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Mark Nettleton
Barton Hill Farm Cottage, Barton on Humber
North Lincolnshire
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20th June 2025

Arboricultural Report - 250523 BaysgarthSchlDN186AE

Dear Mark,

Please find enclosed my findings and recommendations following the resurvey of the sycamore tree (tag no. 1592), at Baysgarth School, on 20th May 2025.

To help our clients meet their duty of care in relation to risks posed by tree failure, we employ the VALID Tree Risk-Benefit Management Strategy. A copy of the strategy can be found in the latter part of this document.

The condition of the tree hasn't notably changed compared to last autumn. This does indicate a degree of stability in its condition. It also indicates that the area of apical die-back in the crown centre is well entrenched, and it not likely to improved. As such a recommendation has been made to remove the most severely compromised portion of the southern central leader, as detailed in the Surbey Schedule below. A recommendation has also been made to remove all deadwood, greater than 50mm diameter, from elsewhere in the tree. These works are of a moderate priority. Unfortunately, as the southern central leader is not dead, a TPO application to the local authority is still technically necessary for these works.

Provided these works are completed, the tree should be reassessed in 18 months. In the interim period, if any obvious tree risk features are noted, the owner should consult a suitably qualified arboriculturist. Examples of obvious tree risk features can be found on the second page of the VALID Tree Risk-Benefit Management Strategy, included below.

It is also recommended that trees are reassessed following certain events. These include; severe weather events, significant changes in site usage, construction/excavation under tree canopies, and changes that affect wind loading on trees (e.g. removal of neighbouring trees, erection/demolition of buildings).

More generally, due to the marked variability in the health of different parts of the trees, it is hard to make long term prediction as to its fate, and the best management to adopt. There is an argument that applying to remove the tree now would be the most cost-effective, however I personally think it is too early for such an approach, and believe the tree could be a good feature for many more years.

If retaining the tree is favoured, and there is a desire to keep the tree in the best possible condition, the rooting area could be mulched. At the very least the woodchip arisings from the works recommended should be spread in the rooting area. This will help with moisture retention, nutrient provision, and soil aeration. If you wish to consider more comprehensive mulching, a guidance document accompanies this report.

We hope you find this report clear and easily understood. If there are any points that require clarification please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Daniel Kendall, TechArborA
Director, Watson Lindsey Arboriculture Ltd

Arboricultural ASSOCIATION Technician Member

VALID Tree Risk-Benefit Validator

Survey Schedule - 250523 BaysgarthSchlDN186AE

Tag No	Common Name	Maturity	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Comment	Recommendations	Next Survey (months)
1592	Sycamore	Mature	Poor / Fair	Fair / Good	No significant change in limb to NNE subject to VALID assessment in previous survey. Central stem bifurcated from 6m with leaders to N and S. S leader in late stage terminal decline with 95% defoliation. Deadwood of varying size throughout crown.	Reduce southern central leader to 10m above ground level. Remove all deadwood greater than 50mm. Priory moderate. Appy mulch to rooting area. Discretionary.	18

VALID Tree Risk-Benefit Management Strategy V9.0

Trees give us many benefits that we need

The more obvious benefits that trees give us are visual beauty in the landscape, wood, and the various crops they produce. Wildlife habitat, pollution filtering, and reducing weather and climate change effects are additional values. Trees also have important social value as part of our culture, history, or because they commemorate an important event. As if all these benefits aren't enough. There's an ever-expanding body of scientific evidence that shows trees are essential for our physical health, mental wellbeing, and quality of life.

The overall risk to us from trees and branches falling is extremely low

Compared to other everyday risks we readily accept, the overall risk to us from branches or trees falling is extremely low. Our annual risk of being killed or seriously injured is less than one in a million. That's so low, we're at greater risk driving on about a 400km/250mi round trip to visit friends for a weekend than from branches or trees falling over an entire year. Given the number of trees we live with, and how many millions of us pass them daily, being killed or injured by a tree is a rare event. A rare event that usually happens during severe weather.

We can't be an insurer of nature or eliminate the risk from trees

Of course, we can't be an insurer of nature. Trees are living structures that sometimes shed branches or fall during severe weather. Since we need the many benefits from trees, we have to accept we can't remove all of the risk. Leaves, bark, cones, nuts, fruits, and small diameter deadwood regularly fall from trees. This natural debris is an Acceptable or Tolerable risk.

Duty of care

Reasonable
Proportionate
Reasonably practicable

We have a duty of care to manage the risk from our trees. The duty also says we should be reasonable, proportionate, and reasonably practicable when managing the risk. That means there's a balance we need to strike between the many benefits trees provide, the risk, and the costs of managing the risk. By taking a balanced approach, we don't waste resources by reducing risk - and losing benefits - when the risk is already Acceptable or Tolerable.

We all have a responsibility to make reasonable decisions

We're all expected to act reasonably and responsibly. We can manage our exposure to the higher risk from tree failure that happens during severe weather by not going outside. If we go out during severe weather, we're choosing to accept some of the risk.

