

ASH  
DIEBACK

# Advice for Leicestershire Landowners



Ash dieback is a highly infectious disease affecting trees of the ash species (*Fraxinus* species). The latest information from the Forestry Commission shows that ash dieback has now taken hold across much of the UK, including Leicestershire.

The European or Common ash is one of our most important and prolific native tree species, it is widespread across Leicestershire and makes up a significant proportion of our county's trees. Nationally the species accounts for around 12% of broadleaved (trees which don't have needles) woodland.



Ash trees are found in a wide range of settings including woodlands, parks, gardens and hedgerows. They grow in a wide range of soils and climatic conditions, and provide valuable habitat for a wide range of species. Over 900 other species are associated with ash trees, of which 45 are believed to have only ever been found on ash.

The majority of our ancient trees are ash. Mature and ageing trees provide more wildlife value than younger trees and the impact of their loss will mean that the remaining older species will become more important in the landscape. Biodiversity may be negatively impacted as a result of diseases such as ash dieback.

## What is ash dieback?

First confirmed in Britain in 2012, ash dieback, also referred to as 'Chalara', is a disease of ash trees caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus Fraxineus*. A high proportion of ash trees in Northern Europe have been infected and the disease is now widespread in England.

Ash dieback is evident in ash trees in parts of Leicestershire and the National Forest. The fungus is spread by the wind or by the transportation of diseased ash trees.

The long-term impact of ash dieback is likely to be:

- loss of up to 90% of ash trees, with significant long-term impact on our woodland landscapes.
- probable replacement of ash woodland by scrub and other tree species.
- an associated loss of biodiversity.
- dying trees (that can become a danger) and the need for replacement trees.
- loss of trees can also impact on flooding and climate change.

## What are Leicestershire County Council doing?

We launched our ash dieback action plan in July 2018. The plan outlines what steps we're taking to manage the disease. You can find it on our tree web pages - [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/trees](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/trees).

Advice available from The Tree Council, Forestry Commission and Arboricultural Association outlines how best to manage ash trees now that ash dieback is present. Most of the advice would be applicable across the UK - but in some cases, you might need to check locally.

## As a landowner, what can I do to help manage ash dieback?

It is important to retain existing (healthy) ash so that more tolerant individuals can be identified to provide stock for the future. Ash dieback damages the structural integrity of a tree; the disease causes leaf loss and crown dieback in affected trees and can lead to the death of the tree. Infected trees have an increased risk of shedding limbs or collapsing.



As a landowner, you should try to:

- retain ash trees where possible.
- keep an eye on the tree's safety as the disease progresses.
- responsibly manage the health and safety risks from dead and dying trees on your land.
- consider planting other species appropriate to the location.
- monitor trees near highways and rights of way or areas with high levels of public access for signs of the disease, and if risk assessments show these as a hazard, plan careful pruning or felling.
- always visually survey dead or dying ash for protected species such as bats and birds prior to carrying out any tree works.

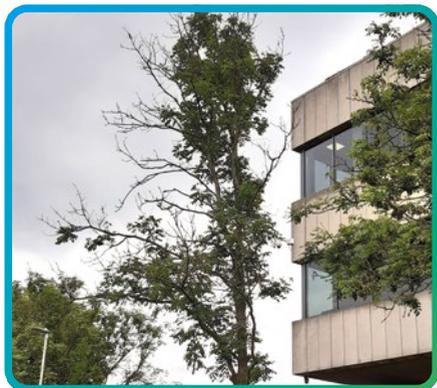
You can help by being aware of Chalara symptoms and reporting them for investigation using the Tree Alert app or on-line form at [www.forestry.gov.uk/trealert](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/trealert)

## How do I spot an infected tree?

Guidance on identifying ash dieback infection has been produced by the Forestry commission: [www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/pest-and-disease-resources/](http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/pest-and-disease-resources/)

Further information on symptoms can be found using Observatree: [www.observatree.org.uk/pests-and-diseases/priority-pests-and-diseases/chalara-dieback-of-ash/](http://www.observatree.org.uk/pests-and-diseases/priority-pests-and-diseases/chalara-dieback-of-ash/)

The images below show a selection of symptoms associated with ash dieback in Leicestershire.





Visit our 'Tree for every person' website: [www.leicestershire.gov.uk/trees](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/trees)  
You'll find information and advice, how to get free trees and an interactive map to log trees that you plant on your land. We want to help to plant 700,000 trees - one for every person in the county.

## Report a problem with a tree

You can report a problem with a tree if it is causing an obstruction or danger to road users or pedestrians or is damaging property by visiting [www.leicestershire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk) and searching 'Report a tree' and completing the online form.

You can also telephone or email.

### **For trees causing a danger to road users or pedestrians:**

Phone: **0116 305 0001**

### **Trees on County Council sites (such as country parks):**

Phone: **0116 305 5000**

Email: [LTSservicedesk@leics.gov.uk](mailto:LTSservicedesk@leics.gov.uk)

This leaflet does not replace information provided by national advisory groups or government. The national advice isn't exhaustive or prescriptive; guidance and information on ash dieback is likely to develop and change as knowledge and understanding increases further. Please keep up to date with the latest on ash dieback by revisiting the websites mentioned in this leaflet.

If you'd like to receive this leaflet in another language, or in an alternative format, please get in touch using the contact details contained in this leaflet.