



YEAR

## Visual Tree Assessment

First Line Address  
Second Line Address  
Town  
Postcode

PHOTOGRAPH  
OF ENTRANCE



VAT No. 791 0611 40

Company Registration Number: 4939203 Registered Office: 7 Loweswater Close, Cheltenham, GL51 3BA

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SAMPLE

**Site:**

**Assessment Date:**

**Compiled by:** Mr Adrian Phillips, CertArb (RFS)

**Instructed by:**

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) has been carried out from ground level, following methodologies available for the professional arborist to use.
- 1.2 The VTA method is a cosmopolitan and legally accepted method of tree control, interpreting the body language and warning signs, evaluating the trees defects and overall vitality/condition.
- 1.3 The 3 stages of a VTA are;
  - a) Visual inspection of the tree for defect symptoms and overall vitality.
  - b) If a defect is suspected on the basis of the symptoms, the presence or absence of that defect must be confirmed by thorough examination.
  - c) The use of specialist tree decay diagnostic equipment. Climbing arborist tree assessment and the quantification of results, through the use of a tree consultant.
- 1.4 Stages a and b are included in this VTA. Stage c will be noted in the information and the recommended works.

## 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Site visit taken place on **date**. Weather conditions were **acceptable**. The VTA was compiled by Mr Adrian Phillips, CertArb (RFS) AAAC, who has over 30 years' experience in the Arboricultural industry.
- 2.2 All trees are located within the curtilage of the site address.
- 2.3 English and Latin names have been used for identification. Heights and spreads are in metres.

## 3.0 Planning Considerations

- 3.1 If the tree or site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or falls within a Conservation Area all works will be subject to a formal planning application with your local council.
- 3.2 Cheltenham Tree Services provides a useful service and with your permission can take care of planning protocol.

## 4.0 Wildlife Issues

### 4.1 Bats and Birds:

Under current legislation it is a criminal offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb birds and bats as per the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2001 & The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

- 4.2 All tree work should be evaluated prior to its commencement. A comprehensive risk assessment should be produced covering all areas of Arboricultural works, environmental and wildlife issues.

## 5.0 Arboricultural Practice

- 5.1 Arborists and tree surgeons are highly specialised in their work place. Choosing a competent company can be difficult. In your procurement of work The Arboricultural Association offers you a comprehensive choice of qualified companies on their website [www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk).
- 5.2 All tree work should be carried out to the highest standards enclosed in the British Standard 3998-2010 recommendations for tree work.

## 6.0 Maturity Guide

**Young: Definition:** Newly planted/ replanted/ replacement or adopted tree, not fully established; usually with good vigour.

**Semi-Mature: Definition:** Established; normally vigorous and increasing in height.

**Mature: Definition:** Well-established trees around the middle half of their lives and retaining good vigour. Achieving full height but their crowns still spreading.

**Late-Mature: Definition:** Fully established trees, generally retaining moderate vigour but growth slowing.

**Over-Mature: Definition:** Fully mature trees in last quarter of their lives, vigour declining.

**Veteran: Definition:** Very old; low vigour; liable to decline.

## 7.0 Terminology

### 7.1 Dead Wooding:

Definition: The removal of all dead, dying, damaged or diseased wood, larger than 50mm (2 inches) diameter at its base, from the crown of the tree.

Objective: Primarily to remove wood which would otherwise be naturally shed from the tree and in doing so could expose persons, property, vehicles etc. to an unacceptable risk.

### 7.2 Crown Lifting:

Definition: The removal of the lower limbs, branches or parts of branches (including any branch stumps) from a tree to a specified height above ground level.

Objective: To achieve a desired clearance above ground level to allow clear pedestrian/vehicular passage or to remove branches which would otherwise touch buildings/structures, or to clear sight lines.

### 7.3 Crown Thinning:

Definition: The removal of a specified percentage of the trees crown by pruning out secondary and small live branch growth from within to produce an even density of foliage around a well-spaced and balanced branch structure. Crown thinning should always include "dead wooding".

