

## Removal of Beech Tree in Churchyard

We thought it would be worth clarifying the situation regarding the beech tree in the churchyard, as there seems to be some misunderstanding about the reason for its removal.

The tree has been under close monitoring for a number of years, originally due to concerns about cracking to the trunk and the angle at which it was leaning over the road and the Village Hall and a number of reports have been produced regarding its ongoing condition. In his 2023 report, the expert Keith Rushforth - a leading arboriculturist/tree specialist <https://keithrushforth.co.uk> - suggested continued close monitoring of its condition, with no immediate action required.

The PCC (Parochial Church Council) therefore inspected and photographed the tree at regular intervals to assess whether there had been any changes.

In October 2025 we noticed a substantial fruiting body at the base of the tree, which we thought might be honey fungus, which is a destructive root disease of trees known to cause plant death. We called in Keith Rushforth again to give us his opinion. He also consulted with a mycologist/fungi expert, who confirmed the presence of honey fungus. He noted that the tree canopy was showing signs of stress and a marked decline in the crown since his previous visit, indicating spread of the disease. His conclusion was that while the tree might last a few more years, given its position overhanging the Village Hall and the road, removal was necessary for safety reasons.

This is not being done frivolously, or for no reason, and it will obviously be a change to the character of the churchyard. We are all sad about the loss of a majestic tree. However, as the expert has recommended removal, the PCC has no choice but to follow his advice. If no action was taken despite the recommendation for removal, and the tree fell causing damage to people, vehicles or the Village Hall, the insurance company would undoubtedly deny any resulting claims, as the expert recommendation had not been followed.

The expert has also recommended the monitoring of the other large beech behind the affected one. The second tree will almost certainly become infected too, as the root systems of the two trees will be intertwined. He has said that it could be removed now, or left in place with close monitoring, which is the route we have decided to take. Unfortunately, at some point in the future, it is also likely to need felling.

The work is currently scheduled to be carried out by Tamar Tree Care on 9th and 10th March. This will NOT involve total road closure, but there will be a Stop/Go traffic management system in place. For those two days, there will be NO PARKING OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE HALL, which will affect groups using the hall on those days (Mums & Tods and private dance sessions on Monday, and Knit and Natter on Tuesday). Cones will be put in place.

If anyone has questions, please call or email

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