AGENDA ITEM 6

Committee: Open Spaces

Date: 1 December 2021

Title: Herne Hill Tree Safety Works

Purpose of Report

To update members on the results of the tree safety survey

Recommendation:

1) For members to note the works identified by the survey from South Somerset District Council (SSDC) to be carried out.
2) For members to support a commission to SSDC to carry out similar surveys across our open spaces to help set a basis for our tree management programme

Background:

1. Ilminster Town Council, in common with other landowners, has a legal 'duty of care' to ensure that users and neighbours of its land are reasonably safe. The council must also ensure that risks to its employees and contractors are reduced as far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

2. Trees are constantly changing as they grow and vary with the seasons. They can also reach considerable size and can become damaged by the elements or affected by pests and diseases that can weaken them. Trees can fall over or lose branches meaning they have the potential to cause harm where they grow in areas of public access or within falling distance of structures or highways

3. The council's fundamental responsibility, in taking reasonable care as a responsible and prudent landowner, is to consider the risks posed by its trees. Therefore, SSDC were commissioned to carry out cursory visual assessment of Herne Hill walking routes to supplement in house inspections as described in the tree risk management plan.

Report:

4. The survey undertaken by SSDC did not include an evaluation of Ash dieback, however it looked at trees that present a risk to users of the three promoted routes and two picnic areas of Herne Hill.

5. 25 trees (or groups) were identified to have been showing signs of debility or structural weakness and remedial works have been advised (**APPENDIX 6a**).

6. A large proportion of these recommendations will require aerial tree works thus requiring a tree surgeons assistance, but the grounds team will take care of the recommendations that they are able to do in house.

7. Most work will include removing dead wood and reducing trees to alleviate stress on the trunks and forks and will show little to no visual impacts except from tree 18.

8. Tree 18 is one of the large pines in the fir pound on the top of the hill. It has a *phaeolus* Fungus also known as dyers polypore which causes butt rot in conifers thus a recommendation has been made to eco pole the tree, this will involve reducing the size of it to about 100m, removing the canopy and cutting the stem to mimic natural storm damage this will become a great habitat for birds and insects.

9. Most of the rest of these works are light touches and shouldn't have too much of a visual impact to the area

10. The table on APPENDIX 6a highlights all the other recommended works.

Jake Taylor
Countryside Manager
1 December 2021

Tree no	**Location** *By Reference to plan or onsite features*	**Species** *Common or description*	**Height** (m)	**Condition** *Brief Details of specific area of concern or observed defect*	**Action**	**Priority** *(High, Medium, Low)*
1	Ridge Path entrance	Oak		Dead wood Present	Remove dead wood path side (Complete 26/11/21)	
2	Ridge Path	Ash		Ash stem leaning over pathway	Removal of cankered stem pathway side (Complete 26/11/21)	
3	Ridge path by bench	Oak		Dead wood present in tree	Remove dead wood path side (Complete 26/11/21)	
4	Red path on the corner	Sycamore		Cavity present	Reduction Path side by 4 m	
5	Red	Ash		Tight union over pathway	Reduction by 3 m	
6	Red trail on island in pathway	Ash trees			Remove vegetation and ivy to allow further inspection	
7	Red trail			Mycelium on path side,	Tree leaning away from trail	
9	Red trail	London Plane		Hanging branches	Remove hanging branches	
10	Red Trail	Oak		Deadwood over exposed pathway.	Retrench tree marked with dot (Complete 26/11/21)	

11	Red trail	Oak		Deadwood hanging over pathway	Remove hanging branches	
12	Sorbus	Rowen x 2		Deadwood present	Remove deadwood bin and path side	
13	Green trail	Oak		Deadwood present	Shorten deadwood over pathway	
14	Merge point of red/green/yellow	Oak		Dead branch over pathway	Remove large dead branch over pathway	
15	Red/yellow	Oak		dead branch over pathway	Remove	
16	Yellow trail	Ash		Ash. Torsion cracks on front stem. .	Reduce 4m over pathway	
17	Yellow Trail	Oak		Large dead over pathway.	Remove deadwood to boundary	
18	Picnic area	Pinus		Phaeolus bracket present	Reduce to eco pole	
19	Picnic area	beech		Juvenile Ganoderma's present.	Reduce 2 metres. Monitor.	
20	Yellow Trail	Oak		Cavity present and evidence of buckling	Reduce 2 x stems over pathway by 4m	
21	Yellow	Lime		Included bark. Tight fork.	Subordinate pathway side stem by 3m to reduce end weight.	
22	Yellow	Ash		Hanging limb above pathway.	Remove hanger	

23	Yellow trail	Red oak		Hanging branch/ dead limb over pathway.	Remove	
24	Yellow green	Ash		Grouped ash with deadwood over pathway	Remove	
25	Red/yellow junction	Pinus		Phaeolus present at base, tree is leaning to opposite slope	Monitor dieback and weight reduction pathway side.	

Priority	Descriptor
High	A tree in poor condition or with significant defects adjacent to high value target, or tree in moderate condition adjacent to a very high value needing action soon
Medium	A tree with defects adjacent medium value target, needing a planned and reasonable response
Low	A tree with limited defects or defects that you wish to be checked as you are unsure about there is significance adjacent low value target
NOTE: If you are unsure about any feature that you observe then your concerns must be referred to competent person.	