INTERIM ADVICE NOTE 172/13 (W)

Ash dieback – Chalara fraxinea

Summary
The purpose of this Interim Advice Note is to guide the Welsh Government Transport’s operations and suppliers in the appropriate response to Ash dieback disease, Chalara fraxinea. This document contains mandatory elements, in particular relating to statutory powers that have now been introduced to contain or eradicate the disease when it is found, including complying with the requirements of Statutory Plant Health Notices.

Instructions for Use
This IAN replaces the initial informal advice circulated by the Soft Estate Manager by email on 6th November 2012 and takes immediate effect. Action needs to be taken by the Trunk Road Agents (TRA’s) and Project Teams together with their supply chains, to undertake appropriate reporting of suspected signs of the disease, (whether in mature stock, but particularly recently planted nursery stock), compliance with any Plant Health Notices served, and follow this advice with immediate effect.
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Abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>WG</td>
<td>Welsh Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRA</td>
<td>Trunk Road Agent</td>
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<td>IAN</td>
<td>Interim Advice Note</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMRB</td>
<td>Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.</td>
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<td>NRW</td>
<td>Natural Resources Wales</td>
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<td>FC</td>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDDMS</td>
<td>Electronic Document &amp; Drawing Management System</td>
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<td>FERA</td>
<td>Food &amp; Environment Research Agency</td>
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</table>
1.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Trunk Road Agents (TRA’s) and Project Teams together with their supply chains are responsible for complying with this IAN, applicable legislation and any requirements coming from, Natural Resources Wales Forest Regulation and Tree Health, or a statutory Plant Health Notice.

This is a stand alone IAN and not part of the DMRB. However, its principles are commended to other highway authorities and local authorities for use on their networks as appropriate.

2.0 Mandatory Sections

Mandatory sections of this document are contained in boxes. If it is not possible to comply, a suitable Departure from Standard must be agreed with the Overseeing Organisation. The remainder of the document contains advice, explanation and guidance.

3.0 Background

3.1 Introduction

Ash dieback, *Chalara fraxinea* and its sexual stage, *Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus*, is a fungal pathogen that has caused widespread damage to Common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) tree populations throughout Northern Europe. It affects only ash trees including ornamental species. It was first identified in the UK in February 2012 on recently planted young ash trees, and confirmed to be in the wider UK environment in October 2012 when it was identified on older established trees in the East of England.

Ash dieback is particularly destructive of young ash plants, killing them within one growing season of symptoms becoming visible. Older trees can survive initial attacks, but can eventually succumb after several seasons of infection. The level to which the disease physically affects mature trees varies, other European countries, where the disease is widespread, indicate that some specimens appear to have a degree of resistance or may be fully resistant.

Evidence from Europe indicates that we might expect a high proportion of the ash population succumbing to the disease as it spreads through the wider UK environment. Ash is a very common tree throughout the UK landscape, with a large population on the Trunk Road and Motorway network in Wales.

Given the large numbers of ash trees on our network and the environmental functions they perform or contribute to, (such as visual screening, landscape integration and nature conservation), Welsh Government, the Trunk Road Agents and their supply chains need to:

- Manage the effects of the disease, in our work on major road projects, local improvement schemes, route management and area operations.
- Help inform the Government’s response to controlling, monitoring the spread and evaluating the impact of the disease.
3.2 Legislation

Legislation came into effect on 29th October 2012, prohibiting the movement of ash plants and seeds (intended for planting) within the UK, with immediate effect. The legislation adds *Chalara fraxinea*, including its sexual stage, *Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus*, to the schedule of notifiable diseases.

Under ‘The Plant Health (Forestry) (Amendment) Order’ 2012, the legislation now:

- **Prohibits** all imports of ash plants, trees and seeds into Great Britain until further notice;
- **Prohibits** all movements of plant-passported ash plants, trees and seeds (intended for planting) within Great Britain until further notice;
- **Permits** movement within Great Britain of all ash timber (but not infected material or that from a known infected site, unless working under the conditions of a Plant Health Notice, or under the instruction of NRW Inspectors), which poses a very low risk of disease transmission.
- This inclusion on the schedule of notifiable diseases **places statutory obligations** on occupiers or other persons in charge of premises, to notify Natural Resources Wales (NRW) without delay if, when going about their duties or business, they become aware of, or suspect the presence of the disease.

