

St Paulinus Churchyard Treework

This note describes the treework undertaken by the Llangors Community Council between 2022 and 2024.

Paragraph 2.11 of the Council's St Paulinus Churchyard Management Policy requires that 'Inspection of trees by a qualified Arboriculturist will be carried out every five years'.

In 2022 Cedarwood Tree Care - Independent Arboricultural Consultancy were engaged to inspect the churchyard trees and their report is dated October 2022. The report used the following identification which will be used throughout this note.



The report's findings are reproduced overleaf.

The priority designations are

Priorities for work:

1* As soon as can reasonably be arranged. This is urgent work.

1 Within the next 6 months

2 Within the 12-18 months

3 Work is recommended, as resources permit

Tag	species	age	Condition/observations.	Recommendations	Priority
1	Yew	M	Moderate. Good condition but vigour is not excellent. By the gates. Multi-stemmed with pruning wounds. Lower branches are a potential issue for access	Crown lift to 2m	1
2	Yew	M	Good. A good specimen with good vigour. Has a large, spreading form. Excellent specimen	No Work Required.	n/a
3	Yew	M	Good. Good vigour. Ivy at the base, limiting the inspection. The crown is more open than would be expected for the species. This is not a safety issue.	Sever the ivy	2
4	Yew	M	Moderate. By the southern boundary with branches over the neighbour's shed. Good vigour but moderate condition. Has a cavity and decay. There is good response growth for the wound. Lower branches restricting access. Soil has been piled up at the base.	Clear soil around the base	1
5	Cypress	M	Good. A tall specimen in good vigour. Has spreading lower branches, and some lower branches are substantial. Use of the tapping hammer indicates a possible cavity or dead bark at 0-2m on the south and west side.	Further exploration is recommended. This may include a decay assessment and/or felling.	1
6	Yew	M	Good. This is an Irish Yew. It is in good vigour. Ivy is becoming prominent. The inspection was limited due to the tree having brambles and other vegetation around it.	No Work Required.	n/a
7	Ash	M	Good. On third party land to the north, growing on the opposite side of the stream. Has localised dead wood. Lower branches may affect access	2m crown lift	2
8	Cypress	M	Good. Good condition and vigour. No visible decay	No Work Required.	n/a
9	Holly	M	Good. Good condition and vigour. Trunk forks at 1m, forming two co-dominant leaders. They fork with a wide angle, which reduces the potential for branch failure. Lower branches may affect access.	No Work Required.	n/a
10	Cypress	M	Good. Good vigour and condition. The tapping hammer indicated a possible cavity at 0-0.5m.	Further investigation is recommended. This may include a decay assessment and/or felling. 2m crown lift.	1
11	Birch	M	Good. In good vigour. Growing from a stump. Has a cavity with decay on the east side 0-0.5m. There is good response wood; the decay may be localised. Ivy is becoming established. Lower branches are restricting access	Further investigation is recommended. This may include a decay assessment and/or felling. 2m crown lift.	3
12	Cypress	M	Good. Good vigour. Trunk forks at 4, forming two co-dominant trunks. The fork is narrow, which is not ideal. There are two large wounds on the south side at 5m. There are large lower branches. A cavity may be present.	Further investigation is recommended. This may include a decay assessment and/or felling.	1

Of immediate concern was the assessment of the condition of the four large Cypress particularly the indications that the trunks could be hollow and the potential for decay where trunks fork. The possibility of employing X-ray techniques to confirm the existence of hollow trunks was explored but proved to be exorbitantly expensive.

The Council consequently decided initially to fell trees 5 and 12 because tree 12 was close to the highway and there had already been a substantial branch fall onto the public footpath and the substantial mass of lower branches on tree 5 appeared to represent a high risk to churchyard users.

After competitive tendering OTM were contracted to carry out this work.

Tree 12 was felled in June 2023 and as shown below there was some decay where the trunks forked but this was not sufficient to represent a safety hazard and the main trunk was sound.



Work on tree 5 was suspended when nesting birds were discovered. Tree 5 was felled in November 2023 and the main trunk was sound.

In light of this evidence the Council decided to take no further action on trees 8 and 10. Work needed on the other trees would be carried out as necessary as part of the routine maintenance cycle.

In August 2024 there was a major branch fall from tree 8 as shown below (this risk had not been identified by the inspection).



The Council reacted by engaging OTM to remove all the lower branches and reduce height by a third of both tree 8 and tree 10. This work was completed in November 2023. These remaining trees are regularly inspected by the Councillors responsible for the churchyard for any signs of further potential problems.