

Useful information for Landowners in West Sussex:

Although ash trees showing symptoms of ash dieback and posing a risk to the highway have been identified in your ownership, you may not have to remove those that do not pose a risk or are not currently showing symptoms of the infection. Some ash trees may remain resistant to the fungus that causes ash dieback for some time; where possible these trees should be retained providing they are in good health, an inspection schedule is in place, and they do not pose a risk to the highway.

Please be aware that ash trees with minimal signs of ash dieback may be prone to secondary infections that can impact on the health of the tree.

A qualified and competent professional can advise you on the condition of the ash trees and recommend the possibility of an inspection schedule where appropriate to do so. This is providing there is no risk of compromising safety.

Landowners have a legal responsibility to ensure that the risk posed by any trees on their land is appropriately managed. Therefore, please continue to monitor all tree species on your land.

As landowner you may be liable for any damage or injury caused should the tree/s fall into the highway or other land.

Tree preservation orders

Before carrying out any tree work please check with your district or borough council's planning department or tree officer to find out whether the tree is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and/or is in a conservation area. Find out more here: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/planning/tree-preservation-orders/>

Felling License

It is also important to be aware of the possibility of requiring a felling licence for tree removal although there are some exemptions - you can read more about this here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-felling-getting-permission>

Appointing a professional:

The Arboricultural Association has an approved contractor and consultant directory available Please contact on 01242 522152 or visit their website: www.trees.org.uk/ARB-Approved-Contractor-Directory

An approved contractor will be able to provide quotes for the works required and advice on what traffic management will be needed while the work is carried out.

One Network:

This website <https://one.network/> enables you to search by road or area and see what road events are planned on a given date or time period. You can also register for a free account and set up an alert for a section of road that you would like to be kept informed about.

Traffic Management & Road Closures:

If you need to close a road or install a temporary traffic regulation such as a lower speed limit to manage traffic while work is being carried out on a tree, you will need to apply for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order Visit - www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/traffic-regulation-orders/about-tros/apply-for-a-temporary-road-closure/

If you need to use other forms of traffic management such as traffic lights, please apply for road space. Visit- www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-licences/apply-to-work-on-the-highway/

Please note: For the purposes of felling diseased roadside ash trees only, there will not be a charge for the Temporary Traffic Regulations Order (This is where the road needs to be completely closed with a diversion route put in place). This is the cost of the application itself (standard cost £432.70).

To ensure you are not charged, please ensure you state clearly on your application form within the works description that the works are for felling ash trees infected with Ash Dieback.

You will still need to pay for a traffic management company to provide their service (equipment, set up and management of any form of closure eg temporary traffic signals, lane closures etc). Your chosen contractor should be able to provide the traffic management service or recommend a separate traffic management company to use.

Tree works and public rights of way:

If works are required near to or on public rights of way, please contact the Public Rights of Way Team via PROW Reporting page - www.westsussex.gov.uk/land-waste-and-housing/public-paths-and-the-countryside/public-rights-of-way/report-a-problem-with-a-right-of-way/ at the earliest possible stage to discuss your proposals. These paths are public highways as much as public roads and you have a duty to keep them open for safe and convenient use until such time as a formal closure is agreed with the County Council.

If path closures are required you will need to apply for a temporary closure - www.westsussex.gov.uk/land-waste-and-housing/public-paths-and-the-countryside/public-rights-of-way/request-a-change-to-a-public-path/temporary-path-closures/

We will assess each application on its merits and expect applicants to minimise any closure period - it may be possible that paths can be kept open by adopting a different work practice. It would be helpful to supply a copy of your felling plan and timetable. We will need to be satisfied on the standard of reinstatement, which is required to be no lesser a standard than existed prior to works.

Please note: For the purpose of felling diseased ash trees alongside a public right of way only, you will be eligible for a courtesy closure for up to 5 days free of charge. To be eligible, please clearly state on your application form within the works description that the works are for felling ash trees infected with Ash Dieback.

Tree Health Pilot Scheme:

On the 31st August 2021, the Forestry Commission announced a new tree health pilot scheme. The pilot will run for three years until August 2024 with a rolling application, so there is no deadline for application submissions. Individual landowners and groups are eligible to apply, and if successful, you will receive a grant to help pay back some of the costs of carrying out ash dieback felling works and for replacing diseased trees. Please see the table for ash dieback below which has been copied from the website:

Type of grant	Trees in woodlands	Trees outside of woodlands
Road closures	Up to 60% of standard costs	Up to 60% of standard costs
Facilitation	£20 per hour	£20 per hour
European protected species surveys	Up to 80 % of actual costs	Up to 80 % of actual costs
Restocking and capital items	Up to £5000 per ha for ancient woodland sites, up to £3930 per ha for other sites	£270.44 per large tree, £3.79 for feathers, £2.29 for whips
Maintenance (per year for 3 years)	£200 per ha	Up to £189 per large tree or £0.14 per feather or whip

If you are interested in taking part, you will need to fill in an expression of interest form and submit to the Forestry Commission. Further details and a link to the expression of interest form can be found on the website www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-health-pilot-scheme