



**National  
Trust**

Cotswolds@nationaltrust.org.uk  
14 September 2020

Via email

Dear Parish Council

## **Ash dieback**

I am writing to you in my capacity as one of the Lead Rangers for the National Trust in the Cotswolds portfolio of properties and places. I am also leading the work locally on ash dieback (*Chalara dieback*), a devastating disease that's affecting ash trees across the country. It is for this reason that I am reaching out to you.

As a charity, we care for around 850 hectares (2,100 acres) of woodland in Gloucestershire. I'm sure you'll know already that ash trees are a common feature in these woods and in the wider landscape.

Ash dieback is caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. Sadly, it is now present in all the woodlands we manage in Gloucestershire. As ash trees succumb to the disease, they can drop limbs and branches, collapse or fall. Once a tree is infected the disease is usually fatal.

The prevalence of diseased ash coupled with the extremely dry spring we've just experienced has resulted in the rapid deterioration of infected trees in Gloucestershire – making it one of the most severely affected areas in Britain this year.

Over the past few months, we've been assessing and monitoring the health of the ash trees on our land. As a result of these surveys, we have identified a large number of trees across the portfolio that pose a risk to public safety and unfortunately are now in urgent need of felling.

Please be reassured that we will not be felling all affected ash trees. Wherever it's safe to do so, we'll be leaving both standing and fallen deadwood so that wildlife can benefit. The felling will only take place in high risk zones where infected trees pose a risk to public safety as identified in our rigorous tree health surveys. This includes those that are along public highways, rights of way, well used paths, permissive routes and near residential areas and car parks.

The felling works will take place at Newark Park, Crickley Hill, Woodchester Park, Haresfield Beacon, the Stroud Commons, Coaley Peak, Pope's Wood, Littleworth Wood, Dover's Hill, Horton, Chedworth, and on the Ebworth and Sherborne Park Estates. The work will be

National Trust  
Ebworth Centre  
The Camp  
Stroud  
Gloucestershire  
GL6 7ES  
Tel: +44 (0) 1452 814213  
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

President: HRH The Prince of Wales  
Regional Chair: Doug Hulyer  
Regional Director: Rebecca Burton  
  
Registered office:  
Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon  
Wiltshire SN2 2NA  
Registered charity number 205846



carried out by specialist contractors and will begin next month. The work in the portfolio is expected to last between 12-14 months as the contractors move from one site to the next.

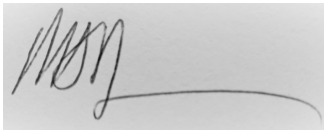
During the felling works there may be temporary road closures and restricted access along some routes and pathways at the places we care for. Where this is the case, we will obtain the relevant permissions and ensure that temporary diversions are in place to keep residents, contractors and visitors safe during these essential works. We hope to keep the disruption to a minimum and I would like to offer you my thanks in advance for your understanding and patience.

Where we've removed the dying ash trees, we will leave some areas to naturally regenerate, in others we will replant with native broadleaves like beech, whitebeam, cherry and oak while in other areas you will see us adopt a mixture of both types of woodland management.

I hope this advance notice of the work we plan to carry out is helpful. I would be very grateful if you could help us spread the word in your communities. Meanwhile, if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at [cotswolds@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:cotswolds@nationaltrust.org.uk). I will be only too happy to help and answer your questions.

Thank you once again for your continued support. It is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MSW', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matt Stanway  
Lead Ranger

Cont/d