Tree Health in Hertfordshire

Report to the Environment Planning and Transport Cabinet Panel

5 February 2018

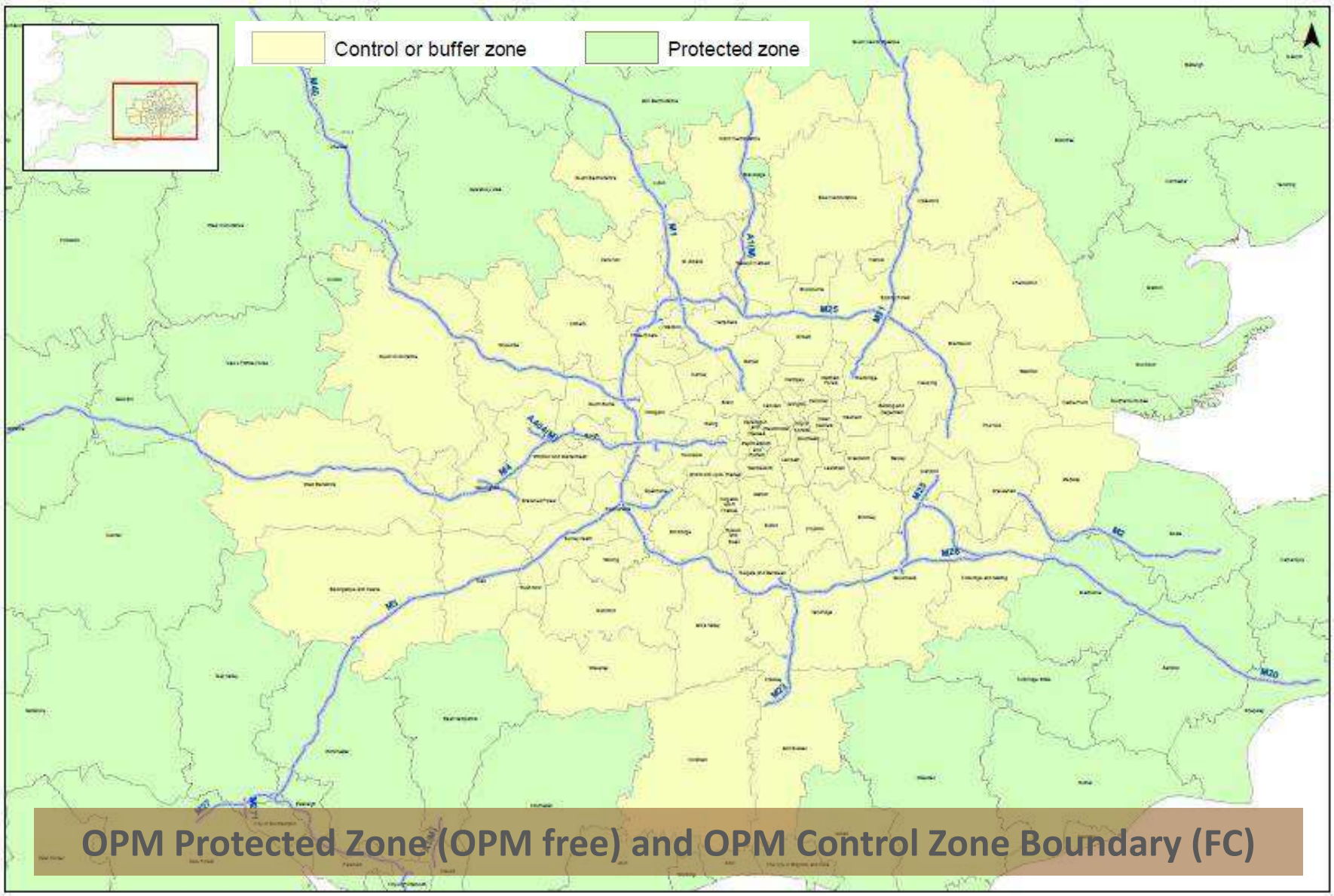
Oak Processionary Moth

OPM egg plaques and caterpillars on oak

Microscopic OPM hairs and nest on oak

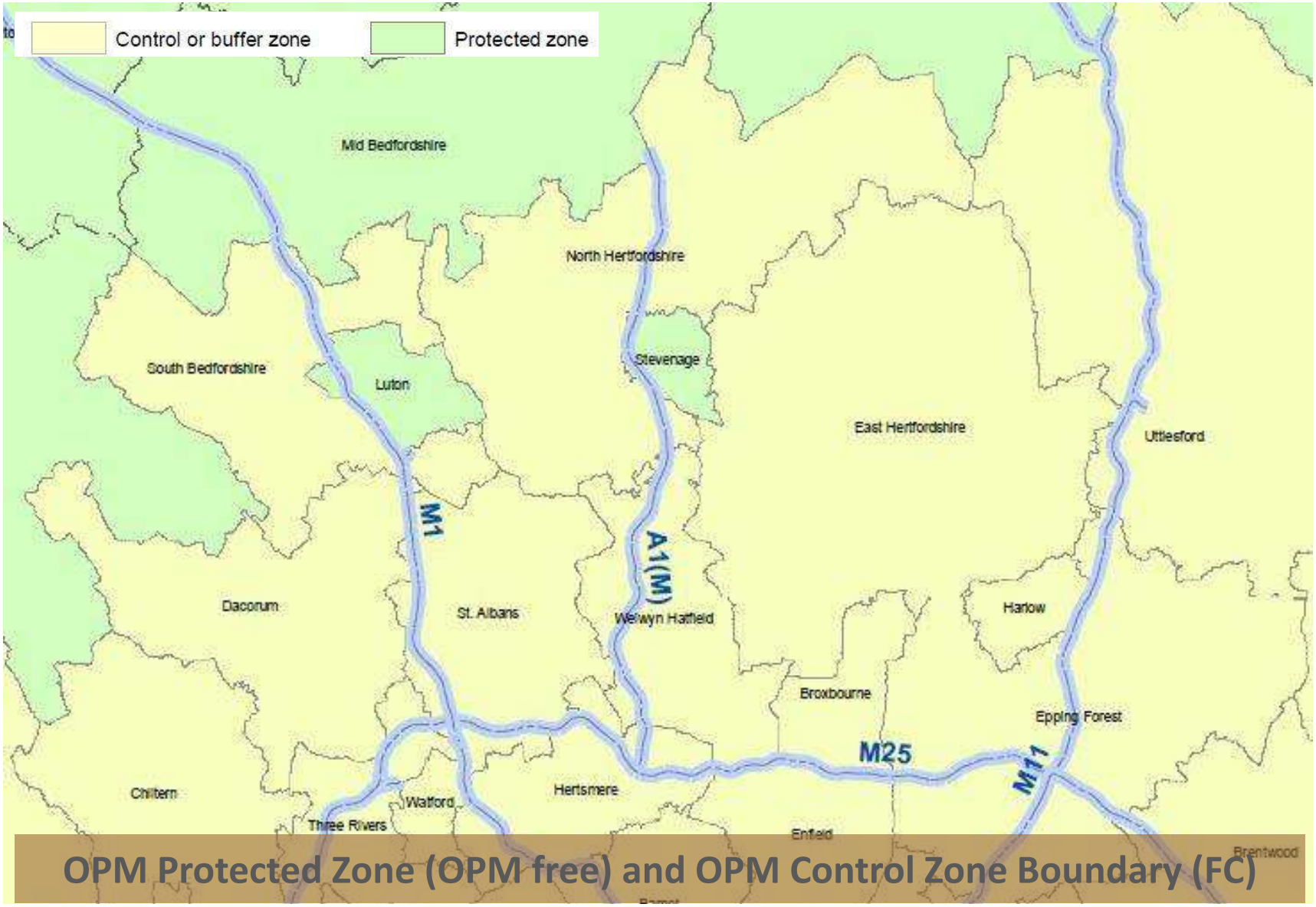
- Caterpillars defoliate oak trees and build large communal nests
- Microscopic hairs contain a toxin which causes skin and eye irritation in people and animals
- Repeat exposure to OPM can result in increasing sensitivity
- Native to Southern Europe
- Introduced to Northern Europe through movement of oak trees
- First UK recorded in 2006, now established in areas of London
- Forestry Commission (FC) control programme contains spread
- First Hertfordshire record in 2016, outbreak controlled by FC

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)



OPM Protected Zone (OPM free) and OPM Control Zone Boundary (FC)

Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)



OPM Protected Zone (OPM free) and OPM Control Zone Boundary (FC)

Ash Dieback (Chalara)

