

Expanded Arboriculture Project Tree Inspections Update

Residents, Housing and Communities Scrutiny Panel

16 February 2023

Presenter:

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Arboriculture Service Redesign

Project Update – 19 January 2023

- **387,078 trees have now been identified and logged in Confirm, identified in over 25,500 inspections.**
- This includes the city's highway trees and those in our parks, cemeteries and open spaces with pose the highest risk. The next phase of inspections will begin to focus on bilateral roads not currently in the highway program and our corporate sites - offices, community centres etc currently being managed by facilities.
- Trees in areas of low risk, such as wooded areas with low levels of footfall, have been inspected under polygon surveys, whereby the group of trees are inspected as a whole – with individual assets only being added for those trees identified with a defect or posing a significant risk e.g. in falling distance of a footpath. This ensures the most effective use of the inspectors time and an accurate representation of the area.
- Trees in higher risk areas, such as our highways, public spaces and parks have been inspected tree by tree.

Arboriculture Service Redesign

Project Update – 19 January 2023

		RAG
Number of trees inspected since January 2022	387,078	Completed ahead of target – 68% complete
Number of trees to be inspected before January 2024	162,922	Ahead of target New inspector due to start in Feb 2023 following delays in recruitment due to industry staff shortages (Contractor still in use)
Trees requiring urgent works (high risk)	6	Remedial works in progress, those of the highest risk identified are already completed in high risk zones
Trees requiring priority works (moderate risk)	260	Defects identified have been risk assessed and scheduled in for remedial works based on the given risk rating

Scope of The Service

- This update is for the trees that CWC has responsible for
- The Service will only carry out works on trees that are dead, diseased, damaged or dangerous
- Our Inspection programme identifies work that needs to be done for the health of the tree, nothing more, and the service does not carry out 'routine maintenance' all work is purely inspection or reporting lead.
- Street trees such as lime species will require regular removal of epicormic basal growth particularly where they impede highway visibility.
- We will not carry out works for

Loss of natural light

Poor Satellite/TV reception

Tree debris

Honey dew

Bird fouling

Tree pollen/BT Cables

Solar Panels

- Unfortunately the majority of the requests the service gets no arboriculture operation will stop the issue from happening, (e.g. bird fouling, leaf shedding), and could in fact affect the stability of the tree.
- **All the above is covered in the Draft Tree Risk Management Policy which at time of writing is with Leadership Team and Cabinet Member for comment before wider circulation**
- Wolverhampton Homes and some schools have their own arrangements in place for the inspections of trees

