

Canal Cottage, 154 Avoncliff

Tree Risk Assessment 2026

On behalf of

Ms Freda Ferne

Canal Cottage
154 Avoncliff
Bradford on Avon
BA15 2HD

Inspected and prepared by

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Appendix 2: VALID assessment of T1

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

- 1.1.1 There is an oak tree within the garden hedge on the boundary around Canal Cottage at 154 Avoncliff. This land is owned by Ms Ferne. The leaves of this tree turned yellow and the crown died back in 2026 and this spurred on the owner to seek arboricultural advice.
- 1.1.2 As managers of the property Ms Ferne has a duty to ensure that site users and members of the public are not put at undue risk because of any failure to take all reasonable precautions to ensure their safety. Accordingly, there is a need to inspect trees in or near public places, or adjacent to buildings or working areas to assess whether they represent a risk to people or property, and to take remedial action as appropriate.
- 1.1.3 A check of the Wiltshire Council mapping system confirms that the site is situated within a Conservation Area and that none of the trees at the property are protected by a tree preservation order (TPO).

1.2 The assignment

- 1.2.1 Bosky Trees has been employed by Ms Ferne to survey the trees at Canal Cottage. The objective for the tree survey is to assess the condition of the trees, carry out risk assessments and to recommend suitable arboricultural management. The following information is provided to accompany this report:
 - A numbered plan showing the locations of the trees surveyed.
 - A schedule listing the details of each tree surveyed and management recommendations.

1.3 Limitations

- 1.3.1 No account has been taken of the effects of leaves, fruit, exudation and insect activity associated with trees that may impact people or property. In addition, this report does not consider any aspect of tree-related building subsidence or any other tree-related nuisances.
- 1.3.2 The risk assessment has considered current site usage. New facilities or activities may change the patterns of site usage and hence necessitate a re-assessment of the trees.
- 1.3.3 Aerial tree inspection, invasive procedures and sub-soil investigations are outside the scope of the survey. Should further assessment involving any of these be required it will be highlighted in the report.
- 1.3.4 The oak tree is covered with ivy and this hindered the visual inspection of a tree. The survey is time-limited and so, whilst efforts were made to look through the ivy, there is a chance that some defects could have been obscured by ivy growth.

2 THE TREE ASSESSMENTS

2.1 Site visit and tree assessment methodology

- 2.1.1 I visited the property and carried out the tree survey on 27th July 2026. Weather conditions were dry and clear and did not present any constraints.
- 2.1.2 The inspection took place from ground level aided by the Visual Tree Assessment method¹. The survey considered only three trees.

2.2 The tree plan

- 2.2.1 An A4 plan of the trees has been produced; this is provided at the rear of the document (TP-1). The map shows the location of the trees included in the survey and the numbers that they have been allocated.

2.3 Assessing tree condition

- 2.3.1 An assessment of a tree's physiological condition and the environment around the tree gives an impression of the vitality of the tree and of its expected tolerance to stress, wounding, pathogenic attack or competition.
- 2.3.2 As part of the condition assessment the surveyor looks for signs of mechanical weakness in the tree that could lead to windthrow, trunk failure or branch shedding.

2.4 The approach to risk assessment

- 2.4.1 During tree risk assessments features within the falling distance of the tree (targets) can be people, property or road traffic. When considering the risks posed by the tree the inspection considered the usage of the target zone, the size of the part that could impact the target, and the likelihood of that part failing.
- 2.4.2 Any trees of safety concern were surveyed using the VALID Tree Risk-Benefit Assessment Method². VALID has a simple traffic light system based around the Tolerability of Risk Framework (ToR) which is an internationally recognised approach to making risk management decisions. The outcome of the VALID assessment has been used as the risk rating tool that has informed the work priorities that are recommended in this report (see table 1).
- 2.4.3 In some situations, works are recommended in the interests of good management, but it is not essential for risk management that these works are carried out; such works are listed as 'advisory'. In some situations, works have been recommended for practical reasons or to enable a more detailed inspection; these works have been listed as 'pragmatic'. In other situations, works have been recommended for good arboricultural management, such works are listed as 'advisory'. Due to the functional nature of pragmatic works they should

¹ Mattheck, C. and Breloer, H. (1995). The Body Language of Trees: A handbook for failure analysis. Research for Amenity Trees 4. HMSO, London.

² Evans, D. (2020). *VALID in a nutshell*. [online] Available at
(<https://www.validtreerisk.com/resources/Documents/What%20is%20VALID.pdf>)

be considered as a higher priority for attention than advisory works, but neither pragmatic nor advisory works are essential for risk management purposes.

