

Broadsheet

The Magazine for Broadland Tree Wardens

Issue 250 – January 2026



**Goodbye and Happy
New Era ... or is it?**

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The Monthly Magazine for
Broadland Tree Wardens



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Goodbye and Happy New Era ... or is it?

SO the sad day has arrived ... for me at least! The final edition of our magazine, Broadsheet, that I first published in September 1998. 250 editions and 28 years later I have agreed with our Executive Committee that Broadsheet will end as I step down as your Chairman and Network Co-ordinator at our AGM to be held on Tuesday 3 February 2026 starting at 19:00 at St Quintin Room, Sprowston Diamond Centre, School Lane, Sprowston NT7 8TR

It should be the start of a new era of course. An opportunity for my successor to take this Network onto even greater achievements. However, there lays a major problem!

None of the existing Executive Committee feel able to take on any of the roles of the Network Co-ordinator and, therefore, without a Network Co-ordinator this Network, that means so much to me, will be forced to fold.

To use the title "Tree Warden" a person must be registered with a Tree Warden Network that is registered with the Tree Council and to be registered with the Tree Council a Network must have a Co-ordinator. However, the Co-ordinator does not have to do all the work.

Perhaps one of you could look after the ordering of trees and hedging. Maybe another could monitor applications for works to trees subject to a TPO or Section 211 Order.

The Network has an excellent Treasurer in Richard Codling who, I understand, will be standing for re-election.

Can you really not spare a few hours per month to do something? To help save this Network that has given you so much over the years?

To use and adapt the famous quote from President John F Kennedy's 1961 inaugural address, "ask not what your Network can do for you, ask what you can do for your Network.

In the bluntest of terms, either you are prepared to contribute a bit of time and effort to the Network that has given you so much or you will lose it and will have no grounds for complaint.

Oh yes. One more thing. Unless you are registered with a Network that is registered with the Tree Council you cannot use the title "Tree Warden". That is a registered Trade Mark of the Tree Council.

So, if you wish to carry on as a Tree Warden you had better find someone who is willing to step up and become the Co-ordinator of the Broadland Tree Warden Network.

The Broadland Tree Warden Network is a "Charitable Unincorporated Association associated to The Tree Council which is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales".

Therefore, there are strict requirements for what happens if the Network fail to appoint a Co-ordinator and, as a result, folds. If you take a look at Section 2 of the Network Handbook "Broadland Tree Warden Network Constitution" you will see on page 3 the following.

U. Dissolution.

If the Executive Committee decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Charity it shall call a meeting of all members of the Charity, of which not less than 21 days' notice (stating the terms of the resolution to be proposed) shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a majority of those present and voting the Executive Committee shall have power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the Charity. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to The Tree Council, Registered Charity Number 279000, or to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Charity as the members of the Charity may determine or failing that shall be applied for some other charitable purpose. A copy of the statement of accounts, or account and statement, for the final accounting period of the Charity must be sent to the Commission.

YOU may like to consider what the Tree Council says about our Network on its website. It was written some time ago but it is still worth considering before you let the Network die.

Broadland Tree Wardens have been planting, protecting and caring for trees and woodlands in Broadland since 1990 when the Tree Council launched the Tree Warden Scheme and was one of the first district councils in the country to set up a network of Parish Tree Wardens.

In November 2018 Broadland District Council, in common with many local authorities, sadly closed its scheme and the Tree Wardens launched their own, independent Network of volunteer Tree Wardens, maintaining their links with town and parish councils and parish meetings. Broadland District Council kindly continued to provide the Network with a generous tree planting budget thereby overcoming one of the biggest hurdles facing independent networks. Funding.

The Broadland Tree Warden Network has 32 Tree Wardens covering some 63 town and parish councils and parish meetings and, to prevent the Wardens feeling isolated, we encourage the creation of local groups that will collectively carry out projects. Regular meetings help encourage feedback to the Executive Committee from Wardens and also help to prevent any feeling of isolation. The feedback received enables the Executive Committee to provide the training required to enable the Wardens to perform a full range of functions. Much of that training is provided by officers from Broadland District Council.

Broadland Tree Wardens are involved in a wide range of tree related activities from planting trees and their aftercare. That includes community woodland and orchards. They recommend trees for protection by Broadland District Council with Tree Preservation Orders and monitor and comment on applications for works to preserved trees. Many Broadland Tree Wardens work with local schools and youth groups and two run a Junior Tree Warden scheme in their parish, encouraging youngsters to experience the full range of Tree Warden activities. As one of those wardens says "we don't have to look for Tree Wardens because we are growing our own!"

Some Wardens write regular articles for their parish magazines and similar outlets and one has had a book published on the notable trees in his parish. Broadland Tree Wardens are kept up to date, both locally and nationally, by their own monthly colour magazine "Broadsheet" which celebrated its 20th anniversary in September 2018 and is now approaching its 200th edition."

WE receive wonderful support from Broadland District Council. Mark Symonds and Jamie Henry are always ready to give invaluable help and advice and, of course, the annual planting budget we receive is most generous.

Indeed, I have been very lucky to have received help and support from a number of people in my time as a Tree Warden. I'm sure that will continue for my successor ... if we can secure one!

It was back in 1994, shortly after I purchased Oakhill Wood with my neighbours, when Margaret MacQueen succeeded Alan McLeod as BDC's Arboricultural Officer. Maggie suggested that I may like to become Brundall's Tree Warden.

"What's one of them", I asked!!!

As Maggie said, if I managed Oakhill properly, and in accordance with the provisions of the TPO of course, then I would rapidly improve my knowledge.

Maggie recommended that I should ask Tree Care to carry out an inspection of Oakhill Wood and carry out the important works that were necessary. What great advice that was and I learned so much from Nick Colman and Colin McDonald.

I prepared a series of articles about the trees in Brundall and then, during a Tree Warden visit, Maggie asked me if I would care to write a quarterly news sheet for our Tree Wardens. Just one or two pages!!

That was the start of Broadsheet in September 1998. Of course, my habit of not doing things by half meant that the two page quarterly news sheet very soon developed into the 30 page monthly magazine, the final edition of which you are reading today!

I owe a great deal to Margaret MacQueen and since she moved on to pastures new BDC's "Tree Officers" have come and gone. Some made their mark and some I cannot remember.

The biggest project I undertook during my time as Brundall's Tree Warden was the creation of Church Fen Local Nature Reserve in association with Norfolk County Council and the Broads Authority.

Brundall had purchased the area of fen and carr woodland which as predominantly wet woodland but with drier areas to the north of the site, further from the River Yare. It is criss-crossed with a network of drainage dykes and there is an area of open reed bed in the centre which is extremely wet.

It was the Broads Authority Ranger Eilish

Rothney who encouraged me to "improve" the site and I learned a great deal from her.

After some time Eilish moved on to pastures new and was replaced as Ranger by Lee Harris (later to become Lee Cozens) who continued the support I had received from Eilish.

It was Lee who suggested that I contact Heidi Mahon, Norfolk County Council's Ecology Manager, with regard to securing Local Nature Reserve status.

Heidi consulted Natural England and Defra and on 21 July 2004 Chris Mowle, Norfolk County Council Member for Brundall, and Graham Mathews, Clerk to Brundall Parish Council, signed the Local Nature Reserve Agreement.

After Maggie MacQueen, Steve Chesney-Beals, together with Barbara Hornbrook as Conservation Manager, certainly gave us great support and helped us develop.

It was during the time of Barbara that I decided to "change my parish" from Brundall to Freethorpe where I created a sensory garden for Freethorpe Community Primary School, among other things.

Working with the children was most rewarding and on 10 September 2014 we were awarded the prestigious Broadland Green Award for the creation of a sensory garden.

With my fellow Tree Warden for Freethorpe, Andrea Rowlands, we created a Junior Tree Warden scheme with Freethorpe School in 2015. What a success that was.

Indeed, the school received an award from the Norfolk Education Industry and Commerce Group in the 2015 Food Farming and Countryside Challenge Competition.

I must register my sincerest thanks to Freethorpe Parish Council. I couldn't have asked for more support and I hope to continue representing and working with them for a few more years to come ... if they will have me!!

During all this time there has been one constant support. The Tree Council.

In particular Jon Stokes, Director of Trees, Science and Research, has been a source of information and inspiration from the time I became a Tree Warden.

Jon was particularly supportive in 2018 after Annie Sommazzi and Jamie Henry at Broadland District Council had asked me to attend a meeting with them. After a short exchange of niceties they announced that Broadland District Council was closing its Tree Warden scheme.

They followed that with the suggestion that I might care to create an independent network.

I can't say that was a surprise as things had been deteriorating for some time so I said that I would think about it.

I immediately called Jon Stokes and he told me not to worry as several Networks had already suffered the same fate and therefore he had all the paperwork necessary for me to create "a Charitable Unincorporated Association associated with The Tree Council which is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales".

Don't worry? It's easy? Come in Jon, that sounds terrifying!!

As it happens it was quite easy ... though quite a bit of work ... and Jon and Clare Bowen, the Tree Council's Director of Programmes, Partnerships and Communications, did make it a fairly simple process.

So there I was ... the Co-ordinator of the newly created Broadland Tree Warden Network!

Our Network developed nicely and I was so grateful to Jon and Clare for their advice and support. I couldn't have done it without them.

In September 2018 the Tree Council circulated the draft Terms of Reference for the

new Tree Warden Network Advisory Group and I fully supported the idea.

Then, in February 2019 I received an e-mail from Clare Bowen informing me that I was to become the Advisory Group's Lead Representative for the East Anglia Region with Kevin Mason, Co-ordinator of the Epping Forest District Network as my deputy. Wow!! What a privileged!

The other members of the group were as follows.

South West - Spencer Keys.

South East - Julie Bolton.

South Central - Dick Walters.

West Midlands - Diane Woodward.

East Midlands - Sam Village.

North - Dave Ellwand..

Wales - Mike Higgins.

Scotland - Catherine Lloyd..

That was to greatly widen my contact with other Networks, not just in the eastern region, and it was quite humbling.

One member of the group that I particularly remember was the lady who represented the East Midlands. Her name? Sam Village. Yes, that is the Sam Village who went on to secure a position with the Tree Council as National Tree Warden Scheme Co-ordinator.

I fully supported Sam's appointment and have never regretted it. It is a difficult job that she does very well indeed.

During that time I was lucky to meet Sara Lom, the Tree Council's Chief Executive. What a nice, approachable lady and a great leader of the Tree Council.

In 2020 the Advisory Group had served its purpose and was disbanded.

That's how I feel today. I have served my purpose as your Chairman and Network Co-ordinator and it is time for new blood. Hence my decision to stand down at the AGM.

I am very proud of what we have achieved together but the time for change has come.

Similarly, I have decided to end Broadsheet and do something else with the ten hours each week that I spend producing it.

So I wish you all a happy, safe and successful 2026 and I hope that you have found Broadsheet to be of interest over the past 27 years.

I also wish my successor as our Network Chairman and Co-ordinator (if we can find one) every success in taking us forward and I promise my full support

One final thing. This is a wonderful opportunity to refresh this Network. All the basic hard work has been done building the foundations and everything is set up to ensure future success ... if we can find a Co-ordinator.

I am willing to give my successor all the help he or she requires to keep the Broadland Tree Warden Network going, but the lack of someone willing to fill the role is making me feel that the last seven or eight years have been a waste of time.

Are you really going to sit there and watch it all fall apart while Broadland's trees lose a great deal of their protection?

Please, please, please, don't do that. Instead, remember that quote from President John F Kennedy's 1961 inaugural address, **"ASK NOT WHAT YOUR NETWORK CAN DO FOR YOU, ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR NETWORK"**.

Here's to our new era ... if we have one!!

Goodbye and very best wishes.

John Fleetwood.

Ministers ‘break word’ on protecting nature after weakening biodiversity planning rule

By Helena Horton and Kiran Stacey for The Guardian

THE government has broken its promise to protect nature by weakening planning rules for housing developers, groups have said. While developers once had to create “biodiversity net gain” (BNG), meaning creating 10% more space for nature on site than there was before the building took place, the housing minister Matthew Pennycook announced exemptions to this rule on 16 December.

Under the new rules developments under 0.2 hectares (0.494211 acres) are exempted from the policy. Analysis from the Wildlife Trusts has found that this means a combined area across England the size of Windsor forest will now not be restored for nature.

The move is part of a bigger package to help the government meet its target to build 1.5m homes by the end of this parliament. This includes a default “yes” to suitable homes being built around rail stations, and a possible exemption from the building safety levy for small and medium-sized housebuilders.

Wildlife Trusts CEO, Craig Bennett, accused the housing secretary, Steve Reed, of breaking a promise to him. He said: “In January of this year when he was environment secretary, Steve Reed made a solemn promise that the government was ‘committed to biodiversity net gain’. Now, as housing secretary, he has broken his word.”

Nature groups have also complained the rule change puts private investment in nature at risk. Private firms have already generated £320m into habitat restoration since the BNG 0.494211 rules were put into place in February 2024.

Becky Speight, the chief executive of the RSPB, said: “The decision to exempt sites under 0.2 hectares from BNG flies in the face of the UK government’s promise to be ‘the most nature-positive government this nation has ever had’. It’s a blow for nature, for local communities and for business confidence in the future of BNG.”

Wildlife and Countryside Link has warned that exempting so many small sites could still “wreck the policy altogether”, particularly when small developments dominate England’s planning system. About 95% of planning applications are for sites under 1 hectare, 88% under 0.5 hectares, and 77% under 0.2 hectares.

Reed said: “Right now we see a planning system that still isn’t working well enough. A system saying ‘no’ more often than it says ‘yes’ and that favours obstructing instead of building.

“It has real-world consequences for those aspiring to own a home of their own and those hoping to escape so-called temporary accommodation – we owe it to the people of this country to do everything within our power to build the homes they deserve.”

The plans could reduce the need for



brownfield sites to deliver BNG. Pennycook announced the government would consult on how to ensure the system supports brownfield-first development, while making it easier and cheaper to deliver biodiverse habitats offsite through simplified rules.

The government is currently consulting on whether, and how, nationally significant infrastructure projects such as airports, roads and waste incineration plants, should achieve biodiversity net gain.

Nature campaigners have said ministers should hold these projects to a high standard in order to prevent mass habitat destruction.

Richard Benwell, the CEO of Wildlife and Countryside Link, said: “To meet its electoral promise of halting wildlife decline, government should strengthen green economy rules, not shrink them. Rapidly applying net gain to all major infrastructure and stopping developers dodging their environmental responsibilities should be clear priorities, not more carveouts.

“So far, this has been a parliament of delay and relentless deregulatory threats to nature. The public outcry in support of net gain must be a last-chance wake-up call that environmental promises weren’t a ballot box bonus. Restoring nature and stopping pollution are a key test of the government’s credibility and it’s time for action.”

INTERESTINGLY, the Property Reporter carried an article by David Fisher, head of geo-synthetic sales at Geoworks, who believes that one answer to confidence across the housing market fluctuating and planning reform still uncertain, lies in the trees that already surround us.

It has been a year marked by turbulence. Sales have stalled in some regions, and many schemes have been delayed because of planning challenges. At the same time, housing targets continue to dominate headlines and

pressure on land use has never been greater. In this landscape, developers are being asked to balance viability with environmental responsibility while still creating places that attract long-term residents.

Against this backdrop, new national research by Geoworks has shed light on a factor that many developers underestimate. A survey of more than 2,000 potential homebuyers found that more than 80% would prefer to purchase from a builder that prioritises the protection of existing trees and greenery. Many respondents also said they would be willing to pay more for homes in greener settings. More than half indicated increases of up to £10,000 or more.

These findings reveal a growing recognition that established trees are not simply an aesthetic benefit. For many buyers, they are central to how a place feels. They influence wellbeing, community identity and the sense of permanence that people look for when investing in a new home.

There were notable regional differences too. Attitudes were strongest in areas facing rapid development and high-density building. In the South East and Greater London, 81% of respondents said new housing projects lack sufficient green space. This echoes wider concerns about the erosion of natural features within expanding suburbs and commuter towns. The findings also align with broader environmental warnings.

The Woodland Trust has reported that more than 1,000 ancient woods have been threatened by development over the last decade. The loss of mature canopy cover carries consequences for biodiversity, local ecosystems and climate resilience. It also affects public confidence in the long-term stewardship of new communities.

Yet developers often face practical barriers when it comes to tree protection. Mature root networks can complicate groundworks, create constraints on access and increase engineering costs. As a result, the common response has been to remove established trees and replace them with new planting.

The problem is that this approach no longer reflects what buyers want. While planting new trees remains essential, saplings cannot replicate the immediate environmental and social value of mature specimens. They take years to establish and deliver benefits. For residents looking to move into a completed home, scenery that will mature in two decades does not offer the same appeal as a formed landscape on day one.

This is where modern engineering can provide a more balanced solution. Advances in

geosynthetics and root protection systems are allowing developers to build around existing trees without compromising health or stability. Cellular confinement structures such as Geoworks' ProtectaWeb distribute weight across a wider area and reduce soil compaction. This enables access roads, driveways and footpaths to be constructed while maintaining the integrity of root zones.

These systems bring consistency and predictability to a process that has traditionally been viewed as costly and complex. They allow design teams to plan confidently from the start. They also support compliance with planning requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Equally important, they help housebuilders meet rising expectations from buyers who want greener neighbourhoods.

Tree retention brings long-term value to communities. Mature canopies improve air

quality, provide habitat for wildlife and regulate temperature in warmer months. They also promote wellbeing. Studies continue to show that access to green space reduces stress and encourages outdoor activity. When these benefits are embedded into a development from the outset, they strengthen the character and resilience of the place as it grows.

There is also a commercial motivation. In a competitive market, homes that offer an immediate connection to nature stand out. They are more likely to attract committed buyers who value the wider environment around their home as much as the property itself. By protecting established trees, developers can differentiate their schemes in ways that are backed by evidence and aligned with future policy direction.

As housing pressures continue, the industry must find practical strategies that meet

environmental commitments without slowing down delivery. Root protection is one of the most straightforward. It bridges the gap between the need for growth and the need to protect the natural assets that communities care about.

The message from homebuyers is clear. Green space is no longer a bonus; it is an expectation. Mature trees carry value that cannot be replicated through planting alone. Developers who recognise this and adopt solutions that allow for effective retention will be better placed to deliver sustainable, liveable developments across the UK.

The future of housing depends not only on the number of homes we build but on the quality of the environments we create. Tree retention has become a defining part of that conversation. Those who embrace it now will help shape places that people want to call home.