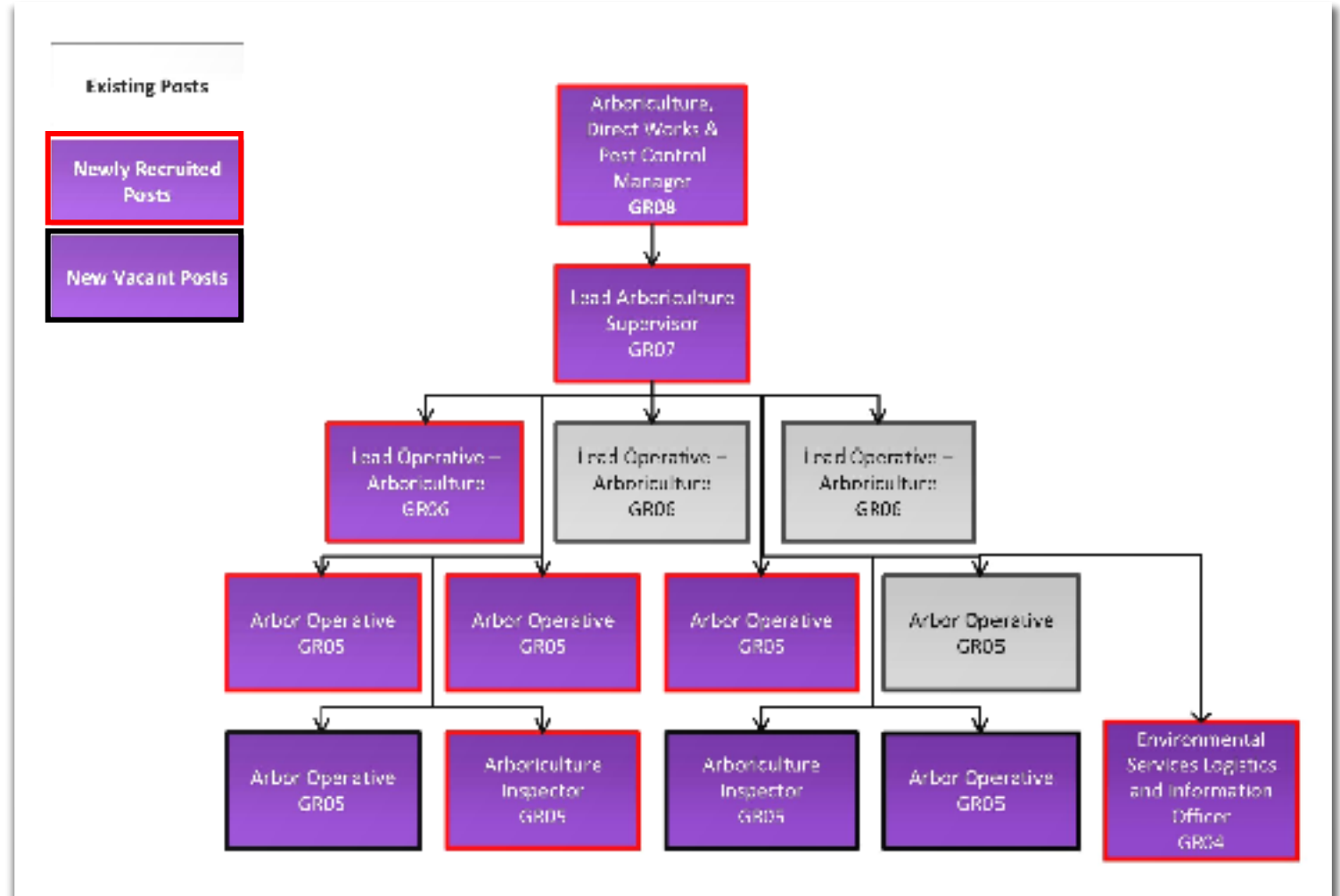
Arboriculture Service Redesign

Team Update

We have successfully recruited 8 of the required 11 members of staff to complete the initial restructure of the Arbor Team, with the final 3 roles currently being advertised.

This has included,

- A new Arboriculture Manager
- A new Arbor Supervisor
- A new Arbor Inspector with another position also current being advertised
- An additional operational arbor team, to enable the team to react to the uplift in required maintenance following the inspection program.
- A new Logistics officer to give day to day logistical support with emphasis on case triage



Arboriculture Service Redesign

Identifying Defects

- Any defect found on a Council Tree as part of the inspection programme is documented, photographed and stored in Confirm.
- The inspection, defect, remedial works as well as any enquires relating to the tree in question will remain on record
- Defects are easily monitored by the arboriculture department by utilising dashboards and maps.
- The severity of a defect and the risk it poses is assessed utilising the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) system. Which moves away from labelling trees as either 'safe' or 'unsafe' and instead QTRA quantifies the risk of significant harm from tree failure based on location, size of tree and potential damage.

Confirm®

Defect - 301352 (Supersedes 634317; Action Required) Create Job

Details

Defect Type: A-F Fungal decay specify (AF08) | Observation Type: --

Site: WEST PARK (PARK ROAD WEST) (44837890D1)

Feature: G:Tree (Leisure) (90489)

Description: Small (5x10cm March 2017) Granoderma fungal bracket between buttresses to east. Stem sounds good in all but immediate vicinity of bracket.

