



# Tree Tops Forestry™ Ltd

Tree Surgeons, Tree Felling and Forestry Contractors  
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Est. 1973

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15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Rev A Steer  
St Andrews Church  
Church Street  
Gargrave  
Skipton  
N. Yorkshire  
BD23 3NE

Our Ref – CSG.1502

Dear Rev Steer,

Further to our phone calls, I have now been and inspected the trees within the churchyard at Gargrave.

The tree that failed was a Horse Chestnut and this was severely decayed in the base. This is the reason it collapsed.

I have inspected all the trees around the area and taken soundings of the trunks and base root areas. On the whole the trees are in good condition and little remedial work is necessary.

It would be worth a light crown lift on the roadside trees to make sure they are up to the statutory height of 5.2m.

There is no dead wood of note on the mature Beech trees bordering Church Lane. The trees are old and many limbs are twisted and rubbing. You cannot do anything about this now other than monitor them and keep an eye on them throughout the growing season.

I am making a mention of three trees. These require more work and therefore I have noted them separately.

Tree 1 is the Sycamore just through the gate, walking up to the church door. This has quite a large amount of dead wood in the crown. It needs this clearing and taking back to live wood.

Tree 2 is adjacent to tree 1, standing next to the Lych Gate. This is a mature Sycamore and is the tree which was impacted by the falling Chestnut. The tree has obvious issues in the crown with a massive amount of dead wood. This is more than would be expected, even for a mature tree.

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Soundings of the lower trunk shows some decay on the buttress roots nearest to the gate. The trunk itself is sound but has pockets of decay.

The tree has been reduced at some time. This may have been because of dead wood and in an attempt to prolong its life. The tree is in decline and it has no vigour left. It clearly is struggling and not able to put goodness to the crown extents.

If the tree were reduced again to growing wood, I feel you would need to come down to around 40% of its current height. This would leave large wounds and a poor shaped tree. I would have doubts as to whether it would recover and re sprout.

For the reasons above, I must recommend the tree be removed. I would then replant with 2 trees well spaced to take the place of the two lost trees. You could plant Hornbeam trees which are native and would mature well.

Tree 3 is an Ash in the conservation garden at the rear of the church. This has advanced Ash Die Back and the disease has made the crown very brittle. The disease is at a point where reduction would again be too severe for the tree to recover. The tree should be removed and replaced.

The trees are covered by preservation order and as such an application would need to be made to Craven District Council for consent to carry out any work.

Given the storms we now seem to be getting and the intensity of winds, I would not leave it too long to act on tree 2 particularly.

The survey determines the health and stability of the trees on the day of the survey only. No liability can be taken for failures occurring after this day. Survey carried out on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

Yours Sincerely,

Jonathan Strange