Campaigning works: five times your support saved ancient woods and trees

By Jay Henderson, Campaigner, for The Woodland Trust

DOES campaigning really work? Does signing a petition or writing a letter truly make a difference? The answer is a resounding yes! It might sometimes feel like threats to the UK's woods and trees are overwhelming and our individual actions have little impact, but irreplaceable woods and veteran trees still stand today because of your support. Let's look back at some of the vital victories we've secured together over the years.

1. Rewriting the rulebook: National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is effectively the Government's guidebook for development. For decades, we campaigned for stronger protection for England's ancient woods and veteran trees within this key policy. In July 2018, our campaigning paid off. Over 8,000 of you responded to the Government's consultation, securing a vital change: the revised NPPF now explicitly considers these habitats 'irreplaceable' - the highest level of protection. This policy change is a major success, ensuring protection from poor planning decisions and that ancient woods can be only be removed in 'wholly exceptional circumstances'. It has since saved many woods and trees from development, including ancient Coldthorn Wood in Sussex in 2022 and the 500-year-old Clatterbury Oak in Essex in 2024. Your continued support, alongside our woods under threat team and threat detector volunteers, remains essential to enforce this crucial protection.

2. When the community spoke: Nidd Gorge saved

Local campaigns are incredibly important for protecting our most cherished places and Nidd Gorge in Yorkshire is a great example. A road scheme threatened to cut this beautiful landscape in two, including ancient woodland and one of our own sites. When 15,000 of you joined the campaign to save Nidd Gorge in 2019, the local council listened and scrapped the destructive road plans entirely. This shows the direct power of local community action when

it comes to defending nature.

trees.

3. Destruction derailed: HS2 Phase 2

The HS2 rail project posed a massive threat to ancient woodland across the country. Phase 2b of the proposed route from Birmingham northwards would have destroyed dozens of irreplaceable habitats. But with your support, we campaigned tirelessly against the devastating plans and more than 40,000 of you called on Government to consider the scheme's environmental impact, helping to delay works and save woods and trees. In 2023, Government cancelled the entire route north of Birmingham. This decision immediately saved many woods, including ancient Whitmore Wood in Staffordshire, which at 5.5 hectares was set to be the biggest single loss of ancient woodland on the route. We continue to hold HS2 accountable for Phase 1 impacts.

4. Woodland imprisoned: freeing Chaddesden Wood

As one of only two ancient woods in the city of Derby, a proposal for 150 new houses was a significant threat to Chaddesden Wood. Already surrounded on three sides, the development on the fourth side would completely enclose it. As well as a precious community space, this site is a keystone of local biodiversity and we know enclosing and fragmenting habitats is damaging for our wildlife. We submitted an expert objection alongside letters against the application from 1,488 residents. The council unambiguously rejected the application specifically because of the severe consequences it would have for Chaddesden Wood and its veteran

5. Beating the bypass: the Darwin Oak

The Darwin Oak, a 550-year-old tree near Charles Darwin's childhood home, was threatened by the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road. We were a key opponent, arguing the road ignored planning rules protecting ancient trees, but despite highlighting the damage it would cause, the local council pursued the scheme. Campaigning helped delay the development while a national petition gathered over 100,000 signatures, applying massive political pressure at 10 Downing Street. In 2025, Government announced it wouldn't fund the road scheme. The bypass was consequently paused and is now likely to be cancelled, securing the future of the magnificent Darwin Oak.

Make a difference where you live

These victories clearly prove that your involvement is not just appreciated, but absolutely essential. Every letter you send and petition you sign defends our most precious woods and trees from harm. Thank you.

We must keep this vital momentum going to secure a brighter, healthier future for nature. Ready to act? Check out all the ways you can help woods and trees where you live and across the country.

Take action in your community

You can get involved in lots of ways, indoors and out. Check out our ideas and advice for plenty of ways to make a difference for woods and trees, now and for the future.

'Silent epidemic of chemical pollution' demands radical regulatory redo

By Mike Gaworecki for Mongabay

AN international team of scientists has issued a stark warning that current toxicology and chemical regulatory regimes are failing to protect public health and the environment from a host of toxins found in pesticides and other petrochemical-based compounds. In an article published in November in the peer-reviewed journal *Environmental Sciences Europe*, 43 researchers from five continents, including leading experts in toxicology, biology, public health and environmental sciences, began by pointing out severe lapses in current regulatory systems for evaluating the safety of products derived from petrochemical byproducts.

They note, for example, that the full commercial formulations of common petrochemical-based pesticides used in global agriculture have never been subjected to long-term tests on mammals. They also note that only the active ingredients declared by makers of pesticides and plasticizers (a type of chemical additive used to increase pliability) have been assessed for human health risks.

In fact, the full ingredient lists for these commercial chemical compounds are often proprietary, not publicly disclosed by the companies that develop them, yet, the article's authors found that these pesticides and plasticizers contain petroleum-based waste and heavy metals such as arsenic that could make them "at least 1000 times more toxic at low environmentally relevant doses than the active ingredients alone under conditions of long-term exposure."

As a result of these regulatory failings, "We are facing a silent epidemic of chemical pollution," said article co-author Angelika Hilbeck, a biologist at ETH Zürich. "Chronic diseases are surging, biodiversity is collapsing, and public trust in science is eroded by decades of conflicts of interest."

Gilles-Éric Séralini, a researcher of pesticides and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and professor of molecular biology, endocrinology and toxicology at France's University of Caen Normandy, led the *Environmental Sciences Europe* article. He told Mongabay that the call for a new paradigm in toxicology regulation that he and his co-authors have penned grew out of his 30 years of research into the connection between chemical pollution and chronic disease.

In the 1990s, while trying to determine pollutant levels in healthy newborns in order to use the data as a baseline to compare with pollutant levels in breast cancer patients, Séralini was surprised to find more than 300 chemical pollutants already inside newborns. He has spent the last three decades trying to determine the origins of these pollutants and the mechanisms by which they impact human health.

"I saw that the mechanism was essentially not going through the active [ingredients] unless you put that at quite high levels that you do not reach in the real world. However, at very low



levels, there are other compounds than the declared active principles in the formulation," he said.

Séralini set about determining what those mystery compounds were. "I found petroleum residues and heavy metals that were not declared [by the companies] and they were present in all pesticides."

At the same time he was working to characterize how these pollutants might be affecting humans, Séralini was in touch with a team of lawyers representing cancer patients suing Monsanto, the U.S. maker of the widely used herbicide Roundup. He was also hired by the French ministries of environment and agriculture to assess the toxicity of pesticides. This gave him access to documents that showed the processes by which pesticides are tested and approved for commercial sale. Processes that Séralini found severely flawed.

"I discovered that since the Second World War, no pesticides around the world were [fully] tested by the companies, and that the [environmental protection] agencies in the world, even in North America or Europe or Australia, are not making their own experiments. They are just reading the papers or the files that the company is giving to them," Séralini said.

Paediatrician and epidemiologist Philip Landrigan, who was not involved in the current article, said Séralini and colleagues' assertion that the world needs a new paradigm for

toxicology regulation "is absolutely correct."

Landrigan, a professor at Boston College in the U.S. and director of the Global Observatory on Planetary Health, noted that he and his colleagues at the Consortium for Children's Environmental Health published a paper in *The New England Journal of Medicine* in January that spoke to many of the same issues and came to similar conclusions as the *Environmental Sciences Europe* article, though they approached the issues from the perspective of medical doctors.

"One of the things that's become very clear to us who practice medicine and work in related fields is that commercial chemicals - chemicals that are in everyday use in this country - are causing disease in children," because they are much more vulnerable to these chemical pollutants than adults, Landrigan said. "There are very solid clinical studies and epidemiologic studies that support that statement for a whole series of chemicals."

Chronic diseases in U.S. children are rising, Landrigan explained. Asthma has tripled, he told Mongabay, cancer is up by 35%, and autism now affects one child in 36, according to the latest statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, a federal government agency, while childhood obesity has increased fourfold over the last 30 years.

"Of course, chemicals are not the only driver of those changes, but it's quite clear that

chemicals in the environment are important drivers of these changes. And we've got the evidence to show it," Landrigan said. The increase in the frequency of these chronic diseases, he adds, is closely correlated with the increased outpouring of synthetic chemicals into children's environments since World War II.

If humanity is facing a silent epidemic of chemical pollution, it's silent for a reason, Landrigan added: "I would venture to say that it's not known by 99% of the American public. The chemical and pesticide industry has been so effective in their lobbying that they've been able to keep a toothless law on the books and bring new chemicals to market with virtually no pre-market testing for toxicity."

In the 1960s, when Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* identified the extensive environmental harm that the insecticide DDT was doing, the chemical industry responded with outraged denial and attempts to discredit her and other scientists. More recently, it has moderated its response, calling for voluntary initiatives by companies to develop better safety



protocols; urged increased industry engagement with regulators; and supported incremental change so as not to disrupt society or the economy. The chemical industry continues lobbying against strict regulation.

Séralini's team advocates the implementation of three measures to effect "a paradigm shift in regulation." First, lower the admissible daily intake, or toxicity threshold, of chemical compounds already approved for commercial use by at least a factor of 100. Second, perform

petroleum residues and heavy metals.

Today, we all carry pesticides in our bodies absorbed from the food we eat and the environment we live in, Séralini said. "The good news is that there are ways to feed the world differently. We have to develop agroecology and subsidise that at least as much as intensive agriculture. If we choose to develop agroecology instead, we will change the world and we will save biodiversity and the environment."

long-term tests on the full formulations of new pesticides and plasticizers at "environmentally relevant" (ie low) levels. Finally, require all toxicological data and experimental protocols for approved commercial compounds be made publicly available.

However, even this radical regulatory paradigm shift, if it were to happen, wouldn't go far enough, said Séralini and his co-authors. The team also calls for a rapid transition to agroecology and away from intensive agricultural practices requiring heavy use of pesticides. They point to research showing that agroecological practices lead to a food supply that's lower in

Derby Company fined after tree worker fell more than 30ft

By Matt Taylor for BBC East Midlands

A tree worker suffered life-altering back injuries after falling more than 30ft (9.1m) as he attempted to abseil from an elevated platform that had stopped working. AP Tree Specialists has been fined £20,000 after the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found it had failed to plan, appropriately supervise and carry out work at height in a safe manner.

The employee was carrying out tree surgery from the basket of a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP) at a site in Derby in January 2024.

Company director Matthew Scholes was acting as site supervisor at the time and was "directly involved in decisions and actions that led to the injuries sustained by the employee", the HSE said.

When the MEWP stopped working on 25 January 2024, there was no-one at the site who could bring the basket safely to the ground, leading to the man attempting to abseil down, the HSE added.

The arboriculture company, based in Shelton Lock, Derby, pleaded guilty to breaching section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 at Birmingham Magistrates' Court on 3 December.

As well as the £20,000 fine, the company was ordered to pay £6,956 in costs.

At the same venue, Scholes, 47, pleaded guilty to breaching section 37(1) of the 1974 Act and was fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £400

in costs.

The HSE said the company had not completed a "sufficient risk assessment for work at height activities, and employees were not appropriately trained in the use of lifting equipment".

Where lifting equipment is used, HSE guidance says workers must receive the appropriate training, and rescue planning, equipment and personnel must be considered as part of the site assessment.

HSE investigating inspector, Kerry Scott, said: "This incident could have been avoided if AP Tree Specialists Ltd had planned the work at height with suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe systems of work, including a rescue plan.

"They should have provided the employee with the correct information, instruction and training for working at height and for using the lifting equipment.

"HSE will not fail to take action where companies and directors do not ensure the health and safety of their employees."



Postponement of Norfolk-Suffolk mayor vote triggers row

By Owen Sennitt, Local Democracy Reporter for the EDP

THE postponement of the mayoral elections in Norfolk and Suffolk has sparked anger and left a planned shake-up of local government in chaos, with critics calling it an "attack on democracy". Mayoral candidates across the political spectrum are furious after it emerged **No. 10 plans to push back the vote for two years until 2028.**

The government is arguing the move is necessary to allow more time for local government reorganisation, which will see the abolition of district and county councils and their replacement by unitary authorities.

However, Labour's claims have been dismissed as "spurious" by Reform leaders, who say it is a ploy to prevent its candidate from winning the vote while the party surges in the polls.

Other candidates fear the decision will stifle the region's economy due to the uncertainty it has caused and delay to receiving millions of pounds in funds.

It is likely to mean decisions over major projects like the Western Link, upgrading the rail junction at Ely and improvements to Norwich Airport will be further delayed.

The delay, which also affects mayoral votes in Essex, Hampshire and Solent, Sussex and Brighton, follows a previous decision to delay this year's county council elections until May 2026. Those elections are still due to go ahead.

Nick Taylor, chairman of Reform's Norwich branch, said: "Clearly there is only one reason why mayoral elections will be postponed. It is because all or most of them will be won by Reform UK.

"The idea we need more time for local government reorganisation is completely spurious. People need to wake up to the fact that democracy is being eroded and Labour is slowly taking away the democratic fabric of our country."

Reform are currently surging in the polls, with some suggesting 37% of people in Norfolk would vote for them at the next general election. The party has won several recent by-elections across the county, including in King's Lynn, Thetford and Hunstanton, where neither the Tories nor Labour even stood a candidate.

The shock announcement comes only six months before the vote was due to be held and with interviews already under way to recruit staff for the new mayoral authority.

David Bick, who won a recent county council by-election in Thetford and was announced as Reform's candidate for the vote only at the start of December, believes the delay will ultimately boost his chances.

He said: "When I was campaigning several months ago prior to winning a by-election, the consistent message was that people have had enough of the two main parties. They

have had more than long enough to get on the right path.

"People are already angry about the postponement of the May county council elections. The reaction to this government's latest manoeuvre, which is clearly for political reasons, will harden people's frustrations and I expect Reform's support to grow from here."

The delay means Norfolk and Suffolk will have to wait to begin receiving the £1bn the region is due to receive as part of its devolution deal and which is intended to be used for major projects to boost the economy.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government announced that the two counties will get an additional £1m between them in the coming months, to help with the costs of establishing the new mayoral authorities, and will share a minimum of £3m over the next three years.

Announcing the delay, Steve Reed, the communities secretary, said: "Devolution is strongest when it is built on strong foundations, therefore moving forward we will ensure strong unitary structures are in place before areas take on mayoral devolution."

Tim Passmore, Suffolk's police and crime commissioner and Conservative mayoral candidate, said the decision would damage investment in the two counties.

He said: "The postponement of the mayoral elections for two years has demonstrated once again that Norfolk and Suffolk has been taken for granted by the Westminster blob.

"Having been assured the mayoral elections are definitely taking place only a fortnight ago by the policing minister, we are now witnessing yet another U-turn, if not a complete handbrake turn.

"This relentless confusion from government is damaging inward investment, economic growth and the opportunities for our young people. Strong and decisive leadership is vital

for our two counties and certainly not weakness and vacillation."

Labour's mayoral candidate, Carli Harper, admitted she was "disappointed" by the move but acknowledged the timeline for local government reorganisation was ambitious.

She said: "I'm personally really disappointed by the postponement but I always thought it was an ambitious timeline, so in some ways I am not surprised.

"I am pleased that creating strong unitary authorities remains the priority. For me, the plan is the same. Campaigning for a fairer, more ambitious region that realises its potential and benefits all our communities and I look forward to defeating the far right at the earliest opportunity."

Kevin Keable, the Liberal Democrat candidate, added: "With support growing for the Liberal democrats and minority parties like Reform, it is no surprise people are questioning the government's timing.

"Voters deserve to know this wasn't about politics. What people want and deserve is simple: stability, opportunity and the chance to choose who leads them. Taking that choice away for two more years only deepens the frustration many already feel."

Norwich businessman Marcus Pearcey, who is yet to confirm his intentions to run for mayor but has signalled he is considering standing for the role as an independent, said: "Any move to postpone the elections would be a dark day for democracy.

"People across Norfolk and Suffolk are tired of decisions being made without them. This isn't about party politics. It's about protecting democracy and making sure Norfolk and Suffolk are heard."

Caroline Topping, the Green Party candidate, said: "This whole process of creating mayors was forced onto the country, with the government saying it would help communities.

"They promised areas like Norfolk and Suffolk that agreed to be in the fast track that their mayors would get more powers than those coming later. Now at the last minute, they suddenly throw all that out of the window. They're running scared of the opinion polls. They've seen the rise in support for the Green Party and Reform and they are afraid they will lose control."

David Beavan, an independent candidate, said: "It's really sad that we can't just get long-term planning in the east. It's just turkeys voting for Christmas. They know that they will lose a lot of seats [...] so the less elections they have, the better. The people who lose are those in the east."



Assessing the social and cultural values of local treescapes

By the Tree Council and Katie Jones

OVER the last decade, there has been a focus on increasing tree cover across the UK in line with national and local targets. A changing treescape at any scale has the potential to impact the surrounding community and landscape. An understanding of the treescape, the risks it faces and the benefits it provides to the surrounding community, is critical when considering how to manage it.

I-Tree Eco is one tool commonly used to gather local treescape data is. I-Tree Eco is methodology and software developed by the USDA Forest Service, that can be used to map and assess treescape structure in a surveyed area.

By using field data on trees and land use, combined with meteorological and air pollution data, the tool can provide a comprehensive overview of treescape structure and the value of associated environmental benefits (such as carbon storage and sequestration, and reduction in air pollution) to local authority management services.

However, the existing i-Tree Eco method does not capture the way people value trees, how they engage with them, or their views on how they should be managed. Being able to measure and quantify these social and cultural values means that they can be incorporated more effectively into decision making at a local and national scale.

Forest Research, through funding from Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Future Proofing Plant Health Programme, is exploring opportunities to understand and measure the social and cultural values local communities associate with trees, using a newly developed 'i-Tree people' methodology. This research is a collaboration between the University of York, Fera and The Tree Council. The 'people survey' was designed to complement, and be used in parallel with, the core i-Tree Eco approach, as a method of assessing the ways people value the trees around them.

As part of this project, Forest Research, Great Britain's principal organisation for forest and tree related research, published new guidance on how local authorities can utilise the i-Tree people approach, to aid the development of effective and impactful resource management strategies. This guidance was informed by the experience of integrating a people survey, alongside the i-Tree Eco tree survey, in two local authorities: Wirral Borough Council and Portsmouth City Council.

The guidance developed by Forest Research and collaborators provides clear direction, and is prescriptive on how best to plan, deliver and analyse the results. But it can and should be adjusted to suit local contexts. A short summary of the guidance is outlined below to give a taster of what is included, but [please](#)

[see the full document](#) if you are considering carrying out your own survey.