Location: Left of centre walkway

Notes: Imported Defect via Connector

Raised By: Arbor Team 3 (ARB3) | Raised Date: 13 Oct 2022 09:10

Priority: A:Arboriculture Monitor Defect (AM) | Target Date: 13 Apr 2023

Customer Reference: -- | Estimated Cost: 0.00

Organisation: --

Attributes

No Attributes exist.

Map

Map showing the location of the defect at West Park, near Boating Lake. The map includes labels for Park Road West, Park Road East, and Boating Lake.

Linked Defects

#	Type	Created	Status
634317	A-F Fungal decay specify	08 Mar 2017 10:13	Superseded by current Defect

Documents

Drag and drop your files here or [click here](#) to choose files or [click here](#) to enter URL.

- Photo added by ARB3 on 13 Oct 2022 at 09:10
Created 13 Oct 2022 09:10
- Photo added by GMC1 on 08 Mar 2017 at 10:13
Created 08 Mar 2017 10:17

Defect - 301352 (Supersedes 634317; Action Required)

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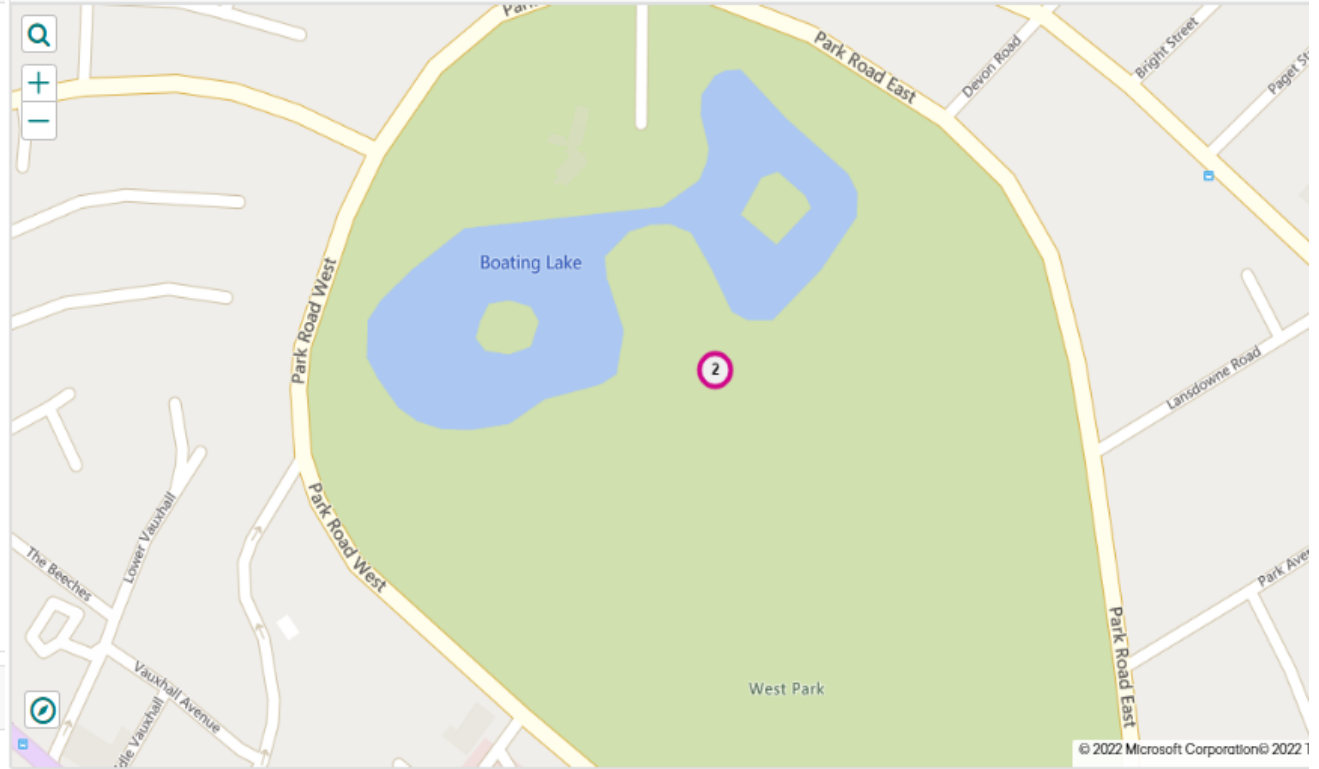
Attributes

