



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

YNYNSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK CABINET SUB COMMITTEE

27th NOVEMBER 2023

**YNYNSANGHARAD WAR MEMORIAL PARK – PLANNED TREE
MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME: WINTER 2023/24**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – HIGHWAYS, STREETCARE &
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Trustees comments and approval to undertake essential tree maintenance work within Ynysangharad War Memorial Park over the winter months 2023-24.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Trustees:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report below and duly resolve to approve the recommended programme of tree maintenance work to be scheduled to take place between November 2023 and February 2024.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the effective management of the tree stock within Ynysangharad War Memorial Park and to minimise the risk to the public from tree safety issues, whilst maintaining a healthy and sustainable tree stock to help retain the value of the amenity.
- 3.2 The Council's Tree and Allotments team know that the trees are an important feature in the park and so they do not carry out any work that is unnecessary, or that might be detrimental to a tree's health in the future. Therefore, trees are only removed if they are dangerous, diseased or already dead.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Council has a proactive programme of tree inspections from which necessary remedial works are generated and carried out. In addition, requests are periodically made by residents for tree pruning which are managed by the Council's Tree & Allotments team, part of the Streetcare Cleansing Service.

Tree Pruning

- 4.2 The Council applies strict criteria for when pruning is deemed necessary and will only prune trees for the following reasons:
- For the purposes of public safety: to ensure statutory clearance over the highway, footway, cycle lanes and public rights of way.
 - To abate an actionable nuisance: where trees come in to conflict with buildings and light structures.
 - Where remedial works are advantageous to the tree or tree stock and are in accordance with good arboricultural practice.

Tree Removal

- 4.3 Trees will usually only be removed where there is a risk to public safety or damage to property or with the aim of stopping the spread of pests and diseases.
- 4.4 Publicly owned trees are a valuable resource in the context of Rhondda Cynon Taf's tree stock, therefore there is a determination to resist the removal of trees wherever possible.
- 4.5 However, there are some circumstances where the Council may deem it necessary to remove trees, namely: -
- To address public safety concerns.
 - To abate an actionable nuisance.
 - To reduce the risk of the spread of pests and disease in accordance with good arboricultural practice.
 - Where the highway and/or footway condition determine retention unsustainable.
 - Where an approved planning application or essential development works requires tree removal.
- 4.6 In addition, it is also important to note that the Service makes every effort to try to avoid anything other than essential tree work during bird nesting season with all trees undergoing wildlife checks, in consultation with the Council's Ecologist, throughout the year, but with utmost scrutiny during the bird-nesting season.
- 4.7 Decisions to prune and / or fell trees are carefully considered by the Council's Tree and Allotments team and it is important, especially with regard to Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, that the public, Elected

Members, stakeholders and colleagues are provided sufficient notice and reasoning of the Council's intention to prune or remove trees, as part of its regular maintenance programme.

5. PROPOSED TREE MAINTENANCE WORKS – WINTER 2023-24

5.1 A number of trees with disease have been identified near the Lido, which will need to be made safe over the next three months:

- Five trees affected by Phytophthora root rot, (a soil-based disease that can kill a wide range of plants).
- One already deceased Monterey Cypress tree on the river bank within falling distance of the public footpath. (Please see Appendix 1)

5.2 Further proposed works planned for the coming winter are as follows: -

- Following the completion of checks for Massaria disease, (a fungus that does damage to Plane trees such as London plane trees, the Oriental plane and the Occidental plane), over the summer, it is proposed to undertake winter checks for all plane trees in the Park during December. This work would utilise a Mobile Elevating Work Platform and will take approximately 4 days for each visit, with any deadwood to be removed at the same time.
- Two semi-mature Lime Tree are to be excavated and moved back from the edge of the paved surface to be in line with the Lime Tree avenue planted two years ago. (This is the avenue adjacent to the tennis courts). If not moved in winter the trees may fail, and further, the bordering footpath will likely suffer in future as well. Whilst not essential this winter, it is nevertheless recommended that the opportunity be taken this winter as it's prior to the Eisteddfod. (Please see Appendix 2).
- The overgrown beech hedge opposite the "M&S" bridge entrance to the Park requires reducing back down to a hedge height that is more manageable and in keeping with its original purpose, (i.e., screening the Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water pumping station). Moreover, if allowed to keep growing, then the hedge roots could damage the surrounding surfaces and underground tanks / pipes. (Please see Appendix 3).
- The Elm trees along the avenue opposite the Lido entrance leading up to the first-aid hut would benefit from having their crowns reduced to prolong their life and existence in their current location during the winter. Such works are generally completed on a 5-year cycle. (Please see Appendix 4).
- The Turkey Oaks situated along the main entrance to the Park are in need of dead-wooding before the end of winter to allow access and help ensure the safety of pedestrians using the route along the main

entrance avenue, (these were last dead-wooded three years ago).
(Please see Appendix 5).

- 5.3 In addition to the above proposed maintenance works, it should also be noted that additional trees are planted throughout RCT annually, for the benefit of all and as part of the Council's climate change initiative to enhance, replenish and increase tree stocks as assets for carbon sequestration and sustainable development.
- 5.4 During the course of the last 2 years, the Council has secured a grant from the Welsh Government to plant trees in parks, cemeteries and open spaces in order to alleviate some of the tree felling which has to take place and Ynysangharad War Memorial Park has seen more than 20 new trees planted in this time.
- 5.5 Moreover, as a result of a tree being lost as part of the Eisteddfod plans, a new tree will be planted as part of the annual maintenance programme. Trustees will be consulted on its exact location within the park prior to the tree being planted. (The Service can use one of its already ordered trees for this purpose: delivery due imminently).

6. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

- 6.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in the Equality Act 2010, Local Authorities are required to have due regard to the need to:
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
 2. Advance equality of opportunity.
 3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.2 There are no equality, diversity or socio-economic duty implications associated with this report.

7. WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Welsh language implications as a result of the recommendations in this report. However, although the recommendations with regards to tree maintenance proposals do not have any direct impact on the Welsh language, opportunities for the service to maintain, grow or upskill Welsh speaking staff will remain a priority.

8. CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

- 8.1 There are no requirements for consultation in respect of this report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 9.1 All proposed tree maintenance works detailed in this report are to be funded from the existing tree management and maintenance revenue budget.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 Ynysangharad War Memorial Park sits within a designated Conservation Area and thus warrants special attention to preserve its social, historic or architectural character, with consent required to carry out works to such an area, if the works affect the character of the area.
- 10.2 Section 69 of the Planning, (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), Act 1990 gives local planning authorities the power to designate Conservation Areas, which are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.
- 10.3 Additionally, within a Conservation Area, anyone proposing to cut down, top, or lop a tree in a conservation area, has to give notice to the Council.

11. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 The Council has committed to getting the best out of our parks by looking after and investing in our greenspaces. This supports the priorities of the Council’s Corporate Plan ‘Making a Difference’ – 2020-24.
- 11.2 This report reflects the Sustainable Development principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, and its work contributes to all seven national goals.

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 The issues surrounding our changing climate are of great importance to the Council and the Tree and Allotments team strive to strike the right balance between tree work, which has to be carried out for health and safety reasons, or as part of good arboricultural practice, and tree planting to counterbalance the effect.
- 12.2 The proposed tree maintenance works outlined above are part of the Service’s continuing efforts to effectively manage Ynysangharad War Memorial Park’s tree assets, minimising risks to park users and ensuring the Park retains a healthy and sustainable tree stock. (Please see Appendix 6 for an indicative map showing the locations of the proposed tree works with numbers correlating with Appendices 1 – 5).

Appendix 1 (Monterey Cypress)



Appendix 2 (Lime Trees)



Appendix 3 (Beech Hedge)



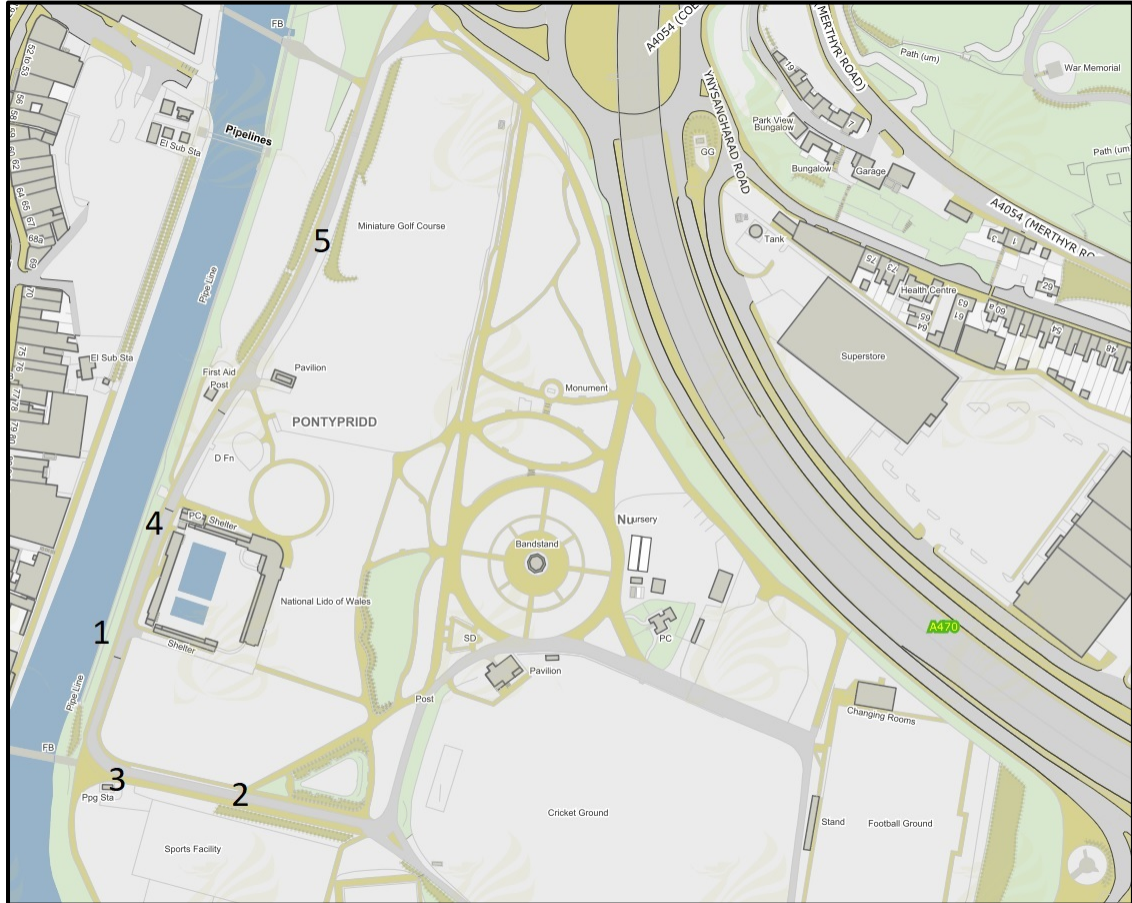
Appendix 4 (Elm Trees)



Appendix 5 (Turkey Oaks)



Appendix 6 (Location map of proposed tree works)



Other Information: -

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny

Contact Officer – Alistair Critchlow, Temporary Head of Streetcare Services