Risk tolerance

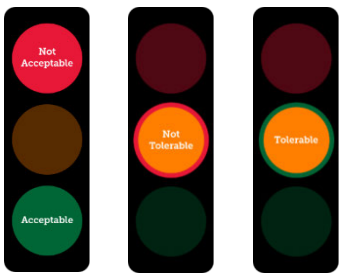
What's an Acceptable or Tolerable level of risk from our trees?

The Tolerability of Risk Framework (ToR) is an internationally recognised approach to making risk management decisions. It's used by duty holders where they manage a risk that's imposed on the public. ToR defines Broadly Acceptable and Unacceptable levels of risk. Between these levels is a region where the risk is Tolerable if it's 'as low as reasonably practicable' (ALARP). Put simply, ALARP means the risk is Tolerable if the costs of the risk reduction are much greater than the value of the risk reduction.

Risk ratings

Risk ratings are as easy to understand as traffic lights

VALID has applied 'ISO 31000 - Risk Management' and the 'Tolerability of Risk Framework' (ToR) to tree risk-benefit management and assessment, which we've adopted. In ISO risk terms, our 'objectives' are to grow, maintain, and conserve trees because of the many benefits they give us we need. And, to manage the risk from tree failure to an Acceptable or Tolerable level. We're going to manage the risk from our trees with **Passive Assessment** in all zones of use. And **Active Assessment** in zones of high confluence (high use + large trees). We have four easy to understand traffic light coloured risk ratings to show how we'll manage the risk.



Red **Not Acceptable** risks will be reduced to an Acceptable level

Amber **Not Tolerable** risks will be reduced to an Acceptable level, but with a lower priority than red Not Acceptable risks

Amber **Tolerable** risks will not be reduced, but may require an increased frequency of assessment than green Acceptable risks

Green **Acceptable** risks will not be reduced

Trees with the highest risk are the easiest to spot

Be watchful after storms

When a tree has a risk that might not be Acceptable or Tolerable, it'll usually have an obvious tree risk feature you can't help but notice. Passive Assessment is simply picking up on these features as you go about your day-to-day routine. If you see anything like these features, get in touch with us.

Root failure

Storms can break tree roots without blowing them over

Signs to look out for are

Change in angle of the trunk
Large cracks in the soil
Hump in the ground on one side


Hanging branches

Don't forget to look up

Branches can break during storms and still hang on

Sometimes they can get stuck up there for quite a while



A crack or split into the wood, beyond the bark

When trees bend and twist in storms
the wood can split and crack

Vertical cracks in the bark are just the tree growing well there's no need to worry



Decline & death

To stay healthy and strong trees need 'solar panel' leaves to make food

When trees suffer they often have much
less leaf cover and many dead branches

Standing dead trees have great habitat benefits but need checking



Decay fungi fruiting bodies

To decay fungi these 'fruits' are like apples to an apple tree

Decay fungi and trees mostly live happily together creating essential habitat for wildlife

Fungi can sometimes 'eat' too much wood and weaken the tree



Trained assessors (Validators) looking for risks that are not Acceptable or Tolerable

Active Assessment is when we're looking for risks that might not be Acceptable or Tolerable. It's also triggered when **Passive Assessment** has picked up a tree that needs a closer look. Active Assessment has three levels to it that increase in depth of evaluation. The 3 levels are Basic > Detailed > Advanced.

Risk ratings are limited by the level of assessment

Risk ratings have limitations that depend on the level of assessment at which they're made. For instance, when we carry out Active Assessment at a Basic level. If there are no Obvious Tree Risk Features, the risk is Acceptable at that level of assessment. A Detailed or Advanced Assessment is a more thorough evaluation than a Basic Assessment. They might find features that weren't apparent at a Basic level, and the risk could be higher. However, carrying out a higher level of assessment, with the additional costs, when there's no obvious feature to trigger it isn't reasonable, proportionate, or reasonably practicable.

Basic Assessment

Finding the few trees where the risk might not be Acceptable or Tolerable

At a Basic level of assessment, we're looking for trees with obvious features where the risk might not be Acceptable or Tolerable. We're also keeping an eye out for features that might increase the likelihood of failure. We can evaluate the significance of these features with VALID's Tree Risk App, and will carry out a Detailed Assessment when it's necessary. Rarely, we may come across emergency work, and we'll let you know about this as soon as we can.

Tree alerts you raise from Passive Assessment

If you raise an alert from **Passive Assessment**, we'll decide whether the tree needs a closer look at this Basic level of assessment.

We'll assess the trees from easily accessible ground

We'll assess trees from easily accessible ground, by foot, bike, or in a vehicle with a drive-by, and agree which one with you beforehand.

If we can't get a close enough look at a tree that we need to we'll let you know

If there are any trees we need to get a closer look at. But can't because of climbing plants, undergrowth, hedgerows, boundaries, or basal growth, or because the ground is too difficult, we'll let you know.