No Attributes exist.

Linked Defects 1

#	Type	Created	Status
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Documents 2

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QTRA

Quantified Tree Risk Assessment

- Though tragic for anyone involved, in reality very few people are killed by trees. In the UK, only six people a year are killed by falling trees or branches.
- In a population of 60 million, this means a one in 10 million chance of dying from a falling tree, or a one in 20 million chance of being killed by a tree in a public open space. In other words, there is more chance of being killed by lightning (1:19 million) or of winning the National Lottery (1:14 million) than being killed by a tree on public land.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recognises that the risk of “being struck and killed by a tree falling” is “extremely low“, and is firmly in its “broadly acceptable“ category of risks.

Thresholds	Description	Action
1/1 000	Unacceptable Risks will not ordinarily be tolerated	Control the risk
	Unacceptable (where imposed on others) Risks will not ordinarily be tolerated	Control the risk Review the risk
1/10 000	Tolerable (by agreement) Risks may be tolerated if those exposed to the risk accept it, or the tree has exceptional value	Control the risk unless there is broad stakeholder agreement to tolerate it, or the tree has exceptional value Review the risk
	Tolerable (where imposed on others) Risks are tolerable if ALARP	Assess costs and benefits of risk control Control the risk only where a significant benefit might be achieved at a reasonable cost Review the risk
1/1 000 000	Broadly Acceptable Risk is already ALARP	No action currently required Review the risk