When planning an i-Tree people survey, there are some key parameters that need to be considered, such as whether specialist social scientists or statisticians will be involved, what kinds of data you will collect, and which sampling approach you will take. The new i-Tree people guidance provides detailed information on how local authorities can approach decision making within these parameters, and how to align these with the objectives of your survey and the intended uses for your results.



The guidance also highlights the importance of identifying the key themes you are aiming to address when structuring a survey. In this case, the survey guidance outlines suggested themes, moving from broader values people might hold in relation to treescapes, towards more specific themes focusing on people's preferences and how they might engage with treescapes. The suggested themes are:

People's values

- People's preferences
- Seeing, accessing and visiting trees
- Perspectives on benefits of treescapes
- Action for trees

When deciding your themes it is important to address three questions:

1. Why is this important to investigate?
2. What could you ask about?
3. What else is there to consider?

The guide provides a number of example questions to suit the above themes through its [Question Bank in Annexe 1](#).

Trees provide many benefits to people, including physical and mental health benefits, alongside broader wellbeing benefits. Utilising an i-Tree people survey in conjunction with an existing i-Tree Eco project allows local

authorities to combine the social dimensions of the community with environmental data to develop a holistic understanding of the treescape.

Considering people's preferences within the treescape can also reveal useful information about how local authorities can meet people's needs, and why needs might vary across the borough/city. As an example, the guidance produced by Forest Research discusses how lower canopy cover and social issues, such as deprivation, are often related. Evaluating both factors supports dialogue between the community and local authority and enables evidence-based, strategic planning policy to ensure that benefits to people are distributed equitably. Broadly, understanding people's ability to access spaces where there are trees (both perceived and physical ease of access) allows local decision-makers to identify barriers preventing access, where access can be improved and where canopy cover could be increased.

"Integrating the Social and Cultural Values survey into the work we are doing for our resilient treescape has been a valuable addition. We are using it to inform the creation of our Urban Forest Master Plan, that sets out our long-term vision, with measurable actions, to continue developing our resilient treescape. It is allowing us to make the actions and targets within the plan tailored and specific to Portsmouth, helping us to achieve the best for our treescape and the benefits it brings to our residents." Green and Healthy City Project Officer at Portsmouth City Council

Appreciating the inherent value trees hold within communities allows local policymakers to understand where people would like to see more trees, or improvements to treescapes, and to be proactive against reputational damage when valued trees are threatened by management or development. Ultimately, the i-Tree people guidance aims to encourage community cohesion within the delivery of environmental objectives towards a more sustainable future treescape.

Full guidance on conducting an i-Tree people survey is available here: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/publications/assessing-social-dimensions-treescape/>. For further information on the social and cultural values project, please visit <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/research/social-and-cultural-values-of-treescapes/>

Katie Jones is The Tree Council's Science & Action Research Officer

Eco-minded Holkham estate accused of 'trashing' village site by outraged locals

By Chris Bishop, Chief Reporter South & West for the EDP

A Norfolk estate which prides itself on its conservation work has angered locals and nature groups by revamping one of its caravan parks and applying to extend its season. Both fear the move could threaten protected species on the Norfolk coast. McDonnell Caravans, which is owned by the Holkham Estate, is carrying out an "improvement programme" under permitted development rules over the winter on the site at Holme, near Hunstanton.

However, neighbours are worried the work, which involves laying concrete slabs ready for new caravans, poses a threat to protected natterjack toads which are found around the village.

Retired accountant Fred Hallsworth, 72, who lives on nearby Kirkgate, has natterjacks (pictured) in his garden close to the caravan site, which has permission for 64 static mobile homes.

"The issue here is on the one hand you've got Holkham promoting itself as a bastion of ecology and on the other hand they've got massive earth moving equipment on the site during the natterjack toad's hibernation season," he said.

"With luck, they may have been woken up and escaped. More likely, they will have been scraped up and put in a concrete crusher. They are trashing a site that's 40m from an SSSI, in the middle of the natterjack toad hibernation."

Retired doctor Steve Feast, 64, who also lives on Kirkgate, said: "Holkham laud their environmental credentials, so we as local neighbours were surprised that they appear to have taken their eye off the ball and allowed such a development in an area of environmental sensitivity.

"What's surprised and upset us is that as far as we can tell this is land owned by the Holkham Estate and is being developed by McDonnell Caravans for them. Given their commitment to conservation and what now appears to be the destruction of a very sensitive site, that they're not really taking a greater interest and indeed why are they going ahead with it?"

He added the work carried out so far had "transformed and devastated" the site, adding: "I hope they are fully aware of what is being done in their name."

People living around the park, behind village pub the White Horse, have also taken to West Norfolk Council's planning portal to object to proposals to extend its season from seven months of the year to 11.

"The caravan site lies adjacent to the parish's conservation area," said Mr Hallsworth. "The village is designated National Landscape. Redwell Marsh is on the northern boundary of the caravan site and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Area.

"This is an area of outstanding natural beauty. The village is a unique historic and

environmentally rich community, local people value this. Our small village is already under severe pressure due to the frequent influx of people and vehicles, and this planning application would only exacerbate this."

Another said: "Two parking spaces per van, tarmac paths, all the delivery vehicles and tradespeople, cleaners - extra movements and employment that are used to justify the economic impacts, are going to mean an all year around degradation upon the village's carefully balanced ecosystem."

Holme Parish Council has also submitted a lengthy objection. It said proposals to extend occupation from the third week in March - October 31 each year, to February 14 - January 4 the following year "fails to recognise the sensitivity of the site" and the impact on "important heritage and environmental assets".

It added "significant change" was taking

"The use of the site over this period could cause visual and noise disturbance which would deter the species from using the land for feeding."

Norfolk Wildlife Trust said it was "significantly concerned" about proposals to extend occupancy at the site, which is close to the North Norfolk Coast Site of Special Scientific Interest, North Norfolk Coast Special Area of Conservation, North Norfolk Coast Special Protection Area and internationally-important wetlands, along with its Holme Dunes nature reserve.

It added: "We are also aware of concerns raised by local residents regarding the potential for natterjack toads, a protected species, to be present on the application site.

"We understand that the site has been recently cleared and while this is not the subject of this planning application, we recommend that the enforcement team look in to any potential breaches of planning as soon as possible.

"Holme Dunes is already facing considerable visitor pressure, and we do not believe that extending the season of campsite facilities in such close proximity are sustainable."

Holkham is Norfolk's largest country estate, comprising 25,000 acres and is owned by Thomas Coke, the 8th Earl of Leicester. The estate maintains conservation is "integral" to everything it does.

It said in a statement: "The White Horse Caravan Park at Holme-next-the-Sea is owned by Holkham and operated by McDonnell Caravans. The planning application to extend the holiday season is currently with West Norfolk Council for determination.

"Separate to the planning application to extend the holiday season, essential improvement works are currently being carried out and these fall under existing consents and do not require new planning permission.

"There has been a suggestion that McDonnell Caravans will be introducing lodges onto the holiday park. This is inaccurate. It is a consented site and when it re-opens, the park will have fewer caravans than it has had in recent decades.

"The McDonnell team will continue to work with the planning advisers, the council and the expert ecologists."

McDonnell said in a planning statement extending the season would "meet the demand and expectations of holidaymakers visiting this part of north Norfolk".



place on the site, which it believed might not be lawful.

It said flooding and sewage spills had occurred near the site in recent winters, adding: "Increasing the temporary population of the site during the winter period risks further overload of the sewage system."

West Norfolk Council's ecologist, Claire Wiggs, said a habitat assessment had not been submitted with the application to extend occupancy. She said the caravan park was close to protected sites, where over-wintering birds would be at risk of disturbance if its season was extended.

"This is particularly the case for pink footed geese which generally start arriving in Holme from October onwards and continue to increase in numbers towards the later winter months," she said.

Everything you need to know about giant hogweed

By Helen Keating, content manager, botanist and tree lover for The Woodland Trust

YOU may have heard about the dangers of giant hogweed, a non-native invasive plant which can cause burns. So we've put together the facts for you, from identification to staying safe. Giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* is a plant in the Apiaceae family (previously known as the Umbelliferae). This family includes some well-known plants such as parsley, carrot, parsnip, cumin and coriander.

Giant hogweed is not native to the UK. It originates from the Caucasus Mountains and Central Asia. It was first introduced to the UK as an ornamental in the 19th century when it escaped and naturalised in the wild. It is now classed as an invasive species and can be found throughout much of the UK, especially colonising river banks where its seeds are transported by the water.

Giant hogweed looks like an enormous cow parsley plant. When it's fully grown, it can reach towering heights of 1.5–5m and have a spread of 1–2m. It forms a rosette of jagged, lobed leaves in the first year before sending up a flower spike in the second year and then setting seed.



Stems: green, often with purple blotches and stiff, white, bristly hairs. Stems are hollow with ridges and have a thick circle of hairs at the base of each leaf stalk.

Leaves: huge, up to 1.5m wide and 3m long, deeply divided into smaller leaflets. They look a bit like rhubarb leaves, with irregular and very sharp or jagged edges, which has given rise to one of its other common names – wild rhubarb. The undersides of the leaves are hairy.

Flowers: appear in June and July. They are small and white (or slightly pink) and are clustered on umbrella-like heads known as umbels that can reach a diameter of 60cm. All the flowers on the umbel face upwards.

Seeds: dry, flattened and oval. Almost 1cm long with brown lines extending across three quarters of the seed length.



The sap of giant hogweed can cause burns. It contains furocoumarin, which makes skin extremely sensitive to sunlight (phytophotodermatitis). If the sap gets onto your skin and it's then exposed to the sun, your skin can blister badly. Blistering can then recur over months and even years. This is known as phytotoxicity.

The best way to avoid injury is to familiarise yourself with the plant and avoid contact with your skin. Brushing through patches of giant hogweed and exposing yourself to plants that have been cut might cause you to get sap on your skin.

If you do get giant hogweed sap on your skin, be sure to wash the area thoroughly and immediately. Seek medical advice and do not expose the area to sunlight for a few days.

Giant hogweed poses a similar threat to pets as it does to people, with the potential to cause blisters and burns. Although animals such as dogs and cats get some protection from their fur, hairless regions of skin are particularly vulnerable when coming into contact with the plant. And if the sap gets into their eyes, it can cause blindness.

Livestock can, in some cases, suffer the same skin reactions to giant hogweed as other animals. However, there is evidence that certain cattle, sheep, goats and pigs can graze giant hogweed without harm and even be effective at controlling the plant. Still, care should always be taken and animals should be separated from giant hogweed if any signs of blistering or illness occur.

If you come across giant hogweed in your garden, you should look to have it removed to avoid any health risks and prevent small infestations from getting worse over time. Individual plants can be removed by hand but larger, more established colonies are best left to professionals and may require the use of herbicides.

If you're removing giant hogweed yourself, it must be done in full protective clothing due to the danger posed by the sap. Clothes and tools should be washed thoroughly after use and it's important to remember that the sap can still be dangerous several hours after the plants have been cut down. The following methods can help

get rid of giant hogweed from your garden at different stages in its lifecycle.

Hoe seedlings to cut them off at the roots. Try to do this early in spring before the plants develop deep taproots, choosing a dry day so that the exposed roots dry out quickly.

Pull up established plants before they start flowering. This is the best way to get rid of giant hogweed, digging out the whole plant in spring before it sets seed. Use a fork to loosen the soil and lever out the roots.

If plants have produced a flower spike, deadhead quickly before the flowers set seed and cut the plant down to the ground. If the flower heads are already producing seeds, cover them with a bag before you start to prevent the seeds from spreading.

If giant hogweed is already growing in your garden, it is not an offence. However, it is illegal to plant or deliberately allow giant hogweed to spread in the UK, and you are obligated to remove giant hogweed on your property if ordered to do so by an environmental authority. Since giant hogweed material is classed as 'controlled waste', it must be disposed of at a licensed landfill site.

If you come across giant hogweed on council-owned land then it can be reported to your local council. Infestations on private land should be brought to the attention of the landowner.

Here are some common plants that could be confused with giant hogweed, with images and descriptions to help you with identification.



Common hogweed is very similar-looking to giant hogweed but is much smaller. Its stems aren't blotchy like those of giant hogweed (their colour graduates smoothly from green to purple) and are ridged, hollow and hairy.

Common hogweed only reaches a maximum height of 2m and the symmetrical flower heads only reach 20cm across. Its seeds are much smaller and lighter than those of giant hogweed, and the leaves are less jagged and more rounded at the edges than giant hogweed.

Cow parsley is a native plant common along hedgerows and roadsides. It grows to 60–170 cm and also has clusters of white flowers in umbels. The leaves are very different to giant



hogweed - they are tripinnate (the leaflets are themselves divided and then these divisions are

divided again). Confusingly, some people refer to giant hogweed as giant cow parsley.

Ground elder is a non-native plant (introduced by the Romans, possibly as an edible) which has made its way into the countryside and people's gardens. It is not related to elder trees *Sambucus nigra* but gets its name from having elder-like leaves. Its leaves are very different to giant hogweed, although it has similar flat-topped clusters of small white flowers which can grow to 20cm across.



New tree species was hiding in plain sight for over 40 years and now it's almost extinct

By Adrian Villellas, Earth.com staff writer

IN a protected corner of the Peruvian Amazon, scientists have finally named a giant tree that hid in plain sight for 40 years. The species, now called *Drypetes oliveri*, towers to about 115 feet and may exist only in a handful of giant individuals. Each of those trees stands in the Tambopata National Reserve of southeastern Peru, inside intact lowland rainforest. For such a huge organism, its world is tiny, and its future already looks fragile.

The formal discovery was led by botanist Rodolfo Vásquez Martínez, who has spent decades cataloguing Peru's tropical trees. His work focuses on finding new species and understanding how they fit into Amazon forests.

Oliver Phillips, a tropical ecology professor, has spent his career running long-term measurements of Amazonian forests. He leads an international profile of researchers who track how forest carbon and biodiversity respond to human-driven climate change.

Naming a species after a scientist is more than compliment; it ties the tree's story to a person who helped make its discovery possible.

In this case, the name recognizes Phillips's role in building the long-running plot network that first hinted something unusual was growing at Tambopata.

About forty years ago, the botanist Alwyn Gentry sampled leaves from an unusual tree inside one of his permanent plots at Tambopata. He suspected it was an undescribed species, yet with only a handful of fallen leaves he could not prove that idea.

To name a new tree, botanists need flowers or fruits, because many unrelated species share very similar leaves. Those structures usually grow in the canopy, the sunlit layer of treetops that can tower more than 100 feet above the ground.

In 2023, Rodolfo Vásquez, Rocío Rojas, and Abel Monteagudo found a fruiting tree at Tambopata whose crown drew macaws and howler monkeys to branches. Rojas tasted the fallen pulp, noticed a peppery-flavour

typical of the genus *Drypetes*, and the leaves finally matched Gentry's long-stored sample.

A formal description shows that *Drypetes oliveri* is dioecious, with separate male and female trees, and carries a crown above the surrounding forest.

Its trunk reaches roughly 22 inches across, with buttress roots that run several feet along the base and brace the tree on wet soil.

The tree grows in upland rainforest on high, clay-rich river terraces in Tambopata, where the ground stays firm even during heavy rains.

So far it appears endemic, found naturally in only one small region, with all known trees standing within a few miles of each other.

Its fruits are egg-shaped, with a dense, velvety brown fuzz, each a little over an inch long and holding a single hard seed.

Animals that chew through that bitter skin probably move the seeds, giving this species a small but important role in the wider forest community.

Drypetes belong to a mostly Old World group of trees, so its relatives are more common in Africa and Asia than in South America. Many

species in this group have thick bark and spicy fruits, signals that discourage some plant-eating animals but still attract fruit-eating specialists.

A continent-wide tree inventory estimated that the Amazon holds around 390 billion trees belonging to roughly 16,000 species.

The same work showed that about 227 common species make up half of all those trees, leaving thousands of species with tiny, vulnerable populations.

Long running measurements from forest plots show that Amazon forests have absorbed billions of tons of carbon dioxide but this uptake is weakening.

Ecologists describe such a system as a carbon sink, a natural storehouse that takes in more carbon than it releases to the air.

As only four trees are known and they occupy less than 10 square miles of habitat, the species meets criteria for extinction risk. Botanists have treated it as Endangered on the Red List of threatened species, a system that ranks how close species are to extinction.

In the Madre de Dios region, satellite-based mapping shows that gold mining has stripped tens of thousands of acres of forest.

The same operations leave pits filled with water laced with mercury, harming fish and communities that depend on those rivers.

Road building and new trade routes connect once isolated forests to distant markets, making it easier to clear trees for ranches or farms.

Hotter, drier dry seasons also fuel more forest fires, sending smoke across southern Amazonia for weeks at a time.

The survival of this newly-described giant over the next forty years will depend on decisions about mining, roads, fire, and protection.



The American West's most iconic tree is disappearing

By Gary Ferguson for phys.org

A profound unraveling is underway in the American South-west, happening across a thousand mile arc from Santa Fe, New Mexico, to the central Sierra. In an unprecedented calamity. The most widely distributed, most iconic tree of the region, the beautiful ponderosa pine *Pinus ponderosa* is disappearing. So significant is this loss, both visually and ecologically, that it's reasonably fair to say it may be triggering the first post-climate-change landscape in America.

It was the ponderosa pine that more than 1,100 years ago allowed the rise of the first cities in what would later become the United States, providing structural beams for the multi-storied dwellings of the Ancestral Pueblo.

More than 700 years later, under the tutelage of the Nez Perce, Lewis and Clark hewed boats from ponderosa trunks, using them to paddle from the mountains of western Montana to the Pacific Ocean. Settlers used the tree with abandon, fashioning everything from barns to saloons, opera houses to hardware stores to livery stables.

Ponderosa gave millions of track ties for railroads, then often provided the fuel for the fireboxes of the locomotives that ran along them.

Since 2000, more than 200 million ponderosa have died. More alarming still is that many of those forests won't be coming back, likely yielding the ground to what will be grass and shrublands for centuries to come.

Some ecologists caution that in just another few decades, more than 90% of the South-western ponderosa forests could vanish. And with them will go some of the more than 200 species that make their homes in those forests, from goshawks to white-headed woodpeckers and from Mexican spotted owls to tassel-eared squirrels.

The loss of forest will also mean much faster melting of the spring snowpacks, since the snow will no longer be shaded by trees. That means less water for streams, rivers and aquifers. This in a region currently facing its 32nd consecutive year of drought.