- **Infected plant material or material from known infected sites** must not be moved outside of the infected site (unless under the conditions of a Plant Health Order Notice, or under the instruction of NRW Inspectors).

- **If a Plant Health Order Notice** is served; the conditions of that Notice must be followed.

4.0 Actions to be followed

4.1 Actions for the Trunk Road Agents, Project Teams and their supply chains

Welsh Government Transport's approach to managing the ash dieback is to maintain a central Register that records details of all suspected and confirmed incidents of the disease and the actions taken on our land. The register is located on the Electronic Document and Drawing Management System (EDDMS). This is in addition to the TRA’s and Project Team’s statutory requirements to notify NRW.
Actions in response to suspected infection:

- TRA’s, Project Teams and supply chain staff, during the course of their normal operational duties, must be alert for signs of ash dieback on the WG Transport’s landholding, including both operational and non-operational areas. Ash and Ash Dieback identification information is given in Annex B (further disease identification information can be found on the Forestry Commission’s website).

- If a suspected infection is found it must be reported immediately to the NRW’s Tree Health Officer, treehealth@cyfoethnaturiolcymru.gov.uk, giving National Grid Reference details and supporting photographic evidence. Suspected plant material must not be removed or transported unless working under the conditions of a Plant Health Notice or under the instruction of NRW Plant Health Inspectors.

- TRA’s and, where possible, Project Teams must additionally record details in the Causeway shared data area; EDDMS ‘Notifiable Pests and Diseases Register’. Details of information to be reported are given in Annex A.

- Details of how to request access to the EDDMS ‘Notifiable Pests and Diseases Register’ as a temporary user is given in Annex A.

- Project Teams without access to the EDDMS must report suspected cases, giving the details in Annex A, to Transport’s Notifiable Pests and Diseases mailbox PestsandDiseases@wales.gsi.gov.uk

- Infrastructure Delivery Division and Network Management Division staff, and their supply chains, will need to respond fully to support the access of NRW staff to the network to enable disease confirmation. This may include the provision of photographs and sample material.

Actions to help prevent disease spread:

- No ash trees will be planted on the estate or (in accordance with the legislation) ash planting material transported around the Trunk Road and Motorway Network.

- No infected plant material, unless working under the conditions of a Plant Health Notice, or under instruction of NRW Inspectors, will be transported around the estate.

- If a Plant Health Notice is served, handling and disposal of infected plant material must be done under the conditions laid out in the Notice.

- Should the Inspector seek voluntary action to deal with infected material, without serving a Plant Health Notice, handling and disposal of that material must be done accordance with FC guidelines or under instructions from the Inspector. (FC Advice- ‘Management of infected leaves and saplings’.)
- When undertaking work on the soft estate, particularly around ash trees, Trunk Road Agency and Project Team staff and their suppliers must comply with the risk based, Forestry Commission’s biosecurity measures. Generally, all sites should be treated as low risk unless Chalara symptoms have been observed or where its presence is confirmed, or where it has been observed or confirmed on adjacent sites, in which case these sites will be treated as high risk.

- Trunk Road Agency and Project Team staff and supply chains must comply with any issued Statutory Plant Health Notice, updating information (or, if appropriate, submitting updated information) about the outcome in the EDDMS ‘Notifiable Pests and Diseases Register’.

**Actions to support tracking sources of the disease:**

- NRW may request information on Trunk Road and Motorway planting schemes and access to the road network as part of their investigation into the distribution of infected trees. Infrastructure Delivery Division and Network Management Division must be prepared to receive and deal with these requests.

### 5.0 Relationship

The ‘*Chalara Management Plan for Wales*’ (March 2013) Approved by the Minister for Natural Resources and Food on 2nd April 2013.

The initial focus of the Chalara Management Plan is on tackling Chalara in woodland settings. The next phase of the Management Plan (by April 2014) will address the impact of the disease on ash trees in non-woodland settings, including roadside plantings. This guidance will be updated as further actions for managing the disease in non-woodland settings are determined.

There are no internal documents that relate to or precede this IAN (though informal initial advice was provided in November 2012 – this is now superceded by this IAN). There are external documents which have been published by the Forestry Commission that should be read in conjunction with the IAN, and links to the current versions on the FC website are referred to within this document.