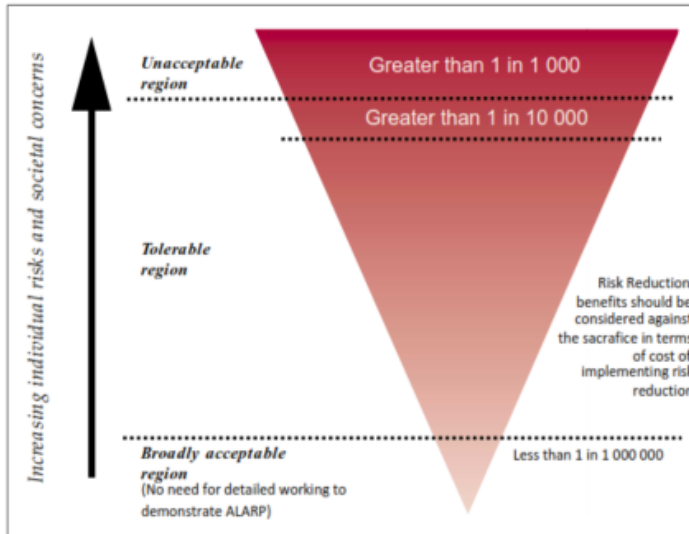


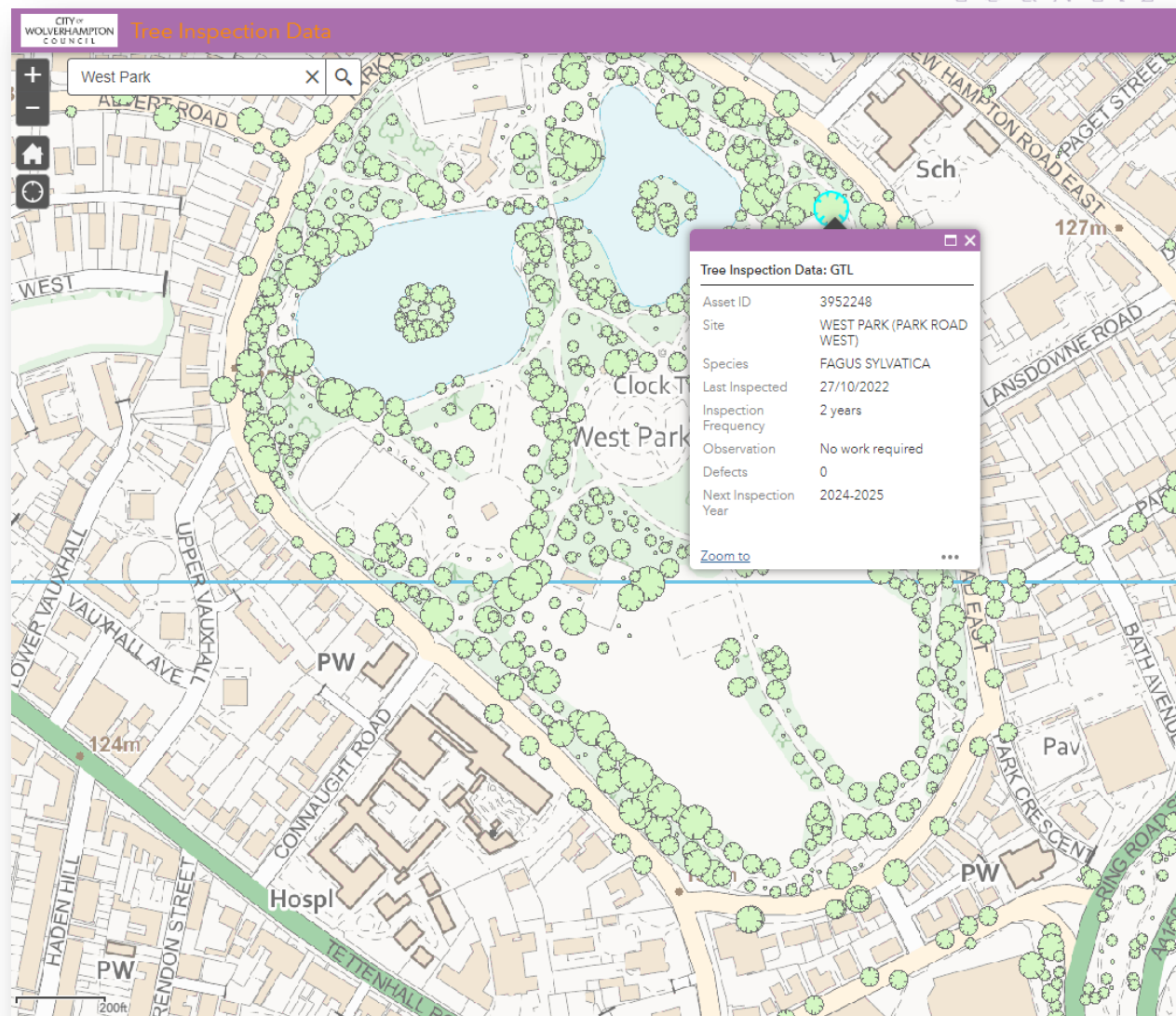
Fig.1 HSE Risk Framework

Probability of Failure Score (RoH)	Priority
1/1 – 1/1K	Emergency/Very High (Priority Works).
1/1K – 1/5K	High (Unacceptable risk where imposed on others).
1/5k – 1/10K	High Moderate (Control/review the Risk)
1/10K - 1/1M	Low (Control the risk/review the risk.
1/1M	Negligible. (No work Required).

Arboriculture Service Redesign

Tree Map

- All trees inspected as part of the project can now be seen on the Tree Map shared with Councillors earlier this year.
- [CWC TREE MAP](#)
- This allows Councillors and Council staff to easily identify a tree and check it's most recent inspection date, next inspection date and if any defects identified require additional work.