For humans, there will also be profound emotional impacts. Across much of the Southwest, ponderosa are the only trees of real stature, with their cinnamon-coloured trunks towering more than a hundred feet higher than the pinyons or junipers. Furthermore, the soaring trunks of a mature ponderosa forest are widely spaced. So much so that early explorers often marvelled about how it was possible to ride a horse through them at full gallop.

It was this combination of physique, colour and spaciousness that led to the ponderosa being routinely cast in countless films and television shows, including "Easy Rider," "The Electric Horseman," "Bonanza" and "Yellowstone." It's why they showed up in the writings of John Muir, Zane Grey, Norman Maclean and D H Lawrence; and finally, why this tree was such a favourite for artists such as



Ansel Adams and Georgia O'Keeffe. Hands down, ponderosa groves are the most iconic and most celebrated forests across the South-west.

That this level of loss is happening to a tree long known for its hardiness, able to withstand sizzling heat and excruciatingly dry summers, not to mention the usual outbursts of pine beetles and blight and wildfires, is indicative of just how deeply we've altered conditions on the planet.

These ponderosa pines and plenty of other trees, including the giant sequoia *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, are disappearing under the blows of a devastating one-two punch. The first of those blows spotlights our terrible choice across much of the 20th century to suppress all wildfires, a move that allowed both an overly dense growth of young trees and great masses of debris and fallen trees—what firefighters call "fuel loads"—piling up on the forest floor.

It was a policy that utterly ignored the fact that in the arid West, fire is the primary means by which nutrients are recycled through an ecosystem, thereby keeping it healthy.

The second blow to ponderosa is climate change, which has led to measures of heat and drought severe enough to leave tens of millions of trees as easy prey for insects and disease.

When heavy fuel loads and climate change collide, there often come the extraordinarily big, hot wildfires now routinely seen roaring across

the landscapes of the West and when those severe wildfires come often enough, as they increasingly are, all that can survive in the end are grasses and shrubs.

It's not that we're just sitting idly by. Fire crews are increasingly conducting prescribed burns, a technique that can create healthier forests by clearing debris and reducing the overcrowding of young trees. However, with some 300 million acres in the West currently under excessively heavy fuel loads, an area about three times the size of California, we're only managing to perform prescribed burns across about 10% of the lands that need it.

At the same time, replanting efforts are underway in many places, but that task, too, is incredibly daunting. So far, in any given year, we're replanting only about 3% of the fire scars that really need it.

For untold thousands of years, ponderosa have fed and sheltered an astonishingly varied collection of life across the West—humans and butterflies, woodpeckers and warblers, foxes and owls and squirrels. At the same time, for many humans, these forests offered up a profound, soul-deep satisfaction, the gift of a singularly peaceful yet soaring natural beauty.

Beyond all the practical losses that will be laid at our feet as these forests vanish, there will surely be a cavernous, tree-shaped hole in our hearts.

Soldiers and smugglers strip South Sudan's valuable teak forests

By Josephine Muthama, Intern, East Africa Peace and Security Governance, ISS Nairobi and Willis Okumu Senior Researcher, ENACT, ISS Nairobi

In January 2025, South Sudan's Environment and Forestry Minister, Josephine Napwon, stopped the issuing of logging permits to protect teak and other endangered tree species. Concerns have been growing over the smuggling of South Sudanese teak to meet high demand, mostly from India and, to a lesser extent, the Netherlands.

Teak, known as the 'king of woods', has been listed as endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since 2004. And although trade in the species from South Sudan has been banned by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora), logging continues.

Teak is a durable tropical hardwood used for high-quality furniture, luxury yachts, boats and construction. It is South Sudan's second most valuable raw material after oil, with over 100 000 tonnes of the timber exported to world markets every year, according to media outlet The Elephant.

According to the World Bank, South Sudan could earn up to US\$150 million (£112,413,750) in revenue annually from teak, but instead brings in just US\$2 million (£1,522,200), with the rest leaving the country illegally.

Smuggling on this scale is causing environmental degradation, soil erosion and loss of natural resources. Plantations in the south of the country near the borders with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda have been decimated by illegal logging.

The illicit activity is facilitated by armed groups, including the South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) and Sudan People's Liberation Army-In-Opposition, says Justin Khamis, a Juba-based border security expert. According to the UN Security Council's South Sudan expert panel, some SSPDF members participate in felling the trees, while others supervise and protect the loggers. Some loggers work for South Sudanese companies that have links to the military.

The involvement of South Sudanese soldiers is linked to the civil wars that divided the army into two factions, says former defence minister Angelina Teny. A lack of pay may have induced military personnel to participate in illegal logging to earn a living.

These armed groups also facilitate teak smuggling from South Sudan into Uganda's northern Moyo District. Environmental activists accuse South Sudan's military of colluding with corrupt administrative and border officials to

transport the wood into Uganda.

Ugandan administrative officials write authorisation letters to facilitate the movement of harvested teak across the border and into the country. Fake certificates of origin are then prepared in Uganda to help transport the timber, disguised as Ugandan products, to Kenya's Mombasa Port.

Kenyan investigative journalist John-Allan Namu says that once in Uganda, South Sudanese teak is mixed with teak from the DRC and declared Ugandan, allowing it to be exported through Kenya to international markets.

South Sudanese teak shipments are shipped from Mombasa to India, the destination for about 73% of illegally exported South Sudanese teak, according to The Elephant.

Although India has teak plantations, global demand for raw and processed teak products

Developing DNA databases for high-value timber in Africa would be a first step towards addressing this problem. With DNA markers unique to specific regions, authorities could use portable sequencing devices to trace illegal shipments back to their origin, even if the timber is processed or disguised. DNA databases can also be developed and used in collaboration with international timber traders and regulatory bodies.

These databases can be used with electronic wood tracking like that implemented in Ghana. This includes a timber legality assurance system that relies on data collected throughout the supply chain, enabling real-time reconciliation and identification of anomalies in wood flows.

Similar databases such as AFRICA-TWIX and the Central Africa Forest Observatory, with platforms like the Open Timber Portal managed by the World Resources Institute, help enhance forest governance and monitor natural resources. These databases ensure the traceability of timber, promote information exchange and foster regional cooperation.

Using databases and tracking systems allows for more effective law enforcement, identification of smuggling routes and disruption of illegal trade networks. They can also be deterrents, as smugglers realise their activities can be tracked and traced.

However, such technology is only valuable if backed by operational support from law enforcement and customs officials along the teak trading value chain. South Sudan faces myriad security and governance challenges, and remains institutionally weak. The borders with Uganda and Kenya are porous, and reports of corruption among officials abound.

Civil society and the media, among other stakeholders, should raise these issues nationally and regionally. Information on incidents and the impact of teak smuggling on the environment and society is essential. Placing pressure on governments, businesses and consumers to disrupt this trade is vital to such advocacy work.

International organisations such as the IUCN and World Customs Organization must recognise that institutional vulnerabilities, particularly in South Sudan, require a more proactive collaboration with the South Sudanese and other countries in the region.

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exceeds domestic production. South Sudanese teak is used either to manufacture products falsely declared as originating in India, or the wood is transported from India to Rotterdam's port in the Netherlands.

False certificates of origin from corrupt Indian Chamber of Commerce officers enable smugglers to bypass the European Union's (EU) timber regulation, which bans illegally logged or smuggled wood from the EU.

Evidence of online teak sales on Facebook and other platforms highlights regulatory shortcomings in South Sudan and countries receiving the timber. Companies selling teak online are often unregistered and operate unnoticed, with loggers venturing deep into South Sudan's forests without proper authorisation or legal documentation.

Ancient Woodland - Revised (England) - Completed Counties

From DEFRA - Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs

UPDATED Boundaries of Ancient Woodland polygons covering England. This is the updated spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of ancient woodland in England (excluding the Isles of Scilly). Ancient Woodland features will be approved county-by-county for publication throughout the first year of production until the data product coverage extends across England.

Where available this dataset takes precedence over the Ancient Woodland – England dataset. The update revises the inventory to address problems and gaps in the previous iteration.

Technological advances mean that small ancient woodlands (0.25-2ha) are being represented within the inventory for the first time as well as wood pasture and parkland being represented as its own category.

The inventory identifies ancient woodland

sites in England. Ancient woodland is identified by studying the presence or absence of woods from historic maps, information about the wood's name, shape, internal boundaries, location relative to other features, ground survey, and aerial photography.

The information recorded about each wood and stored on the Inventory Database includes its grid reference, its area in hectares and how much is semi-natural or replanted. Prior to the digitisation of the boundaries, only paper maps depicting each ancient wood at 1:50 000 scale were available.

Attribution statement: © Natural England

2024. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database rights 2024. OS AC0000851168. It includes Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW), which retains a native tree and shrub cover; Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS), where the original tree cover has been felled and replaced by planting, often with conifers; Ancient Wood Pasture (AWPP), where the trees are managed in tandem with a long established tradition of grazing, characteristically with at least some veteran trees or shrubs or; Infilled Ancient Wood Pasture (IAWPP) which has become infilled with trees arising from planting or natural regeneration.

Read the full document at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/dataset/5d5d1352-7505-4906-b574-b666dcfb16b4>

Prometheus, the world's oldest tree, cut down by a scientist after 5,000 years

By Miguel Varela for <https://en.as.com/>

BACK in 1964, a scientific decision ended up destroying one of the oldest living organisms ever discovered. Prometheus, a Great Basin bristlecone pine growing high on the slopes of Wheeler Peak in Nevada, had survived nearly 5,000 years before it was cut down - long before anyone realized its true age.

The person behind the mistake was Donald Rusk Currey, a graduate student researching tree-ring growth patterns. At the time, Prometheus didn't stand out. It wasn't especially tall or visually impressive, so Currey had no reason to suspect he was dealing with a natural relic older than the Egyptian pyramids.

According to reporting highlighted by Indian Defence Review, even today it's unclear why he chose to fell the tree, though records show he had permission from the US Forest Service.

One theory suggests the coring tool Currey used to extract a sample became stuck in the trunk. Another possibility is that he believed he needed

a full cross-section of the tree to continue his

research. Whatever the reason, the bristlecone pine was cut down—and only later did the magnitude of the loss become clear.

Years afterward, Currey recounted to the San Francisco Chronicle the moment he realized what he had done. Back home, examining the tree's cross-section with a magnifying lens, he began counting the rings. That's when it hit him: Prometheus was nearly 5,000 years old.

Although even older trees have since been identified, the felling of Prometheus remains one of the most unfortunate events in the history of American conservation. The incident sparked widespread outrage and ultimately led to stronger protections for ancient trees across the United States. The goal was simple: ensure that nothing like the Prometheus tragedy ever happens again.



From Tolkien's favourite tree to a royal sapling

By Galya Dimitrova for BBC News

FOR about two centuries, a towering black pine stood in the University of Oxford Botanic Garden, becoming one of its most cherished landmarks. JRR Tolkien loved sitting beneath its shade, Philip Pullman wove it into his fiction and generations of visitors admired its grandeur. However, in 2014, it was felled and came to what many described as a tragic end.

Prof Simon Hiscock, director of the botanic garden and arboretum, reflects on its story and the hope now rooted in a sapling planted by King Charles III.

"There's quite a bit of mystery about the origin of the Oxford black pine," Prof Hiscock says.

An Oxford-trained botanist, he later helped found the University of Bristol's botanic garden, the youngest of its kind in Britain. He now continues his career at the oldest one, in Oxford, which he describes as having been "fun and exciting".

The species, he explains, is called *Pinus nigra* and is widely distributed across central and Eastern Europe, as well as western Asia.

He says "Nobody quite knows where the seeds were gathered for the black pine that became so famous here, but it may have been on a collecting trip or it might have been from a prolific nursery grower of conifers at that time."

He adds that it could have been an experiment by the well-known Oxford botanist and chemist Charles Daubeny.

Prof Hiscock describes black pines as "magnificent trees" that can grow to "awesome proportions".

He says "They often branch multiply from a low trunk and create this amazing upward array of arms that are the branches. The black pine in the botanic garden was the largest tree in the garden at the time of its sad demise."

Initially thought to date from 1799, its rings revealed a later planting - probably in the mid-1830s. The tree inspired deep affection.

Prof Hiscock says "It became a favourite of JRR Tolkien who visited the garden regularly and used to sit under the tree. There are some very famous photographs of him with his beloved tree."

It is also mentioned in Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy.

"Philip was very fond of the tree and has since been very fond of the wood that we've saved from it and have used to make wonderful wooden products that were available at our Christmas fair for the first time [this year]."

The garden's Black Pine Collection features products such as writing materials and cufflinks.

Prof Hiscock says he was told the items evoked "quite a flood of interest, particularly from members of the Tolkien Society".

By the time Prof Hiscock stepped into his role in July 2015, the tree had already gone.

"My understanding is it split in two because the branched stems were so heavy under their own weight and they'd got so tall that it just suddenly split," he says.

At the time, Dr Alison Foster, who worked on the garden, described the loss as "just heartbreaking". However, a future black pine was planted by King Charles III on 8 June 2021,



in celebration of the garden's 400th anniversary.

Prof Hiscock says "He was so interested to learn about various trees and other plants. He planted a sapling grown from a seed that had been collected from the original black pine."

He adds that he was "impressed" by how much the King knows about plants, trees and woodland crafts.

"I've written to him a number of times since and met him a couple of times since, and he's always interested to know how his tree is doing," the professor says.

The young tree grows just a few feet away from where the original was, with "a magnificent

view" of the Great Tower of Magdalen College (see below).

"It's within a part that we call the Literary Garden because it details plants that are associated with English literature mainly, and often authors, poets, writers from Oxford," Prof Hiscock says.

He adds that it is about 20ft (6m) tall now, meaning it is growing "very, very quickly".

"It's in what you might call juvenile phase at the moment, so it looks like a big Christmas tree. That will all change as it continues its development and starts to branch out, but in 100 years it'll start looking really good."



Charities back MP's 'iconic' tree bill

By Jason Arunn Murugesu for BBC North East and Cumbria

CHARITIES have backed an MP's calls to create a list of "iconic" trees and improve schooling about their value following the felling of the Sycamore Gap tree. Labour MP for Hexham Joe Morris tabled the bill on iconic trees and nature education on 1 December 2025. He said the register, which could include popular trees such as the Major Oak in Sherwood Forest, would help young people to better understand their importance.

Education charity Wilderness Foundation UK head Jo Roberts backed the bill and said: "That's why we've got to do more reverence now so that we don't have another Sycamore Gap."

The tree, at Hadrian's Wall in Northumberland, which was more than 100 years old, was felled in September 2023 by Daniel Graham and Adam Carruthers. Both men, from Cumbria, were jailed for four years and three months.

Ms Roberts said that trees were like the "cathedrals of nature" and that it was only right we held some in the same awe that we placed on certain buildings. "We don't take the time to really notice trees until they are gone," she said. "I think there's something to giving [some trees] status [in a way that] I think people will be able



to appreciate and feel part of."

Other trees Morris suggested could be part of the list included the Ankerwycke yew near Wraybury in Berkshire, which is linked to the signing of the Magna Carta.

Education charity Wild Things head Luke Strachan also backed the bill which includes improving the way pupils are taught about the value of trees. He said "With the increasing prevalence of digital media and online culture,

younger generations need, more than ever, to have opportunities to rebuild their relationship to the natural environment."

Outdoor learning charity Learning Through Landscapes official Hannah Engelkamp said she hoped the tree register would be used by teachers to discuss "local pride" and the "personality and validity of species that aren't human". However, she also said that ordinary trees should not be overlooked, noting that 17% of primary schools in Scotland had fewer than five trees on their grounds.

She said "Children really care about these every day, un-iconic trees, and we want to see an improvement at this level. Nature mustn't be a special, distant, 'over-there' thing for the fortunate few to visit, but a daily part of every child's learning and play."

The second reading of the bill is due on 16 January.

Wildfire burns climate-vulnerable Joshua trees in US national park

By Bobby Bascomb for Mongabay

Awildfire in California's Joshua Tree National Park burned through some 29 hectares (72 acres) of land during the recent federal government shutdown in October and November. That's a small fire by California standards, but firefighters estimate it scorched roughly 1,000 of the park's iconic Joshua trees, according to The Los Angeles Times.

The burned area was considered one of the most climate-resilient refuges for the trees as the region grows hotter and drier amid climate change.

Joshua trees *Yucca brevifolia* provide critical food and shelter for wildlife species in the Mojave Desert ecosystem. The trees are listed as least concern on the IUCN Red List and currently have no federal protection outside the park. But they're increasingly threatened by habitat loss and the effects of climate change.

Adult trees are relatively drought-tolerant but scientists are concerned about young trees, which are more sensitive to drought, heat and predation. Adding to their vulnerability, Joshua trees can take up to 70 years to reach sexual maturity and depend on a single pollinator, the yucca moth *Tegeticula synthetica*, which is also stressed by climate change.

The recent fire took place near the park's



Black Rock Campground, "the location of some of the most robust and healthy Joshua tree forests in Joshua Tree National Park," Mark Butler, a former superintendent of Joshua Tree National Park, told Mongabay in a video call. The area sits at a higher, cooler elevation and was considered the climate-resilient Joshua tree habitat in the park.

Since 1895, precipitation has fallen in the park by nearly 40% while temperatures have increased by an average of roughly 2°C (3.6°F), according to the National Park Service.

"So, Joshua trees have got this double impact," Butler said. "They're being affected

chronically by the long-term effects of a changing climate and then acutely by things like wildfire that can take out significant numbers of trees in a very short amount of time."

Invasive grasses have also worsened wildfire risk. Historically, the arid landscape lacked fuel to spread fires, but grasses now sprawl across the land, often right to the base of trees, creating a pathway for flames to spread.

Experts estimate that as many as 30% of the Joshua trees damaged in the recent fire may survive and regrow from the roots. However, most trees won't survive without active intervention, a growing challenge as National Park budgets and resources have been slashed in the second Trump administration, Butler said.

"Without some changes to how we manage and protect the Joshua tree, we can reasonably say that its days might be numbered. I think that we need to decide as a society if we are going to take the steps to preserve this tree for the enjoyment of future generations," Butler said.

Why we urgently need a ‘climate dashboard’

By Jonathon Porritt, Environmental campaigner and author, and Robin Maynard Environmental campaigner, writer and strategist, for the Chatham House website

ANOTHER COP done and dusted. Another plaintive burst of post-hoc rationalizations that the outcome from November’s meeting in the Brazilian city of Belém wasn’t as bad as it seemed. ‘Climate multilateralism’ is alive and well, we are assured, and ‘the deniers are losing the fight,’ according to Ed Miliband, Britain’s Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

The annual Conference of the Parties is supposed to be the world’s great moment of climate diplomacy, and some positive outcomes did emerge from Belém: a tripling of the amount of money to help poorer countries adapt to the worsening impacts of climate change; progress on a Just Transition Mechanism for the mining and processing of critical minerals; and a new Tropical Forests Forever Facility to combat deforestation.

