

**TREE REINSPECTION REPORT
&
RECOMMENDATIONS
For
Douglas Crescent Gardens**

For and on behalf of:

Douglas Crescent Gardens Committee
Edinburgh

October 2012

Douglas Crescent Gardens

Tree Survey Re-inspection audit, October 2012

1. Scope and Method

All trees included in the survey of October 2011 have been re-inspected on 2nd October 2012 following the method adopted in the original survey i.e. visual inspection from ground level. I have placed emphasis on observing and reporting any deterioration of known defects and in observing new defects which could be of significance from a health and safety perspective (including storm damage following the high winds during December '11 and January '12). I have also looked at some of the management issues discussed in the report of 2011. This report provides updated recommendations for future management based on this survey and should be read in conjunction with the original report of October 2011.

2. Summary of findings

Although there are no serious issues to report requiring immediate attention, there are several trees which require works within the next 12 months; these are listed in table 3 below. Most notably this includes the recommended removals of T1557 Wild Cherry and T1748 Horse Chestnut. In addition there are a number of trees which have been subject to storm damage and where relatively minor new work is recommended, such as removing hanging branches. The most significant issues where action is required are shown in table 3 below.

As might be expected, there are signs of continued decline with some of the late mature Whitebeams located near the lawn area. These trees are discussed below.

The most urgent remedial tree works prioritised in the report of 2011 have been carried out, including the removal of 5 potentially dangerous mature trees.

The tree work carried out following the initial report has generally been carried out comprehensively and to a high standard. Much of the work prioritised under timings 1 and 2, as identified in the report of 2011 now appears to have been completed; the exceptions are listed in table 1, below and include work to the Lime trees adjacent to Douglas Crescent.

Young promising Ash and Beech regeneration, in particular, are generally developing well and this includes trees in close proximity to the mature trees which have been removed. There appears to have been little management work done (under timings 3 and 4) in respect of thinning areas of young regeneration and formative pruning work.

The gravel being added to the path beside Douglas Crescent will reduce compaction around the roots of adjacent trees.

3. Tree works

Tree works carried out

Following the report of 2011, the most urgent remedial tree works have been carried out, including the removal of 5 large mature trees: T1443, T1448, T1592, T1723 and T1784. Remedial works prioritised in timings 1 and 2 have been completed with the exception of tree works to the mature Lime trees adjacent to Douglas Crescent and other works listed in table 1 below.

Tree work outstanding

The following is a list of works which have not been carried out in timings 1 and 2 of the original report and remain outstanding:-

Tree no.	Species	Description of work outstanding	Priority Category
T1517	Ash	Removal of Ivy	1
T1650	Lime	Remove epicormic growth at base (and re-inspect.)	1
T1682	Lime	Remove epicormic growth at base (and re-inspect.)	2
T1733	Elm	Remove small unstable tree leaning over path	1
T1747	Hornbeam	Minor crown reduction not carried out; a 20% weight reduction/thin of the northern crown could be carried out instead.	2
T1401 to T1425	Lime	18 Lime trees adjacent to Douglas Crescent are to be crown-thinned and crown-lifted over a period of 2 years. This includes tree T1421 where the prescription has been changed from pollarding.*	2

Table 1: Outstanding tree work: timings 1 and 2

* modified prescription from crown clean

None of the management work recommended in timings 3 and 4 appears to have been carried out yet as quite rightly priority has been given to address potentially hazardous trees in timings 1 and 2. However, much of the lower priority management work involves operations such as thinning of young regeneration which can be carried out at a low cost. This kind of work could be carried out gradually, over a period of time. I would suggest that a reliable forestry contractor is employed for a day or two in order to see what can be achieved. For safe working, this should be done to coincide with a time when the gardener is on site. I would be happy to provide contact details of a suitable contractor if required.

Additional tree work carried out

Over the course of the past year the following significant tree work has been carried out in addition to those prescribed in timings 1 and 2.

Tree no.	Species	Description	Timing
T1635	Sycamore	Tree reduced to 7m height following extensive storm damage. (Impressive view opened up to north).	1

Table 2: Significant tree work additional to original prescription in timings 1-3

There has been a considerable amount of debris removed from within trees located near the large gated access off Douglas Gardens, near Trees T1621 to T1625, improving access to tree bases and general aesthetics.

4. Tree Condition Findings

The condition of the following trees in table 3 is noteworthy either due to a deterioration of condition since the last survey or for reasons as described:-

Tree no.	Species	Description	Action required
Recommended works (12 months)			
T1437	Wild Cherry	Damaged hanging branch in lower crown near shed entrance.	Remove damaged hanging branch at 5m (W).
T1438	Whitebeam	Small hanging branch at 5m, near BBQ area.	Remove small hanging branch at 5m.
T1446	Whitebeam	Minor bleeding exudate on east stem near compression union.	Continue to monitor.
T1449	Whitebeam	Very minor bleeding exudates on stem at 1m (N). Removal of adjacent tree as planned.	Continue to monitor.
T1594	Wild Cherry	On-going decay. (Weak unions noted in original report).	20% crown reduction of southern crown to reduce weight and leverage (as per original report).
T1557	Wild Cherry	A significant longitudinal crack has appeared on trunk from ground level to 2.5m (N). The tree has the potential to impact Douglas Crescent road and parked cars.	Remove tree.
T1599	Wild Cherry	Lower branches affecting Beech hedge and shrubs.	Crown-lift removing 3 lowest branches.
T1608	Elm	Young tree succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease.	Remove tree and adjacent young Elm regeneration.