Arboriculture Service Redesign

Enquiries – Reported Defects

- All enquires into the Arbor department now come through the Confirm database by system integration with Customer Services (CEP), with an automated update taking place every 15 minutes.
- Enquiries from LoveCleanStreets are also automatically imported
- We are working closely with customer services to develop the current triage process, including expanding the use of enquiry types and streamlining business rules

The screenshot displays the Confirm Customer Services interface. The top navigation bar includes the Confirm logo, user name 'Liz Grimshaw', and a search icon. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the text 'Search for Enquiry' and a search button. To the right of the search bar are filters for 'Updated in: Last 3 Months' and 'Actions' with 'Create' and 'Edit' buttons.

The main content area is divided into three sections:

- Enquiry List:** A list of enquiries with columns for ID, subject, location, and contact. The selected enquiry is 244946, dated 22 Nov 2022, for 'A Arboricultural Works - Arboriculture' at 'WINDSOR AVENUE, WOLVERHAMPTON, WO...'. The contact is 'Mr Dharam Vir'.
- Enquiry Details:** A detailed view of enquiry 244946. It shows the subject 'A Arboricultural Works (AR01) - Arboriculture', site 'WINDSOR AVENUE, WOLVERHAMPTON, WOLVERHAMPTON (44856230)', and location 'WINDSOR AVENUE PLAYING FIELDS, WINDSOR AVENUE, WOLVERHAMPTON'. The description includes submission details: 'CWC-1388367 ---Submitted on Tue, 22/11/2022 - 13:28 Submitted by: Anonymous Submitted values are: Enquiry Type What is your enquiry? Other Your details Name Customer name Mr Dharam Vir'. The system reference is '-' and the classification is 'Enquiry'.
- Current Status:** Shows the status as 'Inspected - Defect Raised (0810)', assigned to 'Craig Watkins (CWAT)', with an effective date of '28 Nov 2022 08:09'. Notes include 'the property on the open space area. Works - fell deadw elms (Ulmus glabra) QTRA TR4, Pof2'. The follow-up date is '-'. There are also sections for 'Commitments' and 'Documents'.

A map on the right side shows the location of the enquiry, highlighting 'Coalway Road' and 'Windsor Avenue'.

Search for Enquiry



Updated in: Last 3 Months

Actions

Create

Edit

242927 20 Sep 2022

G Shrub Bed Maintenance - Grounds Mainte...

BILSTON STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON, WOL...

James Shaw

238666 10 Jun 2022

A Arboricultural Works - Arboriculture

PROBERT ROAD, WOLVERHAMPTON, WOLV...

Cllr Adam Collinge

244946 22 Nov 2022

A Arboricultural Works - Arboriculture

WINDSOR AVENUE, WOLVERHAMPTON, WO...

Mr Dharam Vir

244569 10 Nov 2022

A Arboricultural Works - Arboriculture

BRADEN ROAD, WOLVERHAMPTON, WOLVE...

Mrs Caroline Kovacs-Atkinson

243218 28 Sep 2022

A Arboricultural Works - Arboriculture

Enquiry - 244946

Subject*

A Arboricultural Works (AR01) - Arboriculture

Site*

WINDSOR AVENUE, WOLVERHAMPTON, WOLVERHAMPTON (44856230)

Location

WINDSOR AVENUE PLAYING FIELDS, WINDSOR AVENUE, WOLVERHAMPTON

Description

CWC-1388367 —Submitted on Tue, 22/11/2022 - 13:28 Submitted by: Anonymous Submitted values are: Enquiry Type What is your enquiry? Other Your details Name Customer name Mr Dharam Vir

System Reference

--

Classification*

Enquiry

Current Status

Status

Inspected - Defect Raised (0810)

Assigned To

Craig Watkins (CWAT)

Notes

the property on the open space area. Works - fell deadw elms (Ulmus glabra) QTRA TR4, Pof2

Effective Date*

28 Nov 2022 08:09

Follow up Date

--

Map



Commitments

Documents

Developing Relationship with CEU

- ACTIVITY

- Over a 51 week period the team has dealt with 1,111 enquires; 131 came via councillor support (79 Cllr report/52 on behalf of a resident). Efficiency in dealing with CEU enquiries has increased following appointment of new officer's monitoring and responding to incoming enquiries, process improvements, proactive tree inspections and appropriate work prioritisation.