Realistically, however, these are just more ‘jam tomorrow’ promises that do nothing to cover up COP30’s principal failure: that a small group of petrostates led by Saudi Arabia and Russia blocked progress on the 2023 commitment ‘to transition away from fossil fuels’. The final Belém communique doesn’t even mention them.

Instead, two ‘voluntary coalitions of the willing’ will be set up to discuss new road maps on phasing out fossil fuels and putting an end to deforestation. They will have no formal legal standing. Many reasons account for the

recurring failure of COPs. Intractable geopolitical divides and the increasing influence of Big Oil and Big Agriculture lobbyists among them. However, the failure matters. Each year lost makes stabilizing the climate less likely.

Can anything be done to reverse the descent of the COP process into further irrelevance? It’s doubtful. Primarily because COPs play to a tiny clique of climate professionals. Whether any one COP succeeds, as it did, to a degree, in Paris in 2015, or fails, as they have done each year since, is meaningless to most people. There is no engagement with ‘ordinary citizens’, and therefore no anger at the continuing failure of politicians to address the greatest existential threat to humankind’s future.

The problem is that climate science is both complicated and often contested. Most of the measures used – concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, average temperature increases etc – are too abstract to command either understanding or attention. No single point of authority cuts through the controversies around the science. Even the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has become mired in political and methodological difficulties.

Which leads one to ask: would some plain-speaking representation of critical scientific and economic data about the climate allow people to become more engaged. Presented perhaps in

the form of a dashboard (see below), published each year in the weeks running up to COP?

For instance, could the combined weight of the leading national Academies of Science, led perhaps by the Royal Society here in the UK, come up with a sufficiently trusted dashboard to break through the incomprehension and apathy that clouds ‘the truth’ about the climate crisis?

Such a dashboard would need to command overwhelming consensus within the climate science community, become central to governments’ efforts to engage their citizens in the climate debate and be easily communicable, with a one-page ‘Red, Amber, Green’ summary.

Its final format would be based on the consensus of the experts invited by the Academies of Science to design such a tool. But conceivably it would include a balance of ‘input indicators’ (the principal inputs driving the global economy), ‘output indicators’ (what’s happening in terms of emissions of greenhouse gases), and ‘outcome indicators’ (what are the consequences of that level of emissions in the preceding year?).

Such a dashboard is no silver bullet. Climate deniers and climate delayers will go on denying and delaying. However, with better-informed citizens, there is a chance politicians will be held more effectively to account, and that each COP will be played out in the full glare of much more focused and insightful media coverage.

The Climate Dashboard

Input indicators

1. Capital flows. This would need to capture how much new investment went into fossil fuels in the preceding year, and how much went into renewables, storage and energy efficiency.

2. Subsidies. How much taxpayers’ money, directly and indirectly, had been allocated to support the fossil fuel industries, with governments still failing to deliver on promises made more than 15 years ago to eliminate such subsidies. The IMF has been tracking the extent of these subsidies for many years: It is estimated that global fossil fuel subsidies amounted to \$7 trillion in 2022.

In 2023, G20 countries spent three times as much on fossil fuel subsidies (\$535 billion) as on renewables (\$168 billion).

3. Rates of deforestation. This is the best measure we have to represent all the numerous, and often incalculable, assaults on the natural world. And while some progress has been made in some countries, today’s more intense and more frequent wildfires, caused partly by

accelerating climate change, are beginning to cancel out those gains.

Output indicators

4. Emissions from the burning of coal, oil and gas for electricity and transport. In 2024, emissions from the consumption of coal, oil and gas hit new highs, with not even ‘a plateau’ in sight, let alone a long-anticipated decline. More coal was burned in 2024 (8.77 billion tonnes) than in any preceding year.

5. Emissions from plastics, cement and steel. Fossil fuels are still the principal energy source for these three critical industries. With emissions from electricity and transport, the International Energy Agency reminds us that energy use accounts for more than 75% of total GHG emissions globally.

6. Emissions from the consumption of meat and dairy products. Beyond energy consumption, these emissions are acknowledged to contribute significantly to total greenhouse gas emissions, though recent

estimates of the proportion vary between 12 and 19.6%. Methane emissions in particular have a major effect, but year after year, this remains largely ignored by the COP process.

7. Total greenhouse gas emissions. Basically, the sum of 4, 5 and 6 above, plus additional emissions from other greenhouse gases. Total greenhouse gas emissions from human activities have increased by roughly 1.5% a year since the UN’s Framework convention on Climate Change was agreed in 1992 and are now 65% higher than they were then.

Outcome indicators

8. Concentrations of CO₂ in the atmosphere. This is a familiar and largely uncontested data set, with records going back to 1957. The World Meteorological Organization provides annual confirmation of the rate of increase; 2024 saw the highest ever increase in CO₂ concentrations in a single year.

9. Average temperature increase. The focus on average temperature increases since the

Industrial Age is critical to understanding what is happening to our climate. The average global temperature has already risen by about 1.5°C since then, and, according to the latest Emissions Gap Report, from the UN Environment Programme, will increase to 2.8°C before 2100 based on current policies. This will be catastrophic.

10. The Global Carbon Budget. The Carbon Budget is an estimate of the amount of greenhouse gases we can 'afford' to emit, on an annual basis, to have a reasonable chance of

maintaining a stable climate. The dashboard would reveal whether we're staying within our annual budget, or exceeding it. This is a beautifully simple measure, which is probably why politicians hate it.

11. Economic impacts. No single agreed measure exists of total economic impact from today's more frequent and intense climate-induced disasters. However, there does need to be.

12. The Earth's energy imbalance. This is the big one. Both physically and politically. It tells us the difference between the energy the Earth receives from the Sun, and the energy it radiates back into space. Over the long term, they need to be in balance; in the short term, unfortunately, thanks to greenhouse gases trapping heat in our atmosphere, the difference between them is getting bigger each year, with that imbalance doubling over the past two decades. This all-important indicator doesn't get the necessary attention.

Climate and Environment

WOOD-BURNING stoves are likely to face tighter restrictions in England under new pollution targets set as part of an updated environmental plan released by ministers on 1 December reported Helena Horton and Peter Walker for The Guardian. Speaking to the Guardian before the publication of the updated environmental improvement plan (EIP), the environment secretary, Emma Reynolds, said it would boost nature recovery in a number of areas, replacing an EIP under the last government she said was "not credible".

Reynolds said efforts to restore nature would now take place on "a strategic level" rather than a previously piecemeal approach, arguing this meant the government's push to build housing and infrastructure could still come with a net gain in habitats.

One element of the new EIP will see the targets for concentrations of PM2.5 particulate pollutants tightened to match current EU targets, something that was not part of the previous plan, published in 2023 under the Conservatives.



According to sources in Reynolds' department, this will involve a consultation on possible measures to reduce PM2.5 pollution, including those from wood-burning stoves and fireplaces.

This could involve pollution limits being tightened in smoke control areas, which already limit what fuels can be burned: for example, setting out that wood can be burned only in approved types of stoves or burners, not in fireplaces.

It could mean an effective ban on older appliances and that, in some places, it will not be possible to use a wood-burning stove at all.

The current annual PM2.5 limit is 25µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic metre), with an aim to meet 10µg/m³ by 2040. The EU's standards are stricter, with a new directive passed last year asking member states to meet 10µg/m³ by

2030.

The World Health Organization recommends an annual limit of 5µg/m³. It is understood the EIP will bring the UK's standards in line with the EU, with an aim to eventually meet WHO targets.

Exposure to PM2.5s, which bury deep into the lungs, is linked to numerous health conditions including asthma, lung disease, heart disease, cancer and strokes. Domestic combustion accounted for 20% of PM2.5 emissions in 2023 and has been found to produce more pollution than traffic.

Elsewhere in the EIP, Reynolds will set out that £500m of existing departmental money is to be allocated to landscape recovery projects, larger-scale attempts to restore landscapes and ecosystems, often working with farmers and other landowners.

This will include a specific target to restore or create 250,000 hectares (618,000 acres) of wildlife-rich habitats by 2030.

The EIP is required under the Environment Act, with the intention that it should put into action a more general commitment to improve the environment within a generation.

For the first time, as part of the new EIP, the government will publish detailed Environment Act target delivery plans, which set out how actions will contribute to its aims and help to measure progress.

Such moves, Reynolds argued, should mitigate fears about nature depletion owing to housebuilding and other projects, after fears were raised the government's planning and infrastructure bill could reduce protections and see green spaces lost.

"What we're talking about is restoring nature, not house by house, but at a more strategic level. We can be both pro-development and pro-home-ownership and pro-nature," she said.

"The last EIP, under the previous Tory administration, wasn't credible. I'm confident that our EIP is credible, because it's got these delivery plans built in. You can't just set the targets. You've got to explain how you're going to achieve those targets. And that's exactly what we've done."

An aerial photograph shows the partially revealed bed of a reservoir with a road through



the middle

The new EIP is also expected to include a commitment from the previous plan for every household to be within a 15-minute walk of green space or a waterway.

Other measures to be announced on Monday include a new plan for "forever chemicals", to reduce the amount of PFAS in the environment, and a crackdown on illegal waste dumping.

Ruth Chambers, from the Green Alliance thinktank, said the new EIP was "an important milestone and an opportunity to harness the government's collective clout to deliver better for nature".

She said: "It must now be converted swiftly into the sustained action needed to restore nature, clean up our rivers and air, create a circular economy and help people reconnect with the natural world."

THE chair of a House of Lords committee has said she was "alarmed" the Environment Agency (EA) did not notify it about a number of illegal waste sites reported Stuart Rust for BBC South of England.

The agency submitted evidence to an inquiry into illegal waste dumping that included the locations of several waste sites in England.

However, Baroness Shas Sheehan said it did not include the mountain of waste in Kidlington, Oxfordshire, as well as sites in Wigan and Worcestershire, which have since come to light in the media.

The EA has called the claims "inaccurate" and said it "responded comprehensively" to the questions it was asked.

Baroness Sheehan has written to the EA's

chair and chief executive, Alan Lovell and Philip Duffy, to seek clarification on the issue. She said members of the environment and climate change committee had become "increasingly alarmed" at reports of new waste crime sites in the media.

"We are disappointed that these sites were not deemed necessary to bring to the committee's attention," she said.

The committee's inquiry, which concluded in October, focused on organised waste crime and illegal dumping that posed a serious environmental risk.

In its submission, the EA said it was aware of sites in Kent, Lancashire, Cheshire, Cornwall and Norfolk.

Baroness Sheehan said she was concerned "there may be other sites of a similarly large and environmentally damaging scale" that had not been disclosed.

An Environment Agency spokesperson said: "These claims are inaccurate. We have engaged with Baroness Sheehan's inquiry in good faith and have responded comprehensively to the questions posed to us. We will continue to work closely with the Committee on their further questions."

The EA said its evidence to the committee directly answered a request to identify illegal dumps comparable in size to one in Hoads Wood in Kent. It told the committee it was aware of six other illegal waste sites estimated to be as large as or larger than the Hoads Wood dump.

It said additional sites reported in the media did not meet that definition.

A key UN report on the state of the global environment has been "hijacked" by the United States and other countries who were unwilling to go along with the scientific findings, the co-chair has told the BBC, reported Matt McGrath, BBC Environment correspondent.

The Global Environment Outlook, the result of six years' work, connects climate change, nature loss and pollution to unsustainable consumption by people living in wealthy and emerging economies.

It warns of a "dire future" for millions unless there's a rapid move away from coal, oil and gas and fossil fuel subsidies. However, at a meeting with government representatives to agree the findings, the US and allies said they could not go along with a summary of the report's conclusions.

As the scientists were unwilling to water down or change their findings, the report has now been published without the summary and without the support of governments, weakening its impact.

Researchers say the objections to this new report reflect similar concerns expressed by countries at the recent COP30 talks.

The BBC has approached the relevant US government departments for comment.

Issued every six or seven years, the Global Environment Outlook is a significant scientific analysis of the major threats to the planet.

Developed under the auspices of the UN, the normal practice for studies like this is to have the key conclusions and recommendations agreed word by word with governments and published as a "summary for policymakers".

These summaries are seen as critical because they show that governments agree with the science and are prepared to put the findings into action.

However, this new version of the Global Environment Outlook does not have this type of summary, as the authors and the political representatives of around 70 countries could not



agree one at a "stormy" meeting in Nairobi in October.

Compiled by nearly 300 scientists worldwide, the report argues that the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the energy we consume all involve the extraction of resources in a highly unsustainable manner.

To solve the connected issues of climate change, pollution, nature and biodiversity loss, the report has many recommendations including a rapid move away from coal, oil and gas and a massive reduction in subsidies for farming and fossil fuels.

The authors acknowledge this type of action will drive-up prices for consumers, but that short term pain will bring long term economic benefits for the whole world, the report says.

These strong measures, especially on fossil fuels and plastics, were too much for the United States, Saudi Arabia and Russia among others at the approval meeting, which usually work by consensus.

"A small number of countries basically just hijacked the process, to be quite honest," Prof Sir Robert Watson told BBC News.

"The US decided not to attend the meeting at all. At the very end they joined by teleconference and basically made a statement that they could not agree with most of the report, which means they didn't agree with anything we said on climate change, biodiversity, fossil fuels, plastics and subsidies."

Sir Robert is one of the world's most respected scientific voices. He's a former chief scientist for the UK's department of the environment and has also been chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), as well as working for the World Bank and Nasa.

However he has had rows with the US in the past, criticising their decision to leave an earlier climate treaty, the Kyoto Protocol, when he was head of the IPCC. He was ousted from that role in 2002 after lobbying by the administration of President George W Bush.

Others present at the meeting agreed that the actions of the US and other countries "derailed" the process.

"I thought we had gone beyond the point of recognizing that when you burn oil, this big, thick black stuff comes up, and it probably isn't good, especially when you try and breathe it in," said Dr David Broadstock, with the Lantau Group, and one of the report's lead authors.

"It's kind of pretty obvious, and yet we're still seeing parties wanting to pursue the increasing scale of production of such things," he told BBC News.

Since taking office President Trump has sought to boost fossil fuel production and roll

back US commitments to fight climate change, calling for the country to be a global energy superpower with cheap and reliable resources.

He has also sought to get the US courts to overturn the idea that carbon dioxide is a danger to public health. His government has also followed up with efforts to restrict or limit the efforts of international bodies that set out to tackle warming.

This year has seen efforts at international plastics negotiations, at the international maritime organisation and during COP30 to strike out language that states that climate change is a major issue requiring the world to move away rapidly from fossil fuels.

The disagreement over the Global Environment Outlook report will raise concerns about future negotiations for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports as these studies are seen as the bedrock of global efforts to limit global warming.

KEMI BADENOCH says the Conservatives will scrap the ban on petrol and diesel vehicles due to come into force in the UK if they win the next election, reported Sofia Ferreira Santos for BBC News.

Writing in the Sunday Telegraph, external, the Conservative Party leader said the Zero Emission Vehicle mandate (ZEV) was a "well-meaning but ultimately destructive piece of legislation".

From 2030, all new cars will have to be electric or hybrid as part of government efforts to meet a legally binding aim of achieving "net zero" by 2050.

The Conservative leader's comments come after her meeting with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who has lobbied the EU to water down its own plans for a ban.

Net zero refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere.

Six EU countries, including Italy, have recently called on other member states to rethink plans to phase out new petrol and diesel cars by 2035, saying it could hurt industrial competitiveness.

Badenoch suggested the EU had signalled it would drop a full ban, adding: "The reality is that the EU's change of heart on EVs will leave Labour even more isolated, and by pressing ahead alone, we are placing our domestic industry at a disadvantage while giving others the opportunity to dominate global supply chains."

She said the only "winners in this economic self-harm are China".

The Conservative leader added that her

government would still move towards a "transition to cleaner transport" but one driven by "affordability, practicality and technological progress" rather than "unrealistic mandates that weaken domestic manufacturing and empower foreign competitors".

She said scrapping the mandate would give "space" to rebuild the UK's car industry.

UK car firms were said to have been split over the 2030 deadline, with some calling for more support to be able to meet it.

In its latest Budget, the government announced an extra £1.3 billion investment into the UK's Electric Car Grant scheme to encourage drivers to make the switch to EVs.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves also announced that drivers of battery electric cars, which includes plug-in hybrids, will be charged 3p per mile for the Electric Vehicle Excise Duty from April 2028, with some arguing the move could make electric cars less appealing.

The ban on the sale of petrol and diesel cars was originally introduced in 2020 by then Prime Minister, Conservative Boris Johnson - Badenoch, a cabinet member at the time, opposed the plans.

It was later pushed back to 2035 by Rishi Sunak, with Labour pledging to bring it forward in its 2024 election manifesto.

A spokesperson for the Department for Transport said the government remained "committed to phasing out all new non-zero emission car and van sales".

They said: "More drivers than ever are choosing electric".

The next UK general election must be held by 15 August 2029, but the prime minister can opt to call an election at any point before this.

UNFORTUNATELY, it's not only the UK government that is backing down on plans to end new petrol and diesel car sales. Theo Leggett, BBC International Business Correspondent, reported that The European Commission has watered down its plans to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2035.

Current rules state that new vehicles sold from that date should be "zero emission", but carmakers, particularly in Germany, have lobbied heavily for concessions.

Under the European Commission's new plan, 90% of new cars sold from 2035 would have to be zero-emission, rather than 100%.

According to the European car makers association, ACEA, market demand for electric cars is currently too low, and without a change to the rules, manufacturers would risk "multi-billion euro" penalties.

The remaining 10% could be made up of conventional petrol or diesel cars, along with hybrids.

Carmakers will be expected to use low-carbon steel made in the EU in the vehicles they produce.

The Commission also expects an increase in the use of biofuels and so-called e-fuels, which are synthesised from captured carbon dioxide, to compensate for the extra emissions created by petrol and diesel vehicles.

Opponents of the move have warned that it risks undermining the transition towards electric vehicles and leaving the EU exposed in the face of foreign competition.

The green transport group T&E has warned that the UK should not follow the EU's lead by weakening its own plans to phase out the sale of conventional cars under the Zero Emission Vehicles Mandate.

"The UK must stand firm. Our ZEV mandate is already driving jobs, investment and



innovation into the UK. As major exporters we cannot compete unless we innovate, and global markets are going electric fast," said T&E UK's director Anna Krajinska.