The trees or what they could fall on and the type of assessment will be recorded

We'll record trees or what they could fall on and how we covered the ground. For example, in a park, we'll plot and record that we've assessed individual or groups of trees on foot. Whereas, if there are many trees beside a road, we may record that we've assessed the road on foot or with a drive-by.

No Obvious Tree Risk Features The risk is Acceptable

Unless a tree has a feature to trigger carrying out a Detailed Assessment, the risk is Acceptable at this Basic level of assessment.

Detailed Assessment

We do a Detailed Assessment when a tree needs a closer look

We'll carry out a Detailed Assessment out on trees that we've picked up during a Basic Assessment as needing a closer look. Or where we've been asked to carry out a Detailed Assessment on a tree.

The assessment is carried out from ground level with VALID's Tree Risk App.

You'll get an easy to understand one side PDF report

The App prints an easy to understand one side PDF report. The report includes the risk rating, risk review year, risk reduction work (if necessary), and any general management advice that will help you.

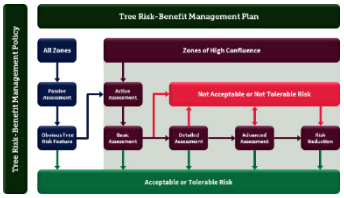
Advanced Assessment

Large and important trees might be worthy of more effort and cost

If we need more information about the likelihood of failure, we can carry out an Advanced Assessment. Often, we'll want to do this because you have a valuable tree which has extensive decay. The tree may have significant strength loss and we want to find out whether the tree is strong enough. Or, an aerial inspection is necessary to look at the upper stem and branches. When a tree needs an Advanced Assessment, we'll let you know and go through the options with you.

If the costs are substantial, we can help you decide whether the tree has enough value and future benefits to justify the investment. We'll produce a report that'll include the risk rating, risk review year, any risk reduction work options, and management advice.

The Strategy at a glance



Whether you manage or assess tree risk, we're here to help make your life less complicated and more effective.

From Strategy to App, we've got all your bases covered with the first complete tree risk-benefit management system. By taking out bafflegab (vague and ambiguous words) and numberwang (questionable maths that you can easily get wrong) from tree risk, we've made it...

"***Uncomplicated...intuitive...simpler...clearer...smarter***"

This is what Duty Holders, Arborists, and other team members who we've trained as Basic Validators are all saying. They're some words you'll likely use to describe how you feel after you've validated your approach to tree risk.

Tree risk-benefit management

Reasonable
Proportionate
Reasonably practicable

Whether you're a Government Agency, Landowner, or Homeowner you have a duty of care to manage the risk from your trees falling or dropping branches. To fulfil your duty, you should be reasonable, proportionate, and reasonably practicable about managing the risk to an Acceptable or Tolerable level.

VALID's got your back here with our full range of ISO 31000 compliant and common sense **Tree Risk-Benefit Management Strategies**. As part of our not-for-profit goals, we've released all the strategies under a creative commons license. That means they're *free* and open to *everyone*. **Validators** can help you customise your strategy. Or, they have an abbreviated *Validator Strategy* that covers you and them.

Tree risk-benefit assessment

VALID has been stress-tested to breaking point

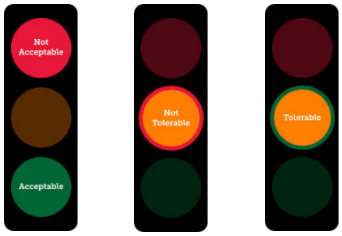
Risk-benefit assessments are carried out under the protective umbrella of our Tree Risk-Benefit Management Strategy. The Strategy does more than 95% of your assessments for you. When you need to carry out a *Detailed Assessment,* you'll use our super smart and intuitive **Tree Risk App**.

We've built the engine of the App with a Professor of Natural Hazards & Risk Science. The Professor's an internationally distinguished expert in this field. He's test-driven the model to breaking point:

> *"We have stress-tested VALID and didn't find any gross, critical sensitivities. In short, the mathematical basis of your approach is sufficiently robust and dependable for any practical purpose."*
>
> Willy Aspinall
> Cabot Professor in Natural Hazards & Risk Science
> University of Bristol

Tree risk ratings

Risk ratings are as easy to understand as traffic lights



Yes, it really is that clear and easy to understand. There's no confusion about what vague and ambiguous words or complicated numbers mean. We have four easy-to-understand traffic light coloured risk ratings.

Red	Not Acceptable risks will be reduced to an Acceptable level
Amber	Not Tolerable risks will be reduced to an Acceptable level, but with a lower priority than red Not Acceptable risks
Amber	Tolerable risks will not be reduced but may require an increased frequency of assessment than green Acceptable risks
Green	Acceptable risks will not be reduced

Tree risk-benefit management advice & training

Visit our Training page
Or get in touch for help

We work with Duty Holders to help them manage the risk and benefits from their trees. We also train Arborists to become **Validators**. And personnel who spend a lot of time outside, who aren't Arborists, to be **Basic Validators**.