Table 1: The system for prioritising recommended tree works.

Level of Risk	Priority	Suggested Timescale
Not Acceptable	Urgent	As soon as reasonably practicable
Acceptable	Pragmatic	Within the next 12 months
Not Tolerable	Non-urgent	As funds allow
Tolerable or acceptable	N/A	N/A
Acceptable	Advisory	N/A

2.5 The oak tree (T1)

- 2.5.1 The oak tree (T1) has yellow leaves (chlorosis) and crown dieback. The base of the tree has patches of dead bark. Several other trees in the vicinity have also died in recent years.



Figure 1: T1 has yellow leaves and crown dieback.

- 2.5.2 In my opinion the symptoms are most likely to have been caused by a Phytophthora (e.g. *P. ramorum*, *P. cinnamomi*, *P. quercina*). There are no obvious management options that are likely to reverse the decline of this tree. A VALID assessment of T1 is provided as Appendix 2. The tree is not imminently dangerous but I advise that the best course of action would be to fell the tree before it becomes dangerous.

2.6 The goat willows (T2 & T3)

- 2.6.1 The two goat willows surveyed (T2 & T3) are both self-sown trees that are multi-stemmed. They are small now but have the potential to become much bigger. I advise that they are removed now before they become much larger and that their stumps are poisoned to prevent them from re-growing.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Recommended tree work

- 3.1.1 Management recommendations have been made for all three trees. These works are listed within the tree schedule in Appendix 1.
- 3.1.2 The priority for works assigned to these trees is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: A summary of the works recommended.

Works Priority	No. of Trees	Suggested Timescale
Urgent	-	Immediately, without any delay
Pragmatic	-	Within the next 12 months
Non-urgent	1	As funds allow
Advisory	2	N/A
Total	3	

- 3.1.3 Trees assessed to have moderate levels of risk ('non-urgent' priority) should be programmed into annual works schedules. They should be addressed in the order that they are listed so that the most dangerous trees are worked on first although if funds allow I recommend that these works should ideally be completed within the next 24 months.
- 3.1.4 Works listed as 'advisory' have been recommended in the interests of good arboricultural practice. There is no timeframe for carrying out advisory works.

3.2 Nature conservation and tree works

- 3.2.1 Any arborist working at the site must comply with all statutory requirements concerning flora, fauna and habitat in accordance with relevant nature conservation legislation. The arborist should make sure that they are familiar with current best working practices to minimise disturbance to flora and fauna.
- 3.2.2 The arborist must consider the risk of impacting protected species prior to carrying out arboricultural works, especially when dealing with trees that have veteran characteristics. Natural England must be notified if there is reason to believe that arboricultural operations may disturb bats because a licence for the works may be required. If nesting birds are found to be present, the tree work must not commence. If the tree surgery has already started and nesting birds are then discovered, the work must stop immediately and be re-scheduled for later in the year.

- 3.2.3 The responsibility for protecting wildlife will be held by the contractor but the need to protect wildlife may result in some works being delayed, and this requirement may also result in increased costs for tree management.

3.3 General advice

- 3.3.1 Trees form a dynamic biological resource subject to the vagaries of pests and diseases, extremes of weather and the influence of human activities. Furthermore, as trees grow they may develop dead wood, cavities or other potential defects through the natural course of their life. Site managers must understand that all trees will drop branches during their lifetime and that no tree is 100% safe.
- 3.3.2 Trees can be damaged during high winds and so it would be sensible to check them after severe storms. A formal re-survey of the trees may be excessive following a storm, but I advise that a designated person walks around the site to look for any obvious damage that may need addressing.
- 3.3.3 Regular tree risk management surveys should be carried out at this property. In this case, given the site use and the nature of the tree cover, I advise that a qualified arboriculturist is employed to carry out a tree risk assessment every 5 years.

4 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

4.1 Implementation of the recommended works

- 4.1.1 The most important requirement is that the prescribed remedial tree works are implemented within the recommended timescales. Advisory works may be carried out at any time, and it is not necessary for them to be carried out at all.
- 4.1.2 All tree work must be undertaken in accordance with BS3998:2010 – Recommendations for tree work³. Only qualified and insured tree surgeons should be employed.
- 4.1.3 Since all of the trees that have been recommended works are located in a Conservation Area it will be necessary to inform the local authority prior to carrying them out. Therefore, I advise that an application for works to protected trees is made to Wiltshire Council, and that it is accompanied by a copy of this report. The council will respond within six weeks of receiving the application.

³ British Standards Institution (2010). BS3998 Recommendations for Tree Work. BSI, London.