Ahead of the announcement, Sigrid de Vries, director general at ACEA, said that "flexibility" for manufacturers was "urgent".

"2030 is around the corner, and market demand is too low to avoid the risk of multi-billion-euro penalties for manufacturers," she said.

"It will take time to build the charging points and introduce fiscal and purchase incentives to get the market on track. Policy makers must provide breathing space to manufacturers to sustain jobs, innovation and investments."

Carmakers in the UK have previously called for better incentives to encourage drivers to buy electric ahead of the government's planned ban on sales of new petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030.

Firms across the world have been changing their production lines and investing billions as governments try to persuade people to drive greener cars to meet environmental targets.

Volvo said it had "built a complete EV portfolio in less than 10 years" and was prepared to go fully electric, using hybrids as a transition. It argued if it can move away from petrol and diesel vehicles, other companies should be able to as well.

The carmaker said: "Weakening long-term commitments for short-term gain risks undermining Europe's competitiveness for years to come. A consistent and ambitious policy framework, as well as investments in public infrastructure, is what will deliver real benefits for customers, for the climate, and for Europe's industrial strength."

However, German carmaker Volkswagen welcomed the European Commission's draft proposal on new CO₂ targets, calling it "economically sound overall".

It said: "The fact that small electric vehicles are to receive special support in future is very positive. It is extremely important that the CO₂ targets for 2030 are made more flexible for passenger cars and adjusted for light commercial vehicles."

"Opening up the market to vehicles with combustion engines while compensating for emissions is pragmatic and in line with market conditions."

Colin Walker, head of transport at the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit (ECIU) think tank, said the UK having "stable policy" would give companies the confidence to invest in charging infrastructure and avoid "jeopardising investments".

"It was government policy that saw Sunderland chosen to build Nissan's original electric Leaf, and today the latest Nissan EV has started rolling off the production lines in the North East, securing jobs for years to come," he said.

Octopus Electric Vehicles chief executive Fiona Howarth warned that if the UK reduced its goals because of changes in Brussels, it would send a "damaging signal to investors, manufacturers and supply-chain partners".

Many of these groups have already invested heavily in the transition "on the assumption the UK would stay the course," she said.

DAMIAN CARRINGTON, Environment Editor for The Guardian, reported that the worst-case impacts of the climate crisis for the UK have been laid bare by scientists, ranging from a scorching 4°C rise in temperatures to a 2-metre rise in sea level.

Another scenario sees a plunge of 6°C in temperature after the collapse of key Atlantic Ocean currents, massively disrupting farming and energy needs.

The impacts, some of which are linked to climate tipping points, are seen as low probability but plausible. The researchers said the scenarios filled a gap in forecasting that had left the UK unprepared for extreme outcomes.

A second set of worst-case scenarios sets out the potential extent of extreme weather between now and the end of the century. These indicate that temperatures could soar in some months by up to 6°C above average, while rainfall could be triple normal levels.

"The climate extremes we have mapped aren't predictions, but they are plausible," said Nigel Arnell, a University of Reading professor who led the study. "The UK has been planning without the tools to test against worst-case scenarios. We've now given decision-makers what they need to prepare for climate outcomes they hope never happen, but can't afford to ignore."

The probability of the extreme scenarios happening could not be calculated because of uncertainty about what action will be taken to tackle global heating and how the climate system will respond. Arnell said this made the analysis similar to national security risk assessments or the Bank of England's stress tests for the financial system.

"You couldn't have known what the probability of Russia invading Ukraine was, but you could have said this is what the consequences might be," he added.

The worst-case scenarios could be used to inform the building of long-term infrastructure, such as new towns, nuclear power stations and urban drainage systems, Arnell said, adding that awareness of climate risks could speed the drive to cut fossil fuel emissions.

Published in the journal *Earth's Future*, the analysis developed the worst-case scenarios using a combination of observed and historical experience, computer simulations and theory.

Global temperatures rising well above 4°C by 2100 could happen if climate action collapses or if there are strong feedback loops such as the Amazon rainforest dying and releasing its enormous store of carbon. This would result in extreme and prolonged heatwaves and droughts hitting the UK in summer. Thousands of early deaths have already occurred in England in heatwaves with just a 1.3°C increase in global temperatures.

Temperatures could also be driven up by about 0.75°C if pollution from industry is sharply cut, the scientists said. This is because aerosol particles from burning coal and heavy fuels block sunlight from reaching the ground.

A major ocean current, the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation (AMOC) is weakening and losing stability because of global heating. It is one of the tipping points that most concerns scientists. A collapse beginning in 2030 would lead to 6°C cooling in the UK.

"Agriculture would struggle enormously and water resources would be completely altered," said Arnell. "Our heat and energy system would be completely caught out by changing winter

energy demand. It wouldn't happen overnight, but it would be massively disruptive."

A collapse of even one part of Amoc, the sub-polar gyre, would reduce UK temperatures by 2.5°C, the scientists said.

Global sea levels are already higher because of global heating but a rise of 2.0-2.2 metres around the UK by 2100 could occur if glaciers in Greenland and Antarctica collapse rapidly, flooding coastal cities and towns. Unlike the other scenarios, this possibility was already known to planners.

The worst-case scenarios do not take into account potential global problems including the

devastation of food supplies and conflict.

The research was commissioned by the Met Office as part of the government's climate resilience programme. A House of Lords report warned in 2021 that not enough attention was being given to low-likelihood but high-impact risks.

The Climate Change Committee, the government's independent advisory body, has said the UK needs to "adapt to 2°C and assess the risks for 4°C". Adaptation plans published in 2023 were criticised as being "very weak".

A government spokesperson said: "Climate change is at the heart of this government's

agenda, both adapting for the future and becoming a clean energy superpower. It is vital that the UK is ready for the impacts and we are helping local communities become more resilient, including by building nine new reservoirs, as well as a record £10.5bn in government funding for new flood defences to protect nearly 900,000 properties by 2036."

The government has requested an evidence review of climate risks from the CCC, which will be published in the spring. It has also asked for guidance on climate scenarios to be used in planning.

Saving our trees and woodlands

CAIT FINDLAY wrote on Cambridgeshire Live that the A14 looks like a tree graveyard. It depresses me every time I drive there. This summer, I drove down to Gatwick from Cambridge at the start of a holiday, but I'm not about to bore you with holiday snaps. What really struck me about the journey was part of the M25, where the wide tarmac lanes were bordered by healthy-looking trees.

I was amazed that a roadside woodland could be so beautiful, when for the past 10 years or so the main roads I have been using are the A1 and the A14. The latter has become my least favourite road, because despite repeated tree planting, the roadside still looks like a half-naked version of what it should be.



If you have driven along the A14 between Cambridge and the A1 in recent years, you will know exactly what I'm talking about. Despite promises of a biodiversity net gain, the current state of the roadside is a constant reminder of time, money, and effort wasted and environmental promises broken.

The first public sign that all was not well came in March 2021, when a council report said that a 'large proportion' of the one million trees planted as part of the scheme had died.

In March 2023, the agency admitted a 'high failure rate', after an internal review found that 75% of the trees had died. It said that it would be undertaking a replanting scheme to the tune of £2.9 million, with around 160,000 new trees planted by March 2024.

You would think that would be the end of the story lessons learned, a new plan in place, and trees planted and thriving. However, this appears to be an ongoing series with no end in sight and I'm not the only person who has noticed.

We reported on the issue of the trees in January of this year, after a Brampton man said the A14 was "where trees come to die". The issue arose again in June, when councillors said the area 'looks like a desert'.

In the winter and spring, I thought it was

unfair to criticise National Highways when trees and plants elsewhere were only just returning to full splendour. Yet, every single time I have driven along that stretch of road this year to date - around 15 times - I have seen little overall improvement, no matter the season.

True, it's hard to judge with absolute accuracy when you're driving past at around 70mph, navigating other traffic. The overall impression I get is that most of the trees planted along the A14 have not grown successfully.

The growth that can be seen is undermined by the plastic tree guards highlighting every spot where a tree should be but isn't, like grave markers at a tree cemetery. In some areas, the plastic guards huddle tightly together in rows, entirely devoid of any signs of plant life.

There are still so many questions that National Highways needs to answer. Why has this failed - not once, but multiple times? Will it ever succeed? How much money has been poured into this? Were there alternatives that would have worked better, perhaps at a lower cost?

For now, it seems as though the A14 will remain a place where trees are planted only to die. And when I'm driving home for Christmas, I know my festive spirit will be dampened by the frustration and anger I feel every time I see an empty tree guard.

THE Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire is facing a tree disease crisis reported Alice Cunningham for BBC News

The charity said it was facing a "woodland crisis" as trees were increasingly suffering with disease. shared the result of its largest survey of woodland nature reserves.

Of almost 6,000 trees surveyed, it found that 29% had diseases while 82% of ash trees, the worst affected species, were suffering from ash

dieback fungal disease.

Josh Hellon, monitoring and research manager at the trust, said the results were "very worrying".

The trust's Woodland Condition Monitoring Survey began in 2021 and as of this year has covered 21 different sites. Teams identify all the trees within a sample area and record everything health related from the girth to the wildflowers on the woodland floor around the tree.

"This is the biggest assessment of the health of the woodlands in our patch we've ever undertaken, and the results are very worrying," Mr Hellon explained.

"Our conservation teams are getting very used to managing the impacts of ash dieback and other tree diseases, and these results show the stark numbers we're dealing with. Ash dieback is having the biggest impact, with 100% of surveyed ash trees infected in some woodlands."

Ash dieback was first discovered in the UK in 2012 and has continued to spread over the past 13 years. According to the Wildlife Trust it has already caused "widespread damage" in Europe and has led to thousands of tree deaths in the UK.

Mr Hellon said teams were trialling new techniques to manage affected sites and change the way they work.

This included spraying deer repellent on saplings, removing affected trees, tackling waterlogging and trampling of wild flowers, and comparing different management options for ash dieback.

PEOPLE carving into trees in the Lake District are causing "lasting harm", according to those who run the national park reported BBC News.

The Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) said carvings were not "just surface scratches" but were leading to issues such as decay and fungal infections. It said while it did not know how widespread the problem was in the area, engravings were usually found collectively in "quiet, secluded areas".

Woodlands officer Olivia Wass said: "What might feel like leaving a memory actually leaves a scar that damages a living tree and disrupts the ecosystem around it."

The LDNPA said carving may "seem like a





relatively harmless act of vandalism" but it "comes at a cost to nature".

One area where the carvings were found was by Windermere.

Ms Wass said: "A wound doesn't close over like a cut on skin... instead, the tree grows new wood and bark around the damaged area to seal it off. This process takes time and energy, and the original injury can remain inside the tree for life."

She said the open wound then becomes an "an easy entry point for fungi, bacteria and sometimes insects. Once inside, decay can spread into the wood, reducing the tree's strength and making it more vulnerable to storms or other stresses."

LDNPA said thin barked species like beech, birch and young oaks were particularly vulnerable due to their protective layer being easily breached.

Ms Wass said: "Carvings aren't just surface scratches, they cause lasting harm. Each cut can weaken the tree, shorten its life, and reduce the benefits it gives to wildlife and people."

AN abundant patch of orchids has been "destroyed" during work by Forestry England to improve a track for logging operations reported Tom Burgess for BBC News.



The work to create ditches and resurface the route to Mayland Bank in Hamsterley Forest, County Durham, took place in November.

Local resident Andy Richardson and his fellow dog walkers are "angry" the work could not avoid the abundance of common spotted and northern marsh orchids during the work.

Forestry England said on-site surveys "identified no concerns about protected orchid species", however they said there are orchid species throughout the forest.

Mr Richardson said the plants had been "destroyed" and "chopped down to the clay".

He said "It is such a shame that Forestry England has not properly considered preserving and protecting that area the orchids were growing in. It attracts a lot of insects and lots of dog walkers use the track and take photographs of the flowers."

A Forestry England spokesperson said: "The resurfacing was a routine piece of work to prepare the forest road for harvesting operations and all our normal procedures were followed."

"Forestry England employs experienced

and professional ecologists who support planning and delivering our forestry work so that important wildlife is protected and enhanced wherever possible."

The organisation said forest road maintenance is important to ensure access is available for emergency services when responding to fires, accidents or missing person searches.

A spokesperson for the Botanical Society of Britain said it is "always sad when people lose wildflower habitat in their area and seeing lovely native orchids is always a treat. The common spotted orchid is, as the name suggests, the most common wild orchid across Britain and Ireland and it is actually quite good at colonising new habitats, so it might even crop up again nearby."

"We'd urge people to keep their eyes peeled when they're out walking in the area. The northern marsh orchid only really occurs north of a line running from the Severn to the Humber."

The society described it as a "stunning" plant which has increased in Britain over the last century, but there have been losses due to "habitat destruction".

CHILDREN have been throwing bricks at buses and fire engines and ripping up newly planted trees in a town reported Claudia Robinson and Louise Hobson for BBC News.

Police say the youngsters have been damaging buses and taxis in Hardwick and Thornaby, in Stockton, Teesside, since the end of November.

Resident David Pennington said youths had been throwing rocks, fireworks and needles at his property for years and that the trees the council planted to protect his property had been ripped up.

Ch Insp Jamie Bell, of Cleveland Police, said the vandalism was being done "predominantly by children" and warned "it might seem like fun but is it really dangerous".

Mr Pennington said he had been targeted by anti-social behaviour on Tithebarn Road for six years and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council recently planted conifers and cherry laurels to protect his home. Within two weeks, the trees had been ripped up and he had to go out with the council to replant them.

He said "I've asked for stakes to be put in with the trees but I have been told no. This footpath is an absolute nightmare, there are motorbikes up and down here all the time, there's kids with balaclavas on throwing bricks at windows, we've had fireworks over, dog poo bags thrown onto the roof and hypodermic needles in the garden."

Councillor Norma Stephenson, cabinet member for community safety, said following reports of anti-social behaviour targeting homes next to the path, the trees were planted to "improve the security" and reduce the risk of crime.

She said: "Unfortunately, the trees were vandalised and pulled out. The community payback team have now replanted them."

Stephenson said the council's civic



enforcement team was supporting the police in trying to identify those responsible for the anti-social behaviour.

Stagecoach North East said it was "deeply concerned" by the attacks on its buses, which were making it increasingly challenging to carry out regular services in the area.

A spokesperson said Stagecoach would continue to work with police and the local council, and would consider using a Trojan Bus filled with police ready to catch offenders.

Ch Insp Bell said: "It might seem like innocent fun on their part. It isn't. It is really dangerous. All it takes is a momentary distraction from the driver and the next thing you know we will have a collision or a pedestrian is run over."

"Parents need to know where their children are, why they are wearing balaclavas, who they are associating with."

VOLUNTEERS who look after a woodland in Derbyshire have appealed for information after most of their "essential" equipment was stolen reported Jude Winter for BBC News, East Midlands.

Derbyshire Police said tools were stolen from locked containers at Waingroves Woodland, near Ripley, between 7 and 10 December.

The Waingroves Community Woodlands Trust said a muck truck, petrol generator, lawnmower, hedge cutters, a brush cutter, and a strimmer "vanished" after being taken by thieves.

David Williams, a member of the trust, said: "This equipment is very useful in our maintenance work, trimming trees and vegetation, planting trees, logging work, and its loss through theft is presently a big blow to us."



Waingroves Community Woodland Trust purchased 12.75 acres of woodland after a public meeting in October 2010 stated the woods were up for sale and could become development land. About 140 people and village groups donated £20,000 to purchase the woods in July 2011, which have been cared for by volunteers ever since.

Mr Williams said the tools being stolen was a "kick in the guts" for him and the other volunteers. It's a massive blow to us. We're having to beg people for spare equipment until it all, hopefully, comes back."

Mr Williams said about £6,500 of equipment was stolen.

"The woodlands mean a great deal to us and they are a jewel in the local community's crown. It's a place of beauty that needs looking after," he added.

"We would like all items returned as soon as possible. These tools mean a lot more to us than they do to anybody else."

AN ancient Essex woodland that was once loved by royalty is set for a huge transformation reported Mel King, Content Editor, and Emily Beament, Press Association Environment Correspondent, for EssexLive.

A scheme utilising nature payments from

developers is working to restore a vast stretch of wild countryside, benefiting both wildlife and local communities.

However, the team spearheading the initiative has cautioned that potential Government alterations to the developer payments system could "take away at the knees" the emerging market designed to secure vital private funding for reviving the UK's beleaguered wildlife and habitats.

The 206-hectare (509-acre) Harold's Park Wildland in Nazeing, Essex, formerly the Royal hunting grounds of Harold Godwinson, the final Saxon monarch, is being transformed from poor-quality agricultural land and paddocks that previously housed a 96-horse stable operation.

Established ancient woodland is being rejuvenated, with three Iron Age pigs – a cross between wild boar and Tamworth breeds – already on-site to begin churning the soil, whilst plans are in place to introduce cattle and ponies to help restore the landscape's natural processes, alongside managed deer populations.

Conifer plantations across the estate are being removed, creating space for indigenous saplings to flourish, with ponds scheduled for installation during winter months and measures being implemented to reduce water run-off and minimise flooding beyond the estate boundaries.

Historic hedgerows will serve as the seed bank for tree and shrub species to colonise the former fields, whilst machinery has carved out an extensive muddy pathway to open up the woodlands and establish what Harold's Park site manager Tom Moat calls an "artery of wildlife through the woodland". "This won't be mud for long, the grass will come and then the flowers behind it," he said.

Mr Moat explained that "nothing is working as it should" in the landscape, which has lost beavers and bison, herds of wild boar and large herbivores that would have created a patchwork of habitats for wildlife and functioning natural systems. He noted that deer, without predators, are not behaving naturally.

"We are replacing that, and as a rewilding company, we're trying to do that as light touch as we can and letting nature do the rest," he said.

Mr Moat described it as "exciting" to observe how the landscape develops, with land currently used as fields gradually transforming into scrubland and wood pasture that benefits numerous wildlife species, including rare ones such as nightingales.

Plans also include establishing an orchard along the estate's perimeter to prevent wind-dispersed wildflower seeds like ragwort from spreading to neighbouring properties whilst providing fruit harvests from the land.

With London visible on the horizon, tourism and corporate retreats will form a crucial part of the project, utilising existing structures and extensive parking to host events.

It is anticipated these facilities could support access for local youngsters and communities to experience nature, whilst there are also proposals to link this wilder landscape with nearby Epping Forest. At the centre of the initiative lies the emerging "biodiversity net gain" (BNG) market, which requires developers to pay not only for replacing habitat destroyed by development, but also to deliver a 10% improvement for nature.

