Carry out tree works and further assessments as identified in the survey schedule.
- 8.2 Maintain clearance of vegetation from footpaths and roads at current levels or as per statutory legislation (whichever is the greater).
- 8.3 I recommend trees within failing distance of the surrounding roads be assessed by a competent person at least annually. For other trees within the park, I consider the maximum assessment period could be extended to three-yearly. (See 7.3 for further information on assessment frequency)

## 9 Implementation of Works

I recommend all tree works are carried out by competent persons with appropriate experience, qualifications and insurance and to BS3998: 2010 *Recommendations for tree work*, where applicable. The Arboricultural Association holds a list of approved contractors on their website at: <http://www.trees.org.uk/find-a-professional/Directory-of-Tree-Surgeons>

## 10 References

- Strouts, R.D. and Winter T.G, (1994) *Diagnosis of ill-health in trees*. HMSO
- Mattheck, C and Breloer, H (2009) *The body language of trees*. TSO
- Mattheck, C. (2007), Updated *Field Guide for Visual Tree Assessment*.
- Lonsdale, D. (2009), *Principals of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management*. TSO.
- Biddle, P., G., (1998) '*Tree Root Damage to Buildings*', Vols 1 & 2, Willowmead Publishing
- British Standards Institute (2010) BS 3998:2010 *Tree work. Recommendations* BSI

## 11 Key to Survey Schedule

Tree No.: Sequential number of tree in survey. This corresponds with the numbers in the site plan, written as T1, T2 etc for individual trees. When the number represents a Group of Trees, this is changed to G3, G4 etc. For Hedges the prefix 'H' is used H5, H6 etc. A 'tree tag' number may also be recorded (in brackets) and this is the aluminium tag number physically attached to the tree to further aid identification.

Species: Common name of tree, (sometimes followed by scientific name of tree in italics, where this is relevant). Identification is based on visual observations and occasionally it may be difficult to accurately identify a particular tree without further detailed investigation. In such a case, in order not to delay the report, where only botanical genus is known the abbreviation 'sp' is recorded as species.)

Height: The height of the tree estimated and recorded in metres.

Crown Spread: the average horizontal distance from the centre of the trunk to the extremity of the crown, estimated in metres. (suffix A = highly asymmetric)

Age Class: Yng - Young, tree less than 1/3 life expectancy

Mid - Middle-aged tree, between 1/3 and 2/3 life expectancy

Mat – Mature, a tree in the final 1/3 of its life expectancy

Condition: A guide to the physical / biological condition of the tree.

A: Good – A tree with no significant defects and growing well.

B: Moderate – A tree which may have some significant defects but the tree has adapted its growth to compensate, or perhaps has minor defects which could be pruned out. Vitality is at least reasonable.

C: Poor – A tree which is in terminal decline – either through loss of vitality or progressive decay or other physical defect.

D: Very Poor / Dead – A tree where significant failure can reasonably be foreseen within a short time (often a year).

Comments: Narrative on any significant features or defects of the tree.

Recommendations: Tree management work recommended by the Author as necessary or desirable, based on his knowledge and experience. The approximate maximum diameter branch considered necessary to prune to achieve the specified works may be recorded in brackets eg (max cut 75mm)

Priority: A guide to the relative priority of recommended works, in three categories; 1, 2 and 3, with 1 being the most urgent.

## 12 About the Author

Andrew Glaister has eighteen years experience of Arboriculture, and has held Senior Officer and Management positions in Arboriculture and Forestry for Local Authorities. He currently works as an independent Arboricultural Consultant and is a Professional Member of the Arboricultural Association.

He gained a HNC in Arboriculture from Houghall College, Durham in 2004 and Holds the Lantra Professional Tree Inspector Award.

