

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

For and on behalf of:

Douglas Crescent Gardens Committee
Edinburgh

October 2013

Douglas Crescent Gardens

Tree Survey Re-inspection audit, October 2013

1. Scope and Method

The trees included in the survey of October 2011 have been re-inspected on 1st October 2013 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. I have also looked again 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 and the re-inspection report of 2012.

2. Summary of findings

There are no serious issues to report which require immediate attention; however, I recommend the removal of 2 mature trees within the next 12 months. These and other works are listed in table 3 below.

The condition of the late mature Whitebeams and Cherry near the lawn area is encouraging. There is no visible deterioration in these trees and crowns appear to be in much improved condition. Probably as a result of the dry summer there has been no repeat of the foliar wilt exhibited so noticeably in the Cherry trees last year.

The most urgent remedial tree work prioritised (under 1 and 2) in the report of 2011 and almost all of the work highlighted in last year's report has now been carried out. Three mature trees have been removed.

The tree work carried out has again been carried out comprehensively and to a high standard.

A large mature Elm (T1675) was uprooted during high winds, causing damage to the perimeter fence. This highlights some of the issues which are presented by large mature trees sited on a challenging site, with steep banking and heavy textured soils.

Young Beech regeneration is developing well, in areas below the central path. Pole stage ash, cherry and sycamore located near the north boundary is likely to become too slender and drawn if thinning is delayed beyond this year. I understand that this work is earmarked for this coming winter.

3. Tree works

Tree works carried out

All of the remedial works prioritised in timings 1 and 2 of the report of 2011 have been completed, including crown lifting and thinning of the roadside Lime trees beside Douglas Crescent.

The list of varied work resulting from last year's inspection has been completed, with the minor exception of work to Holly (T1542). This has included the removal of 3 mature trees: T1557 (Wild Cherry); T1678 (Elm); and T1694 (Ash).

Removal of Ivy from the base of mature trees has been carried out as identified and will reduce the loading on these trees and the likelihood of tree failure in several cases.

Tree work outstanding

Little of the management work recommended in timings 3 and 4 has been carried out yet as again, understandably, priority has been given to address potentially hazardous trees. I understand that some of the thinning work to re-space pole stage trees has been earmarked for this winter. Many of these trees are becoming increasingly drawn and slender and this year probably represents the last opportunity to carry out this work successfully.

Other tree work carried out

Unfortunately a large mature Elm (T1675) uprooted during high winds, causing damage to the perimeter fence by the Water of Leith. This tree has been cleared up along with the smaller Horse Chestnut (T1540) which it collapsed on to.

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; trees earmarked last year should continue to be monitored:-

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

Tree no.	Species	Description	Action required
Recommended works (12 months)			
T1517	Ash	Minor crown separation from T1516, possibly due to minor die back of T1516	Monitor (consider minor crown reduction of both trees)
T1573	Laburnum	<i>Armillaria</i> (Honey fungus) mycelium noted, associated with decay	Remove tree
T1626	N. Maple	Crown with healthy appearance this year; on-going decay at base.	Investigate decay at base using increment borer
T1647	Elm	Diseased: Dutch Elm Disease	Remove tree
T1689	Elm	<i>Armillaria</i> (Honey fungus) at basal cavity with on-going decay.	Remove tree *
T1708	Sycamore	Very large wound with on-going decay	Monitor*
T1729	Ash	Some decay at base with wound wood forming. Good buttress root formation and large crown	Monitor
T1736	Ash	Soil cracking around the root plate possibly due to dry soil conditions; no root heave observed. Small crown.	Monitor
T1755	Ash	Potentially unstable semi-mature tree with root movement	Remove tree
Management works (1-3 years), when possible			
T1461	Cherry	Girdling root from adjacent Holly	Remove girdling root
T1463	Cherry	Girdling root from adjacent Holly	Remove girdling root
T1477	Horse Chestnut	Minor black exudates at 3m (S) on main stem	Monitor
T1556	Sycamore	Young tree of poor form affecting others	Remove tree
T1576	Holly	Root movement and extended lean	Remove tree
T1589	Lime	Crown die-back and black exudates on lower stem (N).	Monitor
T1598	Cherry	Adjacent Elm of poor form affecting growth	Remove adjacent young Elm
T1627	Laburnum	On-going stem decay and small live crown	Remove tree
T1632	Elm	<i>On-going end loading of north crown</i>	<i>Crown reduction of north crown from 12m to 8m</i>
T1633	Ash	Developing end-loading over path, with poor basal flare, restricted rooting and fibre buckling on stem. Potentially unstable.	Remove tree
T1661	Sycamore	Young adjacent stem affecting growth.	Remove small adjacent stem.
T1697	Sycamore	Debris stacked neatly at base but prevents inspection.	Remove stacked debris at tree base, also T701.