Harold's Park belongs to nature restoration firm Nattergal, which is placing the estate into the BNG market to secure private funding for rewilding efforts and generate returns for investors, whilst creating local opportunities to



restore nature in an area facing extensive development.

More than 10% of the BNG units available for Harold's Park have already been sold or are under contract, with Mr Moat noting: "If we sell them all it more than washes its own face in terms of every cost."

The company is also forging partnerships with developers that have resulted in nature-friendly initiatives, such as relocating dozens of slow worms from development sites to Harold's Park.

However, the Government is currently reviewing the fledgling BNG scheme as it advances its "build, build, build" agenda to boost economic growth and attempts to remove barriers to development.

Conservation organisations and firms like Nattergal are concerned about potential changes – including reports that the BNG requirement may be scrapped for all sites under 0.5 hectares – which could devastate one of the most promising avenues for channelling private investment into desperately needed nature restoration. Archie Struthers, the chief executive of Nattergal, highlighted that BNG is the world's first statutory biodiversity market.

It has already facilitated the restoration of 5,000 hectares of land, generated £450 million in economic value, and created an estimated 4,000 jobs.

However, he warned that the changes reportedly being considered by the Government could severely impact a range of businesses that have invested significant effort, time, and money into building this industry.

"It just feels to me like an own goal at a time when we have a chance to be a world leader, and instead, we're undermining that," Mr Struthers said, emphasising the need to maintain investor confidence in the nature restoration market.

He revealed that the industry had suggested a compromise of exempting sites smaller than 0.1 hectares and focusing on system improvements.

Mr Struthers labelled the current debates around nature versus food and nature versus growth as "completely ludicrous". He warned that it was impossible to grow food or the economy without nature, citing increasing flood risks and impacts on UK harvests.

"Nature is critical infrastructure, and therefore the economic realities of us failing to manage, repair, restore, nurture that infrastructure are becoming ever more painful," he concluded.

PLANS to demolish a former Masonic lodge to make way for a new housing development have been refused by councillors reported Chris Young, Local Democracy Reporter for the Telegraph and Argus.

The refusal came after members of the planning panel were told that the Conservation Area site had been illegally cleared of trees.

There have been plans to redevelop the Former Provincial Grand Lodge Of Yorkshire West Riding at Spring Bank Place, Manningham for several years, and last week the latest application for the site went before Bradford Council's Planning Panel.

This application, submitted by K Mahmood, called for a section of the derelict masonic lodge to be demolished, and two attached villas to be restored as family homes. A pair of semi-detached dwellings and five detached homes would be built on other parts of the site.

A report by planning officers recommended the plans be refused for a number of reasons, including the impact on the Apsley Crescent Conservation Area and the effect on residents living near the site.

The officers' report also raised concerns about the fact a swathe of trees on the protected site had been felled without permission.

It said: "The site previously contained a number of mature protected trees which have been felled without authorisation. The proposed site layout presents limited opportunities for replacement tree planting to compensate for the loss caused by the felling and clearance works carried out on site.

"Reports of tree works being undertaken was received in late December 2019. The site had been cleared of a large number of trees. By April 2020 the rear of the site had been cleared. Trees within conservation areas play an important role in establishing the character of the area and are protected, by default, because of this. It is also important to emphasise that the removal of trees within a conservation area without serving the required notice to the local planning authority amounts to a criminal offence.



"In order to avoid rewarding the criminal acts replacement trees should be planted as near as can reasonably be achieved to the site of those illegally removed. This issue needs to be borne in mind as it would be inappropriate to grant a planning permission which in effect rewards the unlawful removal of protected trees."

At the meeting Planning Officer Andrew Moxley was asked if any action had been taken over the tree felling. He replied: "There has been no action yet. We are getting to the bottom of when exactly the tree felling occurred. From around December 2019 there has been a substantial loss of trees."

Members were also told there were highway concerns about the application.

One objector, Mr Zahir, said the street accessing the site was narrow and it was difficult for vehicles like fire engines to get down the road. He added: "The tree felling shows a disregard for the Conservation Area."

Jo Steele, agent on behalf of the application, said his involvement in the application had only been recent.

He said: "I was appalled what I saw on the site. Fly-tipping is widespread and has had to be cleared by the applicant."

He said there had also been copper thefts from the building.

Mr Steele told the meeting the applicant

"has a commitment to the site" and added: "Prolonging the site in its present state is of no benefit at all."

Cllr Sinead Engel (Lab, Clayton and Fairweather Green) said: "I would like to see these villas saved."

However, she pointed out there were numerous reasons to refuse this plan.

Cllr Chris Herd (Cons, Worth Valley) said: "You look at this site. It isn't acceptable to have sites like this in Bradford. In this case we have someone who wants to make the site better and improve it. There are lots of sites in the city that people aren't bothered to improve. There is the potential to create nice homes in this area."

Councillor Mohammed Amran (Lab, Heaton) said: "Why haven't we worked with the developer on this?"

Mr Moxon said: "We do work with developers, but there gets a point where we can't agree on some issues."

A dramatic bid to halt the felling of some mature trees in an East Devon town heated up as a councillor put herself in the path of contractors with chainsaws reported Bradley Gerrard, Local Democracy Reporter for DevonLive.

Now an emergency protection order has been issued.

Councillor Jess Bailey said she was alerted to work that had just occurred to significantly reduce a mature hedgerow, and that moves were about to be undertaken to fell what she classed as "healthy trees" on Sidmouth Road.

Cllr Bailey (Independent, Otter Valley), who is a member of both Devon County Council and East Devon District Council (EDDC), stood under one of the trees to prevent it being chopped down by contractors with chainsaws.

She then contacted EDDC, which has responsibility for planning, including in relation to trees, in a bid to get the authority to protect them.

"I became aware that trees were about to be felled, so I rushed down to the site," Cllr Bailey said.

"I was absolutely horrified by what I saw when I arrived. A vast stretch of hedge had been completely decimated and there was literally nothing left of it. The contractors were poised with their chainsaws about to fell five roadside trees. I stood in the road under the trees and blocked contractors as they couldn't chainsaw whilst I was in the way.

"When I was standing in the road under the trees I called the council tree officers and asked them to attend urgently and put in place emergency tree protection orders (TPOs). Residents stood with me and brought me cups of tea and a coat for which I was very grateful.

The trees are located on a site where a bid to build 63 houses was previously turned down by East Devon District Council.

Cllr Bailey said one of the reasons it had been rejected was because of the hedge along the edge of the site.

"Questions are being asked whether the hedge was removed last week in a cynical attempt to overcome the grounds for objection," Cllr Bailey said.

"Residents want to know what enforcement action EDDC is going to take about the hedge removal. I am pressing EDDC to investigate what enforcement action can be taken under the hedgerow regulations. Hedgerows have significant levels of protection and are really important for wildlife. They cannot just be removed on a whim.

"Many residents have expressed their outrage at what has happened and expect the



district council to do something about it."

The plan for up to 63 homes on the land was refused by East Devon's planning committee in November 2023, and an appeal was subsequently dismissed by the government's Planning Inspectorate in December last year.

Part of East Devon's reason for refusal related to the fact the site was an area of open fields, and the application included the "removal of a hedge bank to provide vehicular access and visibility splays [which] would have a harsh and harmful urbanising effect on the character and appearance of the area".

"The resulting development would fail to respect the local distinctiveness or maintain the rural qualities evident in this landscape," the decision stated.

"This identified harm is considered to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits that the proposal could bring about."

The agent who represented the applicant for the rejected planning application said he had "not been involved in the project for a number of years" and so no longer had involvement with the land owner or developer.

Companies House records show the firm that submitted the rejected planning application no longer operates.

OLIVER PRIDMORE, Agenda Editor for NottinghamshireLive, reported that calls are being made for the legendary Major Oak tree in Sherwood Forest to be given extra legal status following the illegal felling of the Sycamore Gap.

Two men were recently convicted of criminal damage after felling the Sycamore Gap tree in 2023, with the landmark also known as the Robin Hood tree given its appearance in the 1991 film Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves.



An MP has now introduced a bill which would put other iconic trees around the country, including Sherwood Forest's Major Oak, on a national register giving it extra legal protection.

The bill was recently introduced in Parliament by Labour MP Joe Morris, who represents the constituency that contained the Sycamore Gap and it has also received the backing of Ruscliffe MP James Naish.

Sitting in Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest home, legend has it that Robin Hood and his outlaws hid within the Major Oak's trunk to

escape the clutches of the Sheriff of Nottingham.

Around 500 acres of the remaining oak wood pasture of Sherwood Forest, containing hundreds of ancient oak trees, is managed by the RSPB and the charity also manages the neighbouring Buddy South Forest reserve.

Sherwood Forest has already been a protected Site of Special Scientific Interest since 1954 and is also designated a special area for conservation and is Nottinghamshire's only national nature reserve.

Yet the RSPB says it would welcome any extra protection for trees like the Major Oak, with the bill from Mr Morris set to go through its next stage in Parliament in January.

Chloe Ryder, RSPB Estate operations manager for Sherwood Forest and Buddy South Forest, said: "The RSPB, alongside conservation partners such as the Woodland Trust, absolutely supports greater protections for the UK's ancient and veteran trees, like the Major Oak here in Sherwood Forest.

"The Major Oak is undoubtedly an iconic tree with huge cultural and natural significance, and is visited by hundreds of thousands of people from across the world each year who come to see the home of Robin Hood."

Mr Morris said when introducing his bill: "I am calling for a register of iconic trees, from the Ankerwycke yew in Berkshire, associated with the sealing of Magna Carta, and the Major Oak in Sherwood Forest, legendary home of Robin Hood... the list goes on.

"Such trees can and should be classified as iconic for holding widely recognised cultural, historical, ecological and symbolic significance."

Ms Ryder added: "One of RSPB's key aims is to connect people with nature, and the work we do here, particularly with the Major Oak and Sherwood's other ancient and veteran trees, provides a fantastic opportunity to engage with our visitors and to explain the importance of protecting this landscape.

"These trees have a vital and irreplaceable role in the forest eco-system. Even after the tree itself no longer produces leaves and acorns, the Major Oak, and other incredible ancient and veteran trees in Sherwood and across the UK, should continue to be protected.

"Each of them, in life and death, provides a habitat for hundreds of species of wildlife. In fact, research has shown that a single ancient oak tree can support up to 2,300 species. To lose them would be catastrophic for us all."

AN East Yorkshire developer has been fined for damaging protected trees reported Francis Redwood for York Press. Wayne Low and Richmond Properties admitted to causing or allowing wilful damage to a sycamore tree and the unauthorised felling of a pear tree in the Etton Conservation Area.

With both trees legally protected under conservation regulations, Mr Low was fined £960 and ordered to pay a £384 victim surcharge. Richmond Properties was fined £3,820 and ordered to pay a £1,528 victim surcharge and £369.66 in costs.

Councillor Nick Coultish, cabinet member for planning at East Riding of Yorkshire Council, said: "The council will look to take robust action against those who break planning rules and harm the environment.

"Trees make significant positive contributions to the environment, improve places' visual appearance, protect ecosystems and provide health and well-being benefits. It is vital to check whether permission is required to undertake tree works, and whether the tree is

covered by a conservation order or a tree protection order."

East Riding Council's investigation found both trees were healthy when works were carried out.

Two amenity assessments valued the sycamore's amenity value between £7,250.40 and £12,282, and the pear tree between £1,611.20 and £3,068.

NORTH East Lincolnshire Council are asking residents to come forward after several trees were vandalised in Immingham.

Five trees were snapped in half on a patch of land at the junction of Pilgrim Avenue and Carver Road. The damage was discovered by members of the Grounds Maintenance team during a routine inspection of the area in question.

This is the second time trees in this area have been damaged following the recent tree planting scheme earlier this year. Replacements will be provided in a safer location after careful consideration to ensure the trees remain where they should without being damaged.

The trees were planted as part of the Greening Up Our Place initiative, planting trees within the borough for the community. Trees provide a wealth of benefits both to the environment and people's health and wellbeing.

It's hoped that by continuing this process, the Council can increase tree coverage across North East Lincolnshire. However, to achieve this it is important that people respect those that have already been planted.

As a result of the vandalism, North East Lincolnshire Council are asking people with information about the damage to come forward.

Councillor Henry Hudson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Net Zero, said: "This is totally unacceptable behaviour. These trees have been planted to help the community and benefit their mental and physical health.

"I urge anyone who has any information regarding their damage to come forward to help prevent this from happening again."

For more information on the Greening Up Our Place initiative, visit [Tree planting | NELC](#).

JULIA BAKER reported for the Hereford Times that significant damage has been caused to the grounds of a Herefordshire castle, including to trees in an adjoining woodland.

A spokesperson for West Mercia Police said that officers received a report of criminal damage at Wigmore Castle, a Grade-I listed monument.

It is reported that significant damage has been caused to the surrounding furniture and land of the castle, whereby persons have damaged the field gate(s), fencing by using a chainsaw to damage them beyond use, along with cutting down approximately 60 meters worth of young trees in the adjoining woodland, causing a "significant" financial cost to repair or replace.

The incident is believed to have occurred at the start of December.

OLIVER CASTLE reported for the BBC Local Democracy Reporting Service that a council says it will work to plant more trees and hedgerows after acknowledging it had a lower level of coverage than many other areas.

Members of South Holland District Council's (SHDC) cabinet met on 16 December to discuss a five-year strategy to manage, plant, and promote trees and hedgerows.



The South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership developed said data showed approximately 6.5% of land in south and east Lincolnshire was classified to have tree cover and 1.5% was classified as having hedgerow coverage.

The national average tree cover stands at 12.8% along with a national hedgerow average of 2.5%.

Council leader Nick Worth acknowledged South Holland had particularly low levels, but said it was "worth bearing in mind" the agricultural nature of the area.

He said "That is why we have so few trees. We prioritise farming and food over the trees so that's probably not a big surprise."

He added the strategy aimed to encourage farmers to put in new hedgerows wherever they can.

The proposal has also been considered by the neighbouring authorities in East Lindsey and Boston, according to the Local Democracy Reporting Service.

SHDC said it would look to work in partnership with the environmental group Friends of the Earth to identify potential locations in the area.

A potential 2,243 acres (908 hectares) of land in East Lindsey has been identified, 27 acres (11 hectares) in Boston, but less than 2.5 acres (1 hectare) in South Holland, the meeting was told.

Councillor Elizabeth Sneath, portfolio holder for conservation and heritage, said trees and hedgerows played "a central role" in response to biodiversity loss and climate change.

"The changing climate and increased risk of extreme weather events highlights the importance of our green infrastructure to protect our communities and underpins our ability to adapt to climate change," she said.

Sneath added Boston and South Holland have "a traditionally fenland landscape" and therefore a much lower level of tree coverage than many other parts of the country.

THE Forestry Journal reported that Joe Morris MP has launched a bill in Parliament to create a register of culturally significant trees like the now-felled Sycamore Gap Tree. He said the felling of the tree in his Hexham constituency "felt like an attack".

In a speech in the House of Commons earlier in December, he said parliamentary colleagues often nickname him "the right honourable member for Sycamore Gap", adding that news of the tree did not just shock communities in the North of England, but the whole country.

The Labour MP suggested Sherwood Forest's Major Oak, near Mansfield, could feature on the list. It is the tree where Robin Hood and his Merry Men are said to have slept.

He also named Surrey's Crowhurst Yew as a contender for heightened protections, to better guard its trunk and canopy which some estimates suggest have been growing for around 4,000 years.

"Trees are not 'just trees'," Mr Morris told the Commons.

"So I'm calling for a register of 'iconic' trees to be made. From the Ankerwycke Yew in Berkshire, associated with the seal of the Magna Carta, to the Major Oak in Sherwood Forest, home to Robin Hood, to the Fortingall Yew in Perthshire, to the Crowhurst Yew in the churchyard of St George's Church, the list can go on.

"Such trees can and should be classified as 'iconic' for holding widely recognised cultural, historical, ecological and symbolic significance."

VILLAGE residents have been left 'outraged' after discovering a more than 200-year-old lime tree had been chopped down reported Hollie Busby for Bucks Free Press.

The tree, located in a field off Gorelands Lane, Chalfont St Giles, is one of five to be felled including a second lime, a cypress and two chestnuts.

Contractors were seen examining the site before residents made urgent requests for a TPO. The trees were chopped before the TPO could be put in place however, leaving neighbours concerned for the rest of the site.

Michael King, retired, of Highfield, e-mailed the council in October requesting it puts the TPO in place, which it confirmed it would. He wrote to the authority again in November to request an update and was told it intended to proceed with the order, but Mr King, a former law professor at the University of Reading, discovered the remains of the logs on December 5.

He said: "After I [told the council] they were being cut down, they came along and spoke to the contractor but of course, it was too late because they hadn't taken out the Tree Preservation Order so they couldn't stop it.

"A couple of the trees were very old and the lime tree is at least 200 years old. It makes me very sad. I didn't want to see these trees cut down.

"They were helping to preserve the environment and stop the soil from getting eroded. They seemed to be a habitat for wildlife and there seemed to be no reason to cut them down. The trees were very pleasant to look at and for them to go along in the morning and hack them down seems to be absolutely outrageous."

Betty Hutton, 87, also of Highfield, raised fears about the impact of habitat loss, saying: "I'm a great wildlife person and I feed the foxes and all the birds. The impact [from habitat loss] will be great. It makes me shudder.

"To do it specifically after Michael had gone to the council and said, 'we better get a protection order on the trees because that will be the first thing to go' is upsetting."

Peter Strachan, Buckinghamshire Council's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning, said: "We were contacted on October 23 by a resident requesting a TPO after contractors were seen inspecting trees on the site.

"Shortly afterwards, we were notified that a request for planning advice for development on the land had been submitted. A judgement was made at that time that the risk of felling was not significant.

"Once we became aware that trees had been felled, we acted immediately by issuing an emergency TPO covering the entire site.

"Due to the significant volume of timber felled, we have referred the details to the Forestry Commission to investigate whether an offence has been committed under the Forestry Act 1967."

Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Area news

Broadland Tree Preservation Orders Served, Confirmed and Revoked				
<i>TPO No</i>	<i>Address where tree(s) are located</i>	<i>Trees to be protected</i>	<i>Date served</i>	<i>Status</i>
2025 No BD0755	Rear of Village Hall, 19 Crowes Loke, Little Plumstead	G1 oak x 2	20/06/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0759	Rear garden of 3 Broad Lane, on boundary with Edgefield, Great Plumstead	T1 walnut	17/07/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0760	Front garden adj to boundary wall and highway, School House, 70 Norwich Road, Horstead with Stanninghall	T1 horse-chestnut	22/07/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0762	Rear garden of 246 Holt Road, Horsford , on boundary with number 266	T1 silver birch	31/07/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0763	Front garden of 6 Hum Road, Drayton	T1 magnolia	31/07/2025	Provisional
2025 No BD0765	Land adjacent to 19 Harrisons Drive, Sprowston	T1 oak	07/08/2025	Provisional
2025 No BD0766	Scylla, Dog Lane, Horsford	T1, T2, T3 & T4 oak	03/09/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0768	Clamps Orchard, land to the north of The Green, located between 17 & 18 The Green, North Burlingham	W1 mixed woodland	11/09/2025	Provisional
2025 No BD0769	Land south of Dell Farmhouse adj to track on the south side, Dell Corner Lane, North Burlingham	T1, T2, T3, T4 & T5 oak	10/09/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0770	Front garden of the Old Rectory in southern side of driveway, 4 Hindolveston Road, Foulsham	T1 yew	17/09/2025	Provisional
2025 No BD0771	Rear garden of 41 Roedich Drive, adj to northern boundary of 29 & 31 Saint Edmunds Road, Taverham	T1 oak	01/10/2025	Provisional
2025 No BD0773	Area of grass set back from corner of Mousehold Lane and Roundtree Way, Sprowston	T1 birch & T2 oak	09/10/2025	Provisional
	Grounds of War Memorial Cottages south of 19 War Memorial Bungalows, Mousehold Lane, Sprowston	T3 oak		
	Adjacent to boundary fence of rear garden of 19 War Memorial Bungalows, Mousehold Lane, Sprowston	T4, T5 & T6 oak		
2025 No BD0776	Land to south and adj to rear garden boundary of 1 William Bush Close and 58 Norwich Road, Cawston	T1 oak	17/10/2025	Confirmed
2025 No BD0778	Land to the east of West Lane, Postwick (Witton), adjacent to highway and public rights of way.	T1 oak	24/10/2025	Provisional
2025 No BD0779	Land south of 28 Station Road and east of Howlett's Loke, Salhouse NR13 6NX	T1 cedar, T2 magnolia, T3 spruce	07/11/2025	Provisional
	Land south of 28 Station Road adj to access road leading to 26 Station Road, Salhouse NR13 6NX	T4 sycamore		
	Land south of 28 Station Road, Salhouse NR13 6NX	T5 larch & G1 4 x pine		
	Land south of 28 Station Road adjacent to access road leading to 26 Station Road, Salhouse NR13 6NU	T6 & T7 sycamore, T8, T9 & T10 oak, G2 1 x sycamore, 2 x silver birch & 1 x oak.		
	Land east of 28 Station Road on field boundary north of 26 Station Road, Salhouse NR13 6NX	T11 & T12 oak, G3 1 x oak, 2 x hawthorn & 1 x silver birch		
2025 No BD0780	Rear garden of Apple Tree House, adj to the track, 1 Lawns Loke, Reepham NR10 4QN	T1 & T2 oak	20/11/2025	20/11/2025
	Rear garden Middlemarch adj to track, Broomhill Lane, Reepham NR10 4QY	T3 sycamore & T4 oak		
	Front garden of The Old School House, Broomhill Lane, Reepham NR10 4QY	T5 horse-chestnut & T6 silver birch		
	Rear garden of the Old School House, Broomhill Lane, Reepham NR10 4QY	T7 hornbeam		

2025 No BD0782	Front garden and driveway entrance of 92A Taverham Road, Taverham NR8 6SB	T1 beech	19/12/2025	Provisional
	Front garden of The Croft, 92 Taverham Road, Taverham NR8 6SB	T2, T3 & T4 beech and G2 comprising 1 each of horse chestnut, lime, cypress & beech		
	Front garden of 92A on boundary with 94 Taverham Road, Taverham NR8 6SB	T5, T6 & T7 beech, T8 lime and G3 comprising 1 each of cedar, sweet chestnut, holly, beech & sycamore.		
	Front garden of The Croft, 92 Taverham Road adjacent to highway, Taverham NR8 6SB	G1 comprising 1 each of lime, holly, sycamore & oak.		
2025 No BD0783	Land east of Fairholme Road, on highway verge, opposite 59 Newton Park, Newton St Faith NR10 3LL	T1 sycamore	27/11/2025	Provisional
	Front garden of 23 Fairholme Road, adj to highway, Newton St Faith NR10 3LL	T2 oak		
	Front garden of Strata House, 30 Fairholme Road, adj to highway, Newton St Faith NR10 3LL	T3 oak		
	Rear garden of Strata House, 30 Fairholme Road, adj to highway, Newton St Faith NR10 3LL	T4 & T5 oak		
	Front of office building at Newton Park, Newton St Faith NR10 3LL	T6 walnut		

Current Works to Trees Subject to a Tree Preservation Order and Section 211 Notifications for Works to Trees Within Conservation Areas

<i>App No</i>	<i>Address where tree(s) are located</i>	<i>Cat</i>	<i>Species and requested works</i>	<i>Decision</i>
2025/2853	90 Charles Close, Wroxham	TPO	Canadian redwood - trim roots (as per photographs).	Approved
2025/2969	20 Spinney Close, Thorpe St Andrew	TPO	T1 beech - approx 25m tall and 12m wide. Reduce overhanging branch by 4m or to growth point.	Approved
2025/3116	22 Church Lane, Burgh	211	T1 oak - 10m wide. Reduce 6 branches overhanging garage by 3m. T2 sweet chestnut - 14m wide. Reduce limb by 6m & crown lift by 2m. T3 holly - 8m wide. Reduce height from 15m to 12m. T4 walnut - 13m wide. Reduce overhanging branches by 5m.	No objection
2025/3143	Cobblestones, 23 Woodland Drive, Thorpe End	211	T1 magnolia - approx height 9m and approx width 12m. Reduce height by up to 2m on owner's side of boundary only.	20/11/2025
2025/3160	Amenity Land at Acom Close and Oakwood Drive, Hellesdon	TPO	T1 silver birch - crown raise to 6m and reduce house side back by 2m with a total length of 6m. T2 beech (Acorn Close) - crown raise to 6m, reduce radius house side by 2m with a total length of 6m. T3 sweet chestnut (Oakwood Drive) - reduce height by 8m by removing deadwood back to growth points. T4 oak (Timber Close) - crown raise to 4m in height to remove limbs from fence and shed.	28/10/2025
2025/3279	55 Greenacre Close, Brundall	TPO	T7 oak - height 14m, spread 15m. 15-20% crown thin and 5.2m max lift. Reduce lowest lateral branches by approx. 2.5-3m, crown clean.	16/10/2025
2025/3330	Robin Hill, 16 South Walsham Road, Acle	TPO	T1 London plane - reduce lateral growth on eastern side of crown from 8m to 6m. T2 Norway maple - reduce lateral growth on eastern side of crown from 4m to 3m.	Split decision
2025/3369	Lock Cottage, The Street, Lamas	TPO	G3 Monterey cypress - reduce two limbs by approx 4m. Low limbs need pruning back about 4m long but diameters of these limbs are 10-12cm maximum.	6/11/2025
2025/3408	11A South Avenue, Thorpe St Andrew	211	Copper beech - currently 14m wide and 19m tall. Reduce by approx 3.5m.	17/11/2025
2025/3422	The Maltings, Millgate, Aylsham	211	T1 hornbeam - approx 10m high and 4m wide. Reduce by 2m. T2 beech - approx 14m high and 4m wide. Reduce by 2.5m.	No objection
2025/3474	Cambridge House, 9 The Boulevard, Thorpe End	TPO	T1 oak - ht 14m spread 16m. Crown reduce by 3m and deadwood. T2 oak - reduce lateral branches and upper edges of crown by around 1.5m (current radial spread 10m in each aspect) and remove significant deadwood.	Approved
2025/3490	Oulton Lodge, 135 Norwich Road, Wroxham	211	T1 Nordmann fir – fell.	No objection
2025/3501	210 St Faiths Road, Old Catton	211	T1 Acer - ht 7m, S 8m. Crown raise by removing the 2 lowest branches back to stem whilst reshaping remaining crown by 1-1.5m to reform shape.	No objection

2025/3502	19 Manor Close, Buxton	TPO	T1 ash - ht 12m, s 10m & T2 sycamore - ht 13m, s 10m. Crown raise to 5m over the garden and reduce crown into garden by 2-2.5m.	Approved
2025/3504	3 Belmore Road, Thorpe St Andrew	TPO	T1 beech - ht 23m. Crown raise to 5m by pruning back to secondary growth points. Crown clean. T2 sycamore - ht 15m. Crown raise to 4m by pruning back to secondary growth points. Crown clean. T3 mulberry - ht 6.5m spread S = 5.5m; E = 5.2m; W = 5.1m. Reduce crown spread/area on these coordinates by up to 1m to reduce end loading.	Approved
2025/3509	21 Oakfield Road, Aylsham	211	T1 horse chestnut - approx 15m tall and 15m wide. Reduce by 2-2.5m and reshape.	No objection
2025/3518	The Gables, 12 Station Road, Reepham	211	T1 & T2 silver birch and G1 small beech trees - crown lift east side of canopies to 3m to create clearance between canopies and neighbour's shed roof.	No objection
2025/3519	Willow House, 14 Ringland Road, Taverham	TPO	T1 oak, T2 & T3 sweet chestnut and T4 ash - fell.	Approved
2025/3530	6 Bulwer Road, Buxton	TPO	T1 oak - thin by 15% and deadwood.	Approved
2025/3534	Kings Head House, Back Street, Horsham St Faith	211	T1 willow – fell.	11/10/2025
2025/3535	6 Binyon Gardens, Taverham	TPO	Silver birch - approx 22m in height, 10m wide. Reduce height by 5m and sides by 2m. Walnut - in rear garden. Approx 14m in height and 12m wide. Reduce height and sides by 3m and crown lift to 4m.	Split decision
2025/3544	The Woodlands, 65 Hall Lane, Drayton	TPO	T1 oak - raise crown to 7m to provide clearance over shed s of 49 Carter Road. T2 Norway spruce - root failure and leaning against fence of 51 Carter Road – fell.	Approved
2025/3545	Sundowner, 14 Saint Michaels Close, Aylsham	211	T1 pine - remove lowest 2 branches over neighbouring property. T2 Acer - reduce height by 3m from 7m to 4m and sides by 1.5m from 3.5 to 2m. G1 limes - reduce crown overhang by 3m from 6m to 3m.	Approved
2025/3547	School House, 59 Norwich Road, Cawston	TPO	T1 oak - 10m x 8.3m. Reduce by approx 1m height and 2m spread. Crown lift over house removing and reducing back branches within 2m of roof. Remove large pieces of deadwood and sever ivy at ground level. T3 ash - reduce over-extended large limb growing toward west over driveway of number 59 by approx 1.2 m from 9m to 7.8m. Remove large pieces of deadwood over drive and sever ivy at ground level.	Approved
2025/3567	82 Mill Road, Blofield	TPO	T1 Douglas fir - current crown spread 18m high x 12m. Reduce crown by 1.5m	Approved
2025/3579	Edgewood, 2 The Avenue, Wroxham	211	T1 Leyland cypress - fell.	No objection
2025/3584	1B Hillside Avenue, Thorpe St Andrew	TPO	T1 beech - ht 16m, 14m. Crown reduce by 2m.	Approved
2025/3587	55 Charles Close, Wroxham	211	T1 & T2 Betula - early stage of dying. Fell.	No objection
2025/3597	82 Mill Road, Blofield	TPO	T1 Douglas fir – current crown 18m high x 12m spread. Reduce crown by 1.5m.	Approved
2025/3610	46 Garrick Green, Old Catton	TPO	T1 cedar - in front garden. Crown lift to 3.5 - 4m over driveway and neighbours' pathway.	Approved
2025/3613	The Maltings, Millgate, Aylsham	211	T1 oak - remove epicormic growth to height of 6m. T2 & T3 oak - remove epicormic growth in main union. Prune back upper canopy by 2.5m leaving approx 6-7m. T4 oak - raise canopy by 6-8m. T5 plum - fell.	No objection
2025/3617	Old School House, New Street, Cawston	211	T1 conifer - fell.	No objection
2025/3623	St Margarets Church, Church Street, Old Catton	211	T4 yew - reduce crown by 2.5m from 7.6m to 5.1m to reduce overhang toward church.	No objection
2025/3638	3 Western Avenue, Thorpe St Andrew	211	T1 & T2 beech - dismantle to ground level.	No objection
2025/3640	Robin's Nest, The Street, Halvergate	211	T1 sycamore - fell.	No objection
2025/3644	36 South Avenue, Thorpe St Andrew	211	T1 spruce, T2, T5 & T6 sycamore & T4 holly – fell. T3 holly - current height 8m. Apical dieback. Reduce to live points around 4m from ground level.	No objection
2025/3647	222 Taverham Road, Taverham	TPO	T1 cedar - crown raise to approx 4m over driveway and approx and 5m over footway/highway.	Approved
2025/3655	Ivy House, Market Hill, Foulsham	211	Copper beech - fell	No objection

2025/3662	School View, Sir Williams Lane, Aylsham	TPO	T1 oak - crown lift over road. Reduce crown over road from 10m to 8m, house side from 12m to 10m.	Approved
2025/3665	The Old Mill, Mill Drive, Foulsham	211	G1 sycamores - crown raise to around 5m and pollard 2 smaller ivy covered stems on north-western aspect to around 3-4m to reduce impact on garden. T2 ash - reduce large lateral branch on northern aspect of tree to where it is bifurcated around 5m (current length around 10m) from stem. G3 hazel, oak, hawthorn, cherry & plum along driveway - crown raise to around 5m. T4 Leylandii - crown raise to 2-2.5m to alleviate conflict with fence and sheds. T5 birch - reduce over-extended branch on western aspect by 3-4m (current length 8m). G6 ash, beech, hornbeam - reduce south-western aspect of crowns growing towards house by around 2m (current crown radius between 6 and 8m). T7 sycamore - reduce crown on southern stem by 1-1.5m to alleviate forces on included union at base (current radial spread around 9.5m).	No objection
2025/3678	20 Gostling Road, Blofield	TPO	T1 pedunculate oak - height 12m. Crown spread (NESW) 8.5 - 7-2-5.5. Crown reduce by 2m to north. Height unaffected. Proposed crown spread 6.5 - 7-2 - 5.5. T2 pedunculate oak . Height 14 m. Crown spread 8-9-8-7. Crown reduce by 2 m to north. Height unaffected. Proposed crown spread 6-9-8-7.	Approved
2025/3692	2 Manor Farm Close, Drayton	TPO	T1 lime - Remove runners/shoots. Crown reduction by 6m from 20m to 14m.	Split decision
2025/3701	Yarehill, 56 Thunder Lane, Thorpe St Andrew	TPO	T1 beech - pollard , perhaps monolith to approx height of 9m.	Approved
2025/3708	Edgewood, 2 The Avenue, Wroxham	TPO	Sycamore - Reduce height by 3.5m from 25.5m to 22m. Reduce crown radius by 3.5m). Crown radius by 2m from 8m all round to 6m.	Approved
2025/3727	2 Thatched Cottages, Squires Road, Halvergate	211	T1 holly - poor specimen in inappropriate location. Fell.	01/2/2025
2025/3735	Land At Mashes Row, Aylsham	211	Ash - fell under an exception of Conservation Area restrictions for dead trees	Exempt tree works
2025/3748	Opposite 16 Anchor Street, Anchor Wood, Anchor Street, Coltishall	TPO	G1 holly - reduce branches by 1m. Remove ivy from base and electrical box up to a height of 4m.	Approved
2025/3750	Wherry House, 300 St Faiths Road, Old Catton	TPO	Refer to accompanying tree report.	02/12/2025
2025/3775	Woodland opposite Appleacres, St Faiths Road, Old Catton	TPO	T1 pine - ht 21m. Dead. Reduce t to monolith at 9m. T2 Oak - ht 16m spread 12m. Heavy decline. Reduce to monolith at a safe height (approx 7- 10m).	No objection
2025/3776	30 Keys Drive, Wroxham	TPO	T3 oak - fell under an exception of TPO restrictions for dead trees.	Exempt tree works
2025/3789	Atterwill, Salhouse Road, Sprowston	TPO	Pine - fell under an exception of TPO restrictions for dead trees	Exempt tree works
2025/3805	Blickling Hall, Blickling Road, Blickling	211	T0557, T0548, T0560, T0558, T0561, T0562 & T0563 oak, T0559 & T0564 hemlock and T0172 & T0541 Scots pine - fell.	08/12/2025
2025/3816	Land Adjacent Bradshaw Road Bradshaw Road Drayton	TPO	TB & TC oak and TA & TD birch - fell. Aspen - remove 2 lowest limbs overhanging road.	15/12/2025
2025/3821	Little Plumstead C Of E Primary School, Old Hall Road, Little Plumstead	TPO	T1 birch - fell under an exception of the TPO restrictions for dangerous trees.	Exempt tree works
2025/3826	New Bungalow, The Moor, Reepham	211	Unspecified species - fell under an exception of the Conservation Area Restrictions for dead trees.	Exempt tree works
2025/3827	Cambridge House, 9 The Boulevard, Thorpe End	211	T1 willow - height 5m, re-pollard back to pollard points. T2 willow - 5m height. Re-pollard. Reduce large stem on eastern aspect by 2m. T3 willow – height 5m. Re-pollard. G1 lilac, camelia, maple - fell. T9 purple plum & T10 whitebeam - fell. T12 Euonymus - coppice.	09/12/2025
2025/3836	9 Breck Farm Lane, Taverham	TPO	T25 1637 14784 English oak – current height 10m x width 8m. Reduce outer crown. Proposed 9m height x 7m width. 10% reduction removing approx 1m. 20% thin, removing 1 in 5 & smaller secondary branches.	11/12/2025
2025/3851	Old Oaks Hall, Reepham Road, Kerdiston	TPO	Refer to attached tree report.	12/12/2025
2025/3902	The Lodge, 9 Laurel Drive, Brundall	TPO	T1 lime - remove epicormic growth up to crown break and remove basal shoots at base.	17/12/2025
2025/3915	5 Library Close, Blofield	TPO	T1 horse chestnut - reduce under an exception of the TPO restrictions for dangerous trees.	Exempt tree works

Note: This is not intended to be a definitive list of all the relevant details. Readers should always refer to the specific application on the Broadland District Council Planning website at <https://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk/planning-applications/find-planning-application>.

Note: in future, to keep informed about TPOs and Section 211 Conservation Areas, Broadland Tree Wardens will need to check the Broadland District Council Planning Portal as described in section 10 of the Network Handbook.

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