### 12.1 Recent relevant employment history

Freelance	Arboricultural Consultant (4 years)
Leeds City Council	Assistant Forestry Manager (1 year)
Leeds City Council	Arboricultural Officer (3 years)
Derby City Council	Arboricultural Officer (1 year)

### 12.2 Qualifications

HNC Arboriculture	University of Sunderland
Passed with Merit/Distinction in all subjects	(Houghall College)
NC Horticulture (Arb) (Distinction)	Myerscough College, Preston
LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection Certificate	

### 12.3 Contact Details

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## 13 Survey Schedule – See Appendix A

## 14 Site Plans

Sketch Plans to show approx location of trees and character areas referenced in this report. (Base Map supplied by Bradford MDC and used with permission)

NOT TO SCALE

Sheet 1 showing trees T1 to T8 and Character Area 4





Appendix A Tree Survey Schedule – Prince of Wales Park, Bingley. Assessed by A. Glaister – 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014

Tree No	Species	Height	Crown Spread	Age Class	Condition	Comments	Recommendations	Priority
T1 (0141)	Elm	10	4	Yng	C	Appears to be re-growth from previously felled stump. Stump now decayed; failure foreseeable. Target: Road / Path	Fell and remove	2
T2 (0145)	Cherry	10	6A	Mid	C	Basal cavities. Poor form. Target: Road	No action at this time  Reassess spring 2015	-
T3 (0146)	Ash	15	6A	Mid	D	Basal deformity. Cavity at 2m (road side) probed and estimated to be significant. Target: Road	Fell and remove	1
T4 (0147)	Ash	16	7.5A	Mid	C	Poor form. Stem / crown cavities. Significant dead-wood. Target: Road	Fell and remove	2
T5 (0148)	Sycamore	11	2	Mid	C*	No significant visible crown. Obscured by Ivy Target: Road	Fell and remove	3*
T6 (0149)	Ash	14	6	Mid	C	Crown defects. Stem cavities – cavities unlikely significant at this time, but retention would require pruning – not worthwhile. Target: Road	Fell and Remove	2
G7 (0150)	Ash/Sycamore	17	5	Mid	C	Group of early mature trees. Considerable deadwood and crown defects Target: Road	Remove dead and defective branches	2
T8 (0151)	Sycamore	18	9	Mat	C* pending further assessment	Extensive fungal fruiting bodies of <i>Ustulina deusta</i> . Likely embrittlement of wood Target: Main path	Assess extent of decay by diagnostic tools (decay detection drill or increment borer).	2

Fields Marked \* have been estimated due to dense vegetation, poor access or other constraint

Appendix A Tree Survey Schedule – Prince of Wales Park, Bingley. Assessed by A. Glaister – 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014

Tree No	Species	Height	Crown Spread	Age Class	Condition	Comments	Recommendations	Priority
T9 (0152)	Pine	10	5A	Mid	C	Poor form. Existing 'hazard beam' split limb Target: Main path	Remove all defective branches	2
T10 (0153)	Oak	18	7	Mid	B* pending further assessment	Cavities & deformity at 4m. Presence of (woodpecker?) hole suggest possible significant decay Target: Main path	Investigate further using basic diagnostic tools (mallet / probe / torch) Arial access required.	2
T11 (0154)	Birch	3	0	Mid	D	Dead and highly decayed stem. Could easily be pushed over and would likely land on path (Target)	Fell and remove	2
T12 (0155)	Sorbus	9	4	Mat	D	Extensive decay throughout tree Target: Road / informal path	Fell and remove	2
T13 (0156)	Sycamore	20	6.5	Mat	C* pending further assessment	Fungal fruiting bodies of <i>Ustulina deusta</i> . Likely embrittlement of wood. Target: Main path / House	Assess extent of decay by diagnostic tools (decay detection drill or increment borer).	2
T14 (0157)	Sycamore	16	5	Mid	B* pending further assessment	Currently unidentified fungal fruiting body at base of stem. Target: Main path	Further identification / investigation & update to follow	2
T15 (0158)	Cherry	6	3	Mid	C/D	Poor. In decline with significant decay Target : Road	Fell and remove	2
T16 (0159)	Sycamore	12	2	Mid	C*	Very little crown evident Target: Road	Remove all ivy and re-assess	2

Fields Marked \* have been estimated due to dense vegetation, poor access or other constraint

Appendix A Tree Survey Schedule – Prince of Wales Park, Bingley. Assessed by A. Glaister – 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2014

Tree No	Species	Height	Crown Spread	Age Class	Condition	Comments	Recommendations	Priority
T17 (0160)	Sycamore	11	4A	Mid	D	Major cavity at base of tree. t/R ratio (assessment of decay) estimated less than 0.15 (failure highly likely in short term) Target: Path	Fell and remove	1

Fields Marked \* have been estimated due to dense vegetation, poor access or other constraint