Objective: The objectives of crown thinning may be varied:

- d) Temporarily reduce the amount of light loss to persons and or property adjacent to the tree.
- e) Temporarily reduce the amount of leaf surface area which may be "caught" by the wind which may result in the tree being blown over.
- f) Compensate for damage to the root system.

### 7.4 Crown Reduction:

Definition: The reduction in height and/or spread of the crown of a tree leaving it balanced. Crown reduction should always include dead wooding.

Objective: To make the crown of the tree similar by reducing the length of the limbs/branches back to a suitable point which will promote the growth of new shoots, that being a branch notch, node or back to a branch collar but retaining the flowing line of the branches. As far as is practicable the crown should be left balanced and aesthetically pleasing bearing in mind the natural form/habit of the species.

Crown reduction may be undertaken for varied reasons:

- a) Reduce the size of a tree which has outgrown its available space.
- b) Reduce the water demand of the tree.
- c) Prevent trees interfering with overhead lines/cables.
- d) To balance a misshapen tree.

### **7.5 Removal of Epicormic/ Basal Growths / Shoots / Ivy:**

Definition: Epicormic growths/shoots are adventitious shoots which 'burst' out from the base main trunk or branches of trees and proliferate during the months of May-August. They are often called 'suckers', 'frith', 'feathers' etc. and are usually less than 10mm in diameter.

Objective: In most instances, removal of epicormic growth is undertaken purely for aesthetic reasons, i.e., to achieve a tidy appearance. In some instances, however, it is necessary to keep epicormic growth under control to avoid obstructing the passage of pedestrians and vehicles, to enable unobstructed vision to highway users and to allow inspection of the structure of the tree.

### **7.6 Formative Pruning:**

Definition: The pruning of a tree (usually a young tree) to achieve a desired shape or form.

Objective: To produce a tree which will develop into:

- a) A structurally sound tree
- b) Be aesthetically pleasing
- c) Suited to surround available space and conditions
- d) Have a balanced crown that will require little corrective pruning

### **7.7 Low Branches:**

Definition: Any branch which hangs lower than 2.2m, over a walkway, open space or 4.5m over a roadway/access road, which constitutes as a hazard. Low branches could damage vehicles or pose a high risk of impact to the upper body (mainly the head area).

### **7.8 Inspect / V.T.A.:**

Definition: To undertake a climbing inspection of the tree and record findings.

Objective: To provide the Client with relevant, factual information in writing to enable decisions to be made on the safety of the tree and any appropriate remedial works.

### **7.9 Tree Removal:**

Definition: To remove the above ground parts.

Objective: The objective(s) of removal may be wide ranging, commonly:

- a) Tree is dead/dying/diseased
- b) Tree is unsafe
- c) Tree is an inappropriate species for the site

## **8.0 Priority Codes**

**Priority 1:** Urgent works to be addressed within 6 weeks or less.

**Priority 2:** Works that can be scheduled in within 6-12 months.

**Priority 3:** Works which are desirable but the completion of which is not related to issues of safety.

## 9.0 Limitations

- 9.1 There is no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied that problems or deficiencies in the subject trees may not arise in the future. Trees are dynamic, living organisms and as such their health and condition can change rapidly.
- 9.2 **Re-inspection:** The health conditions and safety of trees should be checked regularly. 24 month inspections should include winter and summer site visits.

## 10.0 Report & Recommended Works

SAMPLE

Item	Tag No / Photograph	Species	Ht. (m)	Spread (m)	DBH (cm)	Description	Recommendations	Risk Rating	Priority Code
T1									
T2									
T3									
T4									
T5									
T6									
T7									
T8									
T9									
T10									
T11									
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Item	Tag No / Photograph	Species	Ht. (m)	Spread (m)	DBH (cm)	Description	Recommendations	Risk Rating	Priority Code
T30									
T31									
T32									
T33									
T34									
T35									
T36									
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Item	Tag No / Photograph	Species	Ht. (m)	Spread (m)	DBH (cm)	Description	Recommendations	Risk Rating	Priority Code
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T92									
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T96									
T97									
T98									
T99									
T100									

SAMPLE

## 11.0 Tree Location & Site Plan

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