T1626	Norway Maple	Relatively early leaf fall and on-going decay at base.	Continue to monitor.
T1647	Elm	Storm damage to upper crown; long damaged hanging branches over lower path.	Remove damaged branches in upper crown.
T1688	Sycamore	Fresh small damaged hanging branch over steps at 5m.	Remove small damaged hanging branch at 5m over steps.
T1708	Sycamore	Mature tree with on-going decay.	Continue to monitor.
T1748	Horse Chestnut	On-going decay at basal cavity becoming more extensive.	Remove tree *
T1770	Elm	Young tree succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease.	Remove tree and adjacent young Elm regeneration.
		Management works (1-3 years), when possible	
T1450	Sycamore	Lower branches affecting adjacent Beech (T1453).	Crown lift over adjacent Beech.
T1487	Norway Maple	Small diameter dead wood over path.	Crown clean, removing dead wood over path.
T1520	Ash	Heavily Ivy clad.	Sever Ivy at base and at 1m.
Near T1537	Sycamore	Unstable young untagged tree leaning over boundary fence.	Remove tree.
T1542	Holly	Slender west stem now with pronounced lean over tow path.	Remove west stem.
T1545	Sycamore	Heavily Ivy clad	Sever Ivy at base and at 1m. Crown reduce primary branch at 1.6m from 8m-5m.
T1589	Lime	Decaying branch stub at 4m with weakly attached regrowth earmarked of dead wood removal (timing 3).	Crown clean.
T1609	Hawthorn	Tree in decline, with heavy Ivy growth.	Sever Ivy.
T1678	Elm	Significant basal decay developing from existing wound. Tree weighted over woodland	Remove tree.
T1694	Ash	Mature tree with new shear crack at lower trunk from ground level to 1.6m; tree weighted over woodland some possibility to impact path below.	Remove tree.
Near T1418	Amalanchiar	Tree in poor condition and not thriving.	Remove and replace.

Table 3: Tree condition: notable changes since last survey and remedial work recommended.

Other issues and explanations

- There is some decline in the condition of the late mature Whitebeams located near to the lawn: T1438; T1446; T1454 and T1455 (see above). Trees T1438 and T1446 have on-going stem decay whilst, in comparison with the others, T1454 and T1455 exhibit relatively early leaf fall and a lack of autumnal colouring. Ideally these trees should be removed and replaced over a period of time. I would recommend continued monitoring of these trees in the mean-time.
- Horse Chestnut scale inspect has been noted on several trees and appears as a mass of little white spots. This is not significant to the condition of these trees.
- T1461 Wild Cherry: no fungal fruiting bodies have been observed on the current inspection and the tree has recovered well from leaf shot/blossom wilt foliar infestation earlier in the year, as have the other Wild Cherries, including T1594, T1598 and T1599.
- The areas of pole stage trees near to T1491 (Norway Maple), T1494 (Elm) and other areas identified in the original report remain un-thinned. As these trees continue to grow they will become more slender and potentially unstable.
- T1536 Hawthorn lost to storm damage.
- I have noted minor storm damage to several mature trees where no remedial action is required including: T1537 (Ash); T1550 (Sycamore); T1568 (Lime); T1612 (Lime); T1640 (Elm); T1658 (Sycamore); T1677 (Sycamore).
- The late mature Elm, T1587 has minor dead wood in the upper crown, (as has T1726) but has a generally healthy crown appearance; this and the other mature Elms should continue to be monitored for signs of Dutch Elm Disease.
- The large Horse Chestnut T1723 has been removed, as planned; it is encouraging that the young Beech regeneration nearby, including T1717 and T1718 was undamaged and now has increased space to develop. Some of the branch wood cut from T1723 has been stacked below the path in woodland but without damage to promising young regeneration here.
- The young Elm, T1608 has Dutch Elm Disease and should be removed (see above) along with adjacent young Elm including T1606 and T1607 in order to prevent the spread of the disease. This will provide an opportunity for replacement planting; my preference would be for half-standard Oak, planted with a short tree stake and tie.
- The large previously windblown tree near T1745 continues to decay. It appears to be stable and lies down rather than across the slope; no action recommended.
- The Beech hedge near the lawn should continue to be maintained and trimmed at least every other year, preferably during the month of August.

New tree planting

Some new planting could be carried out to replace trees lost due to disease or damage. This is more likely to be appropriate at the edge of woodland areas, where the young newly planted tree will receive sufficient light to develop. The diseased Elm 1608 presents a perfect opportunity to plant if neighbouring Elm regeneration is removed. Nearby, young Elm regeneration of poor form including trees T1600 and 1601 could also be removed and replaced.

My preference for species would be Oak - a light demanding species largely absent from the Gardens – as well as Rowan and Birch, which should also be planted where light levels are high.

Planting should be carried out during the winter months, preferably late November/December, using bare rooted stock from a reputable nursery. Whips (90-12cm or half standard trees should be used. These should be protected using 60cm growth tubes or spiral guards. Trees should be inspected regularly for signs of browsing.

Thinning young regeneration effectively promotes recruitment of young trees and is a much cheaper option than planting. Work should be carried out soon enough to ensure that trees have sufficient room to develop adequate crown space and develop in to stable trees (see section 3, above).

5. Recommendations

1. Remedial action should be carried out as identified in table 3
2. All tree work should be carried out in line with BS 3998 '*Recommendations for Tree Works*'.
3. As the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) the Local Authority should be consulted prior to carrying out any of the new recommended remedial arboricultural work.
4. New planting proposals should be discussed with the Local Authority on an informal basis, if possible.
5. Due consideration should be given to the appropriate legislation concerning Birds and Bats, as recommended in the report of December 2009.
6. The trees should be re-inspected on a regular basis, with mature and late mature trees adjacent to roads and buildings inspected annually.

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15th October 2012