Tree Survey Schedule**Site:** Canal Cottage, 154 Avoncliff**Surveyor:** Ben Rose**Date of Survey:** 27th July 2026

Tree Number	Tree Species	dbh (cm)	Height (m)	Age Class	Overall Health	Notes on Structural Condition and Local Environment	Risk Level	Recommended Management	Works Priority
T1	Pedunculate oak	47	14	M	P	Bark necrosis around the base of the tree, Bark exudation from the lower trunk up to 1m. Leaf chlorosis and crown dieback.	Not Tolerable	Fell the tree.	Non-urgent
T2	Goat willow	8	9	M	G	This is a small multi-stemmed tree. It is growing vigorously and it has the potential to grow much bigger. No obvious significant defects.	-	Fell and poison the stump.	Advisory
T3	Goat willow	8	9	M	G	This is a small multi-stemmed tree. It is growing vigorously and it has the potential to grow much bigger. No obvious significant defects.	-	Fell and poison the stump.	Advisory

A key explaining each category is provided at the rear of the schedule.

Tree Schedule - KEY

Tree/Group Number

The trees and tree groups have been allocated a number for the purposes of the survey but they have not been tagged.

Trees protected by a tree preservation order (TPO) are highlighted by grey colouration in the tree schedule.

Species

Common names are listed.

No. in Group

The number of trees in each group is provided in the group schedule.

Height (m)

All heights are estimated.

DBH (mm)

All stem diameters are estimated at 1.5m. They are recorded in the following categories: <150mm, 150-300mm, 300-450mm, 450-600mm, 600-750mm, 750-900mm and 900mm+.

For multi-stemmed trees the largest trunk is used

Age Class

(Y) Young, (SM) Semi-Mature, (EM) Early-Mature (M) Mature, (FM) Fully-Mature, or (V) Veteran.

Overall Health

An overall assessment of the physiological condition of the tree recorded as (G) Good, (F) Fair, (P) Poor, or (D) Dead.

Tree Structural Condition and Site Notes

Observations on the form and condition of the tree.

An assessment of a tree's physiological condition and the environment around the tree gives an impression of the vitality of the tree and of its expected tolerance to stress, wounding, pathogenic attack or competition.

As part of the condition assessment the surveyor looks for signs of mechanical weakness in the tree that could lead to windthrow, trunk failure or branch shedding.

Site notes are detailed when relevant to the risk assessment.

Risk Level

The risk is listed in accordance with the Tolerability of Risk (ToR) principles. **VALID** has rationalised ToR into the following categories for tree risk-benefit management:

Unacceptable - Risks that need to be reduced; for example, by pruning or felling the tree, or managing the level of occupation beneath it.
Tolerable if As Low as Reasonably Practical (ALARP) - Risks will also need to be reduced when they are *not* ALARP. These risks will not be reduced when they *are* ALARP.
Acceptable - Risks that do not need to be reduced.

Recommended Management

Recommended arboricultural works.
Terminology used is based on guidance detailed in BS3998:2010 – Recommendations for tree work¹.

Works Priority

Urgent - As soon as reasonably practicable.
Non-urgent - Within the next 12 months.
Pragmatic - Within the next 12 months.
Advisory - No time frame.
N/A - No works required at the present time.

¹ British Standards Institution (2010). BS3998 - Recommendations for Tree Work. BSI, London.

English Oak (T1)



Summary

Highest Risk	Not Tolerable
Risk reduction	Advisable
Tree Management	Fell the tree.
Review Year	2027
Date Assessed	2026-07-27 10:44 am
Assessed By	
Phone Number	
Email	

Risk



Tree Details and Location



Species	Height (m)	Stem Ø (cm)	Crown Ø (m)
English Oak Quercus robur	14	47	6

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Risk Inputs



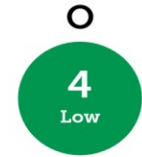
Likelihood of Occupation



Traffic



Speed Limit



Consequences



Tree



Stem



Branch



Deadwood



Likelihood of Failure

VITALITY	V	crown density woundwood response growth	R
ANATOMY	A	wood properties architecture H/D ratio	G
LOAD	L	exposure changes to the tree changes around tree	G
IDENTITY	I	species profile age of wounds CODIT	G
DEFECT	D	soundwood decay - extend feature or fault	R

Leaf chlorosis and crown dieback.



Bark necrosis all around base and bark exudations up to 1m.

Notes

The highest risk is basal failure and the tree falling into the road.

Canal Cottage

Tree Positions



T1



T2



T3

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