



Beech Hurst Park Crown Reductions

Test Valley Borough Council, Andover

OVERVIEW

Tree Technique Ltd provides a range of tree services and was contracted to carry out crown reduction work on four locally notable Beech trees within the grounds of Test Valley Borough Council's main Offices at Beech Hurst Park.

BACKGROUND

A very clear and precise specification had been put together by the Tree Officer that had surveyed the trees, for them to follow. With the council having a number of approved contractors for them to issue works to, Tree Technique was selected for this particular project due to their experience and consistently high standards in relation to this exact type of work.

The specification was to prune the four mature Beech trees and remove the deadwood from the canopies. Varied amounts of growth were to be pruned from each individual tree, depending on the structural conditions identified. One tree was to have an existing cable brace removed.

The reason for the pruning was general tree maintenance to make the trees more stable, and to decrease the sail effect from wind and weight loading on the branches. All of the works were to be carried out to BS3998:2010 Tree work-Recommendations.

PLANNING

The works were surveyed in advance by Lee Hibbs who assess all works as part of the operational planning, to ascertain six factors to ensure the safe and effective implementation and completion of the works.

1. Time
2. Resources
3. Machinery and tools required
4. Initial Risk Assessment
5. Environmental and Legal Considerations
6. Costs

The data from the initial site assessment was documented on their Arb-specific, cloud-based, client relationship management system. The system allows them to photograph the individual trees and plot them onto a map. This information would be automatically presented to the team on-site, through the work tablet, when the work was booked into the calendar.

BEFORE





IMPLEMENTATION

Instruction
of the work

Work Planning

- Review of factors considered
- Selected date before the start of nesting bird season
- Liaison with Tree Officer over dates, preferred routes for vehicles & machinery & arisings
- Raising awareness of work with all stakeholders

SITE SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

At the initial stage of scoping the works, a risk assessment is carried out to consider all the elements of the site, resource requirement, environmental considerations, machinery, traffic management etc. Then on arrival on site this information forms part of the site specific risk assessment which is then completed and all the team are briefed and sign the SSRA.

OUR APPROACH



The Tree Technique team of three competent and qualified Arborists arrived on site in the morning of Monday 27th of March to begin work.



They undertook a team meeting on arrival to delegate roles within the team, discuss the specification, discuss the emergency procedure, identify the nearest welfare facilities and A+E and carry out the site-specific risk assessment. The trees were also re-assessed at this point for their condition.



The work areas were cordoned off with red and white barrier tape and road cones. `Tree Cutting` signs were erected at each entry point to the work area to inform the general public of operations.



A safe method for working at heights using two ropes and a harness could be achieved for this operation and was agreed upon on-site by the team. The use of a mobile elevated work platform (MEWP) had previously been discounted due to the type of work specified based on the height and width of the canopies, the ground conditions and the limited workspace available and restricted access.



They had selected the self-propelled, tracked, TR8 Forst woodchipper to deal with arisings. With its low ground pressure and ability to drive itself, it dramatically reduced the chance of their vehicles causing damage on the grassed areas. A four-wheel drive Toyota Hilux with a tipping chip box was also selected for the same reason and because of the dry weather conditions, no additional ground protection was deemed necessary.

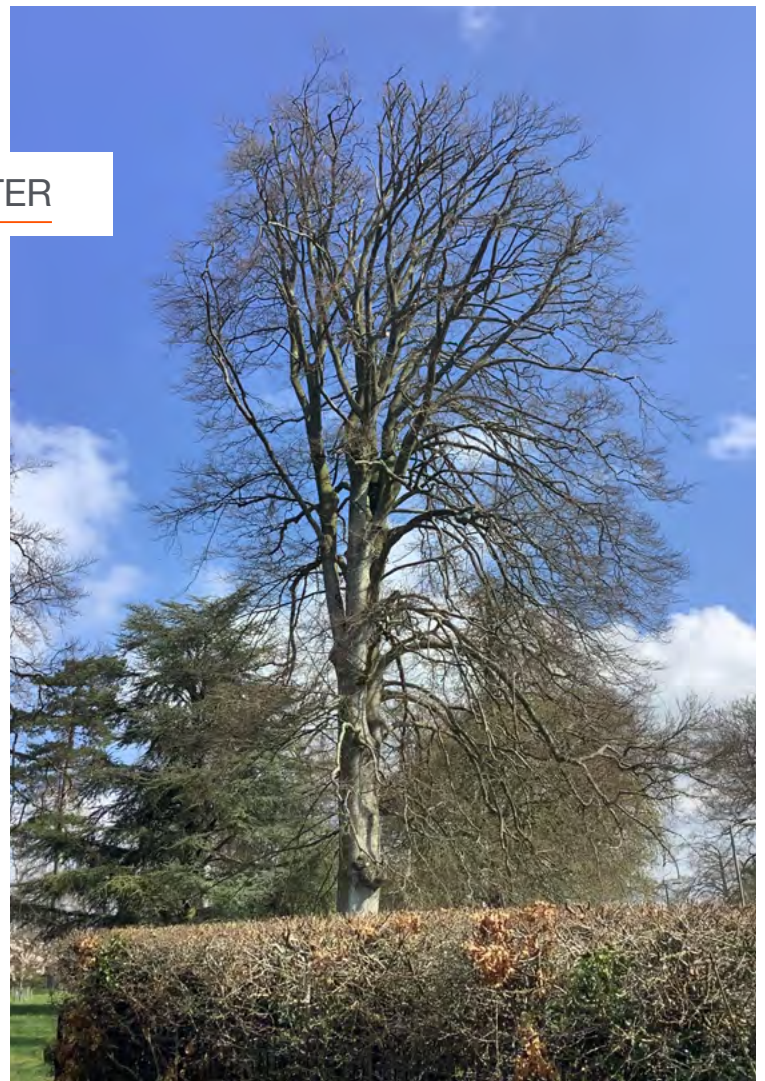


The trees were accessed from ground level using a throwline and climbing rope and once the apex of the tree canopies were reached the pruning began. A clear line of communication was set up between climbing staff and ground staff, to ensure the drop zone would be clear whenever branches could be falling.



Following the guidelines from the Tree Officers specification, branches were reduced in length back to suitable growth points selected, as the climbers made their way around the canopies. Fallen branches were collected by ground staff and fed into their woodchipper. The wood chips were directed from the chipper spout and collected in the back of the chip box on the back of the Toyota Hilux. Once the pruning was finished the ground was cleared of remaining branches and the area was raked over by hand to collect all the small twigs left behind. The leaf blower was then used to clean the footpaths.

AFTER





RESULT

On completion of the work the signs, cones and barrier tape were collected back up and stored back in the vehicles. This operation ran for three days in total, following the processes above for each day.

All of the wood chip was transported to their yard near High Post, Amesbury, stored and eventually recycled for Bio-mass.

CONCLUSION

A time and day were agreed upon by Lee Hibbs and the Tree Officer to meet on-site and check over the works around 5/6 days after completion. The work was signed off following positive feedback from the Client:

“I was personally very pleased with the standard of work that we had achieved and the prospect of Tree Technique looking after the welfare of these trees for many more years to come.”

Telephone: **01980 626 353** or Mobile: **07780 003 575**

Email: **info@treetechnique.com**

Tree Technique Ltd, Longacre, Firsdown
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6DT

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