### 6.0 Implementation

This advice note takes immediate effect. Any actions placed upon the supply chains as a result of the provisions of this IAN should be treated in accordance with existing contractual arrangements and Agency agreements.
7.0 Contacts

Specific technical advice about management of ash dieback on the Trunk Road and Motorway Network in Wales is available from:

John Byrne,
Soft Estate Manager /Rheolwr Ystadau Meddal,
Environmental Co-ordination and Advice Team /Tim Cyd健身房æt a Chyngori Amgylcheddol,
Transport /Trafndaeth,
Department for Economy, Science and Transport /Adran yr Economi, Gwyddoniaeth a Thrafnidiaeth,
Welsh Government /Llywodraeth Cymru,
Sarn Mynach /Sarn Mynach,
Llandudno Junction /Cyffordd Llandudno,
LL31 9RZ.

Ffon:Tel - 0300 062 5434
Ffacs:Fax - 0300 062 5025
e-bost: e-mail - john.byrne@wales.gsi.gov.uk

8.0 Normative References


General information on ash dieback is available from the Forestry Commission and FERA:
www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara
http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/plantHealth/pestsDiseases/chalaraQAs.cfm

SI 2012 No. 2707 PLANT HEALTH The Plant Health (Forestry) (Amendment) Order 2012
Annex A – Welsh Government, Transport’s ‘Notifiable Pests and Diseases Register’ requirements:

Environment Group staff managing the Chalara register will contact service providers/reporters for further information as it becomes necessary.

TRA staff, Project Teams or service providers must make a report as soon as they suspect or become aware of a potential outbreak of the disease. They should endeavour to provide as much of the information below as possible and if safe to do so they should also provide digital photographs of the affected trees to help with diagnosis. TRA staff or Project Teams should make and update entries directly into the Register on EDDMS, Shared Data Area, ‘Environmental Liaison Folder’.

Link- EDDMS Notifiable Pest and Diseases Register.

Access to the EDDMS Notifiable ‘Pest and Diseases Register’ can be requested by initially contacting the Soft Estate Manager john.byrne@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Project Teams or service providers without access to EDDMS should provide the details below to the contact given in ‘Actions in response to suspected infection’ above.

Regular updates to the Register must be provided as more information about a suspected case becomes available, during the diagnosis and disease control process. Scanned/electronic copies of all statutory notices and official correspondence from NRW must also be provided.

If TRA staff, Project Teams and service providers are aware of existing cases of the disease on our network then information on these must be provided to the Register retrospectively.

- Date reported:
- Contact details of who is creating the Register entry.
- Network location or project.
- Details of the suspected notifiable pest or disease.
- Grid reference of suspected infection (centre point grid reference for whole plot infections)
- Additional details of the pest or disease e.g. Level of infection/infestation, species and age of species affected, potential effects on / from adjacent plots or land etc.
- Status- suspected or confirmed.
- When NRW were notified.
- Date Plant Health Notice issued.
- Date resolved
## Annex B – Ash and Ash Dieback Identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Healthy Ash</th>
<th>Healthy Ash</th>
<th>Infected Ash</th>
<th>Infected Ash</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Healthy Ash</strong> - Winter buds.</td>
<td><strong>Healthy Ash</strong> - Early Summer foliage.</td>
<td><strong>Infected Ash</strong> - mature tree.</td>
<td><strong>Infected Ash</strong> - Symptomatic wilting leaves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Healthy Ash Winter buds" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Healthy Ash Early Summer foliage" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Infected Ash Mature tree" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Infected Ash Wilting leaves" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristic black, conical terminal buds. Smooth grey / brown bark on shoots.</td>
<td>Long leaf stalk with leaves arranged oppositely. Fresh green early Summer foliage, darkening as season progresses and fading to light yellow in Autumn.</td>
<td>Dead or dying tops of trees, most easily seen throughout summer.</td>
<td>Wilting leaves, most visible in spring and early summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Infected Ash Symptomatic bark lesions" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Infected Ash Leaf Dieback" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Infected Ash Symptomatic bark lesions" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Infected Ash Leaf Dieback" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesions and cankers on stems/branches/shoot, visible throughout the year.</td>
<td>Dieback of leaves with brown/black leaf stalks, most easily seen throughout summer.</td>
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