

## Guidance note on Ash Tree Dieback (July 2015)



### Introduction

'Ash Tree Dieback' is caused by a fungus known as *Chalara fraxinea*. In affected trees it can cause leaf loss and twigs and branches die back. The disease is spread by spores from the fruiting bodies of the fungus on dead leaves. It can lead to tree death.

*Please note* - This disease does not pose a risk to human health; it is caused by a fungal organism which affects ash trees.

### Where is being affected?

Northern Europe has been affected by the disease and now it has spread to this country. The disease has been identified within a site in Berkshire; however, current information does not indicate confirmed reports within Bracknell Forest.

### Implications

Native Ash trees are widespread throughout Bracknell Forest and it seems likely that in time the fungus will become evident in the borough. However there are no large woodlands formed of ash that would be at risk.

### Management

At a national level investigation and control is being co-ordinated via the Forestry Commission. The initial priority has focused on assessing the extent of the disease and imposing a ban on the import and subsequent movement of ash trees within the country. In the short term, diseased trees may not necessarily involve extensive felling and the focus will be placed on monitoring tree health to identify and verify any infections.

Appropriate steps are being taken to ensure that the situation is properly managed:

1. Monitoring tree health;
  - a) identifying young trees in recent planting schemes which include ash and monitor the trees for signs of disease.
  - b) monitoring mature trees in locations of highest risk re. public safety (e.g. priority highway routes, well used public areas, within falling distance of neighbouring properties).
2. Disposing of diseased trees (leaf litter and wood) as per current Government guidance
3. Processing and determining applications/notices re. privately owned diseased trees that are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

### Reporting Ash Dieback

The main symptoms of Ash Dieback are dead branches and blackening of leaves which often hang on the tree. If you think you see an Ash tree with any of these symptoms then please double check these on the Forestry Commission guidance overleaf or report them to the helpline 08459 335577.

### To help stop the disease spreading:

Please be aware that if the disease is confirmed in the borough, basic rules to prevent the disease from spreading include:

- Before visiting other places, clean mud and leaves from footwear, pushchairs, bikes, cars, dogs and horses
- Do not remove leaves, plants or wood from this area.

# Ash dieback disease

(*Chalara fraxinea*)



1  
Diseased saplings typically display dead tops and/or side shoots.



2  
At the base of dead side shoots, lesions can often be found on the subtending branch or stem.



3  
Lesions which girdle the branch or stem can cause wilting of the foliage above.



4  
Mature trees affected by the disease initially display dieback of the shoots and twigs at the periphery of their crowns. Dense clumps of foliage may be seen further back on branches where recovery shoots are produced.

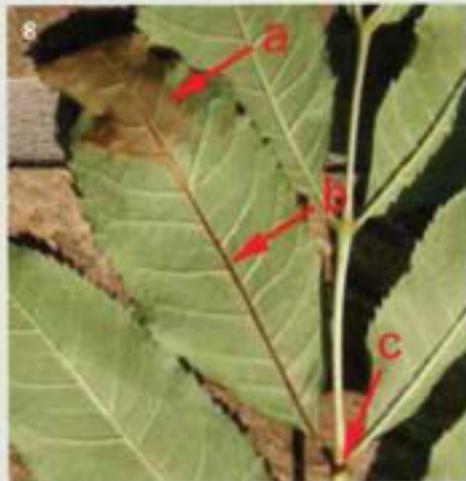


6  
In late summer and early autumn (July to October), fruiting bodies of *Hymenoscyphus* can be found on blackened rachises (leaf stalks) of ash in damp areas of leaf litter beneath trees. These do not necessarily belong to the pathogen but can be tested to determine their identity.



# Ash dieback disease

*(Chalara fraxinea)*



Leaf necrosis (a) extending into leaflet vein (b) and rachis (c).



Lesion on rachis (ends arrowed) without leaflet symptoms.



Necrosis of rachis (arrowed) and associated desiccation of leaflets.



Developing lesions associated with leaf scars.



Older lesion associated with leaf scar.



Developing lesion centred on a dead side shoot.



Older lesion centred on a dead side shoot.



Old lesion centred on a dead side shoot.



The wood and pith underlying bark lesions is usually strongly stained.

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