- KEY MESSAGES

- Resents understanding that we will carry out works to trees, only where necessary and appropriate management timing for those species involved.
- We complete routine inspections, not routine maintenance
- The balance between protecting our trees and responding to residents' requests for pruning is not always well received.
- Complaints coming in around issues that will not be resolved with pruning of the tree.
- Reoccurring requests that have been previously answered.
- Enquires can be left 'open' for weeks beyond our 4-week SLA to respond to queries when our service response is challenged and escalated for a reviewed response
- BT cables are the responsibility of BT and we do not cut back to clear them we only inspect the tree.
- Tree planting requests where we respond with no new planting due to location issues and cannot fulfil the enquiry needs

CEU – Managing Challenges

Whilst it is not always well received, it is our position that we will only prioritise work for dangerous and defective trees identified during our proactive inspection regime or in response to a reactive enquiry for a dangerous tree. Using Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) methodology all identified work will be prioritised accordingly and completed to maintain a level of safety and in line with good arboricultural management.

Whilst we will only work on dangerous and defective trees, we do of course look at individual cases balancing a variety of different considerations around pruning and removal, but we must be clear, that this work does not take priority, resources or financial allocation over risk related defect trees and, reactive inspections for these sorts of issues are low priority.

Unfortunately, there can be unrealistic expectations of what tree maintenance is, with resident concerns regarding height, shading, leaf and detritus issues not being a consideration when identifying work. This can often lead to an enquiry reoccurring and becoming repetitive, even in situations where the service has already advised why certain work is not being completed.

CEU – Service Lead Solutions

We have worked closely with CEU around the above, improving the information on the FAQs section of the CEU so Councillors have more detailed information to pass to residents when they approach them with tree enquiries

Whilst the expanded Arb programme will not resolve all queries, by providing more information and transparency about the service it will reduce some of the CEU requests we get through.

The Arb team are specialists with qualifications and experience which provide them with the expertise to respond professionally with clear advice on tree management issues.

Our proactive inspections offer residents/Cllr's more confidence about the safety of our trees. It is an accessible inventory on our database with clear inspection information identified.

CEU – Increased Transparency

BENEFITS

- An accessible database inventory that can be queried for information allowing transparency of the service on enquiries.
- Prioritisation of risk related work for defect trees and better budget management.
- Reduce reactive inspections and response times as asset data is accessible for each tree.
- Prioritisation of reactive inspections, information collated at CEU e.g leaf, light general detritus is low priority and will not result in an inspection but dead/dangerous trees as high priority for inspection.
- Clear guidance for what works we will/will not prioritise.
- Increased focused response to residents directly where requested and/or necessary to avoid poor communication, misinterpretation and repeat enquiries.
- New locations for tree planting plotted on our database system, along with suitability for new planting requests. With a response to residents and Cllr's being data led.