Other issues and explanations

- The large mature Elm (T1647) located near to Douglas Crescent has unfortunately become infected with Dutch elm disease and marked by the Local Authority. This tree should be removed (see table 3) and the mature Elm monitored, as before (notably T1587 and T1726). A further smaller tree, T1765 has also been marked up by the LA survey team, although in my opinion we should wait until next year to re-assess this tree before removing it.
- Following the failure of the mature Ash last winter, I have looked closely at the mature trees located directly opposite the new block of flats over the Water of Leith. Two Ash: T517 and T1516 (both very tall trees), lie within falling distance of the building. These trees are part of a group of 4 mature trees which provide mutual support and shelter. A relatively minor crown reduction of the 2 Ash would reduce the hazard from tree failure, taking them out-with falling distance of the building whilst improving stability. The integrity of the group would not be compromised which would be the case if these trees were to be removed.
- The crown condition of the late mature Whitebeam located near the lawns is encouraging, and none exhibits early leaf fall. The same is true of the mature Wild Cherry trees throughout the gardens which this year have not suffered from leaf shot/blossom wilt.
- The areas of pole stage trees near to T1491 (Norway Maple), T1494 (Elm) have been ear-marked for thinning this winter.
- Following the removal of T1723 there is prolific regeneration of Holly, Beech and Elder. There is probably room for 1 tree to be planted beside the path (see below).
- The Sycamore (T1635), reduced following severe storm damage (winter 2011) should perhaps be removed to enhance the views across to the west and north over the Water of Leith which opened up following the initial storm damage.
- The Beech hedge was trimmed in August and looks very good.

New tree planting

New planting could be carried out to replace trees lost due to disease or damage to augment trees emerging as natural regeneration and young trees already present. 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 recommendation for species would be Oak - a light demanding species largely absent from the Gardens – as well as Rowan, Birch, Hawthorn and Field Maple which should also be planted where light levels are high. Holly and Yew will tolerate shady conditions in the under-storey and Hazel can be used in mixed conditions. At some

point a few Elm could be planted using newly trialled varieties, with resistance to Dutch elm disease.

Specific suggestions:-

- Plant group of hazel (5 trees) in gap created by removal of T1678 (Elm), leaving space for young Beech tree
- Plant Oak (half standard tree) to replace Holly (1576) opposite 9/10 Douglas Crescent
- 3 young self-seeded Laburnum have emerged between T1602 and T1603; these should be left to develop. Plant 1 x new Oak by bench, replacing T1608 Elm
- Consider planting a single Field Maple near the path to the south east of the removed Horse Chestnut (T1723)
- Consider planting a single Oak in the lawn area (central location)

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.

As previously mentioned; thinning young regeneration effectively promotes recruitment of young trees and is a much cheaper option than planting. Work should be carried out this winter to ensure that trees have sufficient room to develop adequate crown space and develop in to stable trees. These trees should be monitored for signs of Squirrel damage.

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: 2010 '*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.

Martin Langton

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21st October 2013