Arboriculture Service Redesign

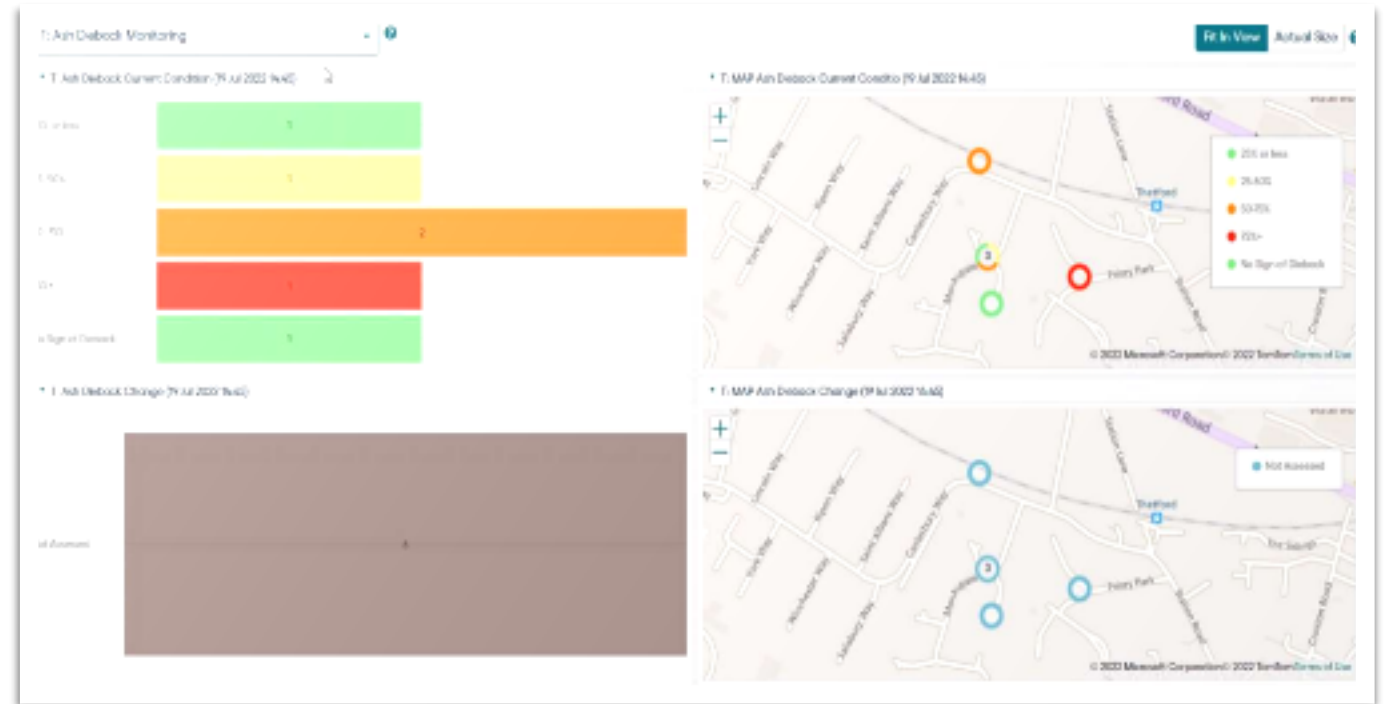
Update – Duty to Consult

- New section 96A Duty of local highway means authorities in England must consult the public before felling street trees
- Local highway authorities must consult on all street trees they are considering felling, unless the tree is exempt as per below;
 - The tree size is consistent with the standard tree size definitions used by the British Tree Nursery sector.
 - The tree is required to be felled under the Plant Health Act 1967.
 - The tree is required to be felled under any enactment on the basis that the tree is dangerous. This covers trees that need to be felled urgently because they present an immediate danger to life or property.
 - The tree is required to be felled in order to comply with section 20 or 29 of the Equality Act 2010 because the tree is causing an obstruction.
 - The tree is required to be felled as part of development authorised either by a granted planning permission or by an outlining planning permission as defined by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Arboriculture Service Redesign

Future Developments

- Publication of tree risk management strategy
- Moving forward, all data for the management of our trees will be stored in Confirm providing a fully auditable record of tree maintenance and management
- The ability to identify risk zones and inspection planning
- Future scheduled inspection plan
- Proactive tree maintenance regime
- Pest and Disease Monitoring
- Integrated duty to consult



Disease Management Example: Ash Die Back Monitoring

wolverhampton.gov.uk