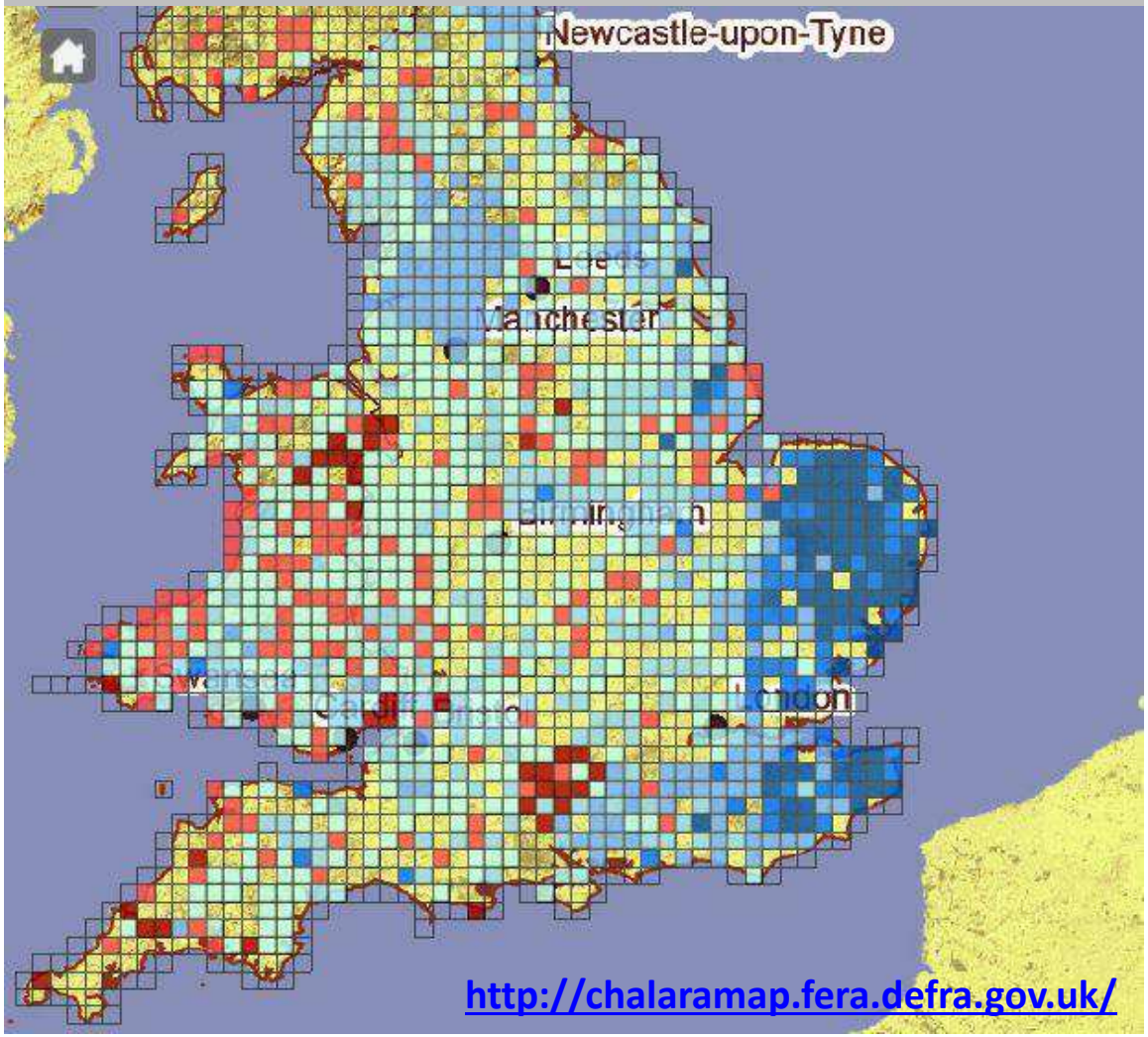
Dead and diseased young ash trees in planted hedge (Essex)

Diseased ash in the wider environment (Hertfordshire)

- Fungal disease of ash trees
- Spread by airborne spores and movement of infected plants
- Young trees die quickly whilst mature trees decline more slowly (most die within 10 years)
- Native to Asia, spread by trade
- Introduced to Europe in 1990s causing widespread damage
- Research suggests that as few as 1% of European ash are tolerant
- First UK record in 2012, now known to be widely distributed
- There is no programme to contain or eradicate ash dieback
- Ash cannot be planted in the UK

Ash Dieback (Chalara)

UK Ash Dieback Distribution (May 2018)



Chalara ash dieback

Wider Environment Infections Confirmed

Year the infection was first recorded

- 2012
- 2013
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016
- 2017
- 2018
- Not confirmed

10km x 10km UK map squares with **confirmed ash dieback infections**. Distribution of records is **linked to survey effort**.

Ash Dieback (Chalara)

Hertfordshire Ash Dieback Distribution (May 2018)

http://chalaramap.fera.defra.gov.uk/

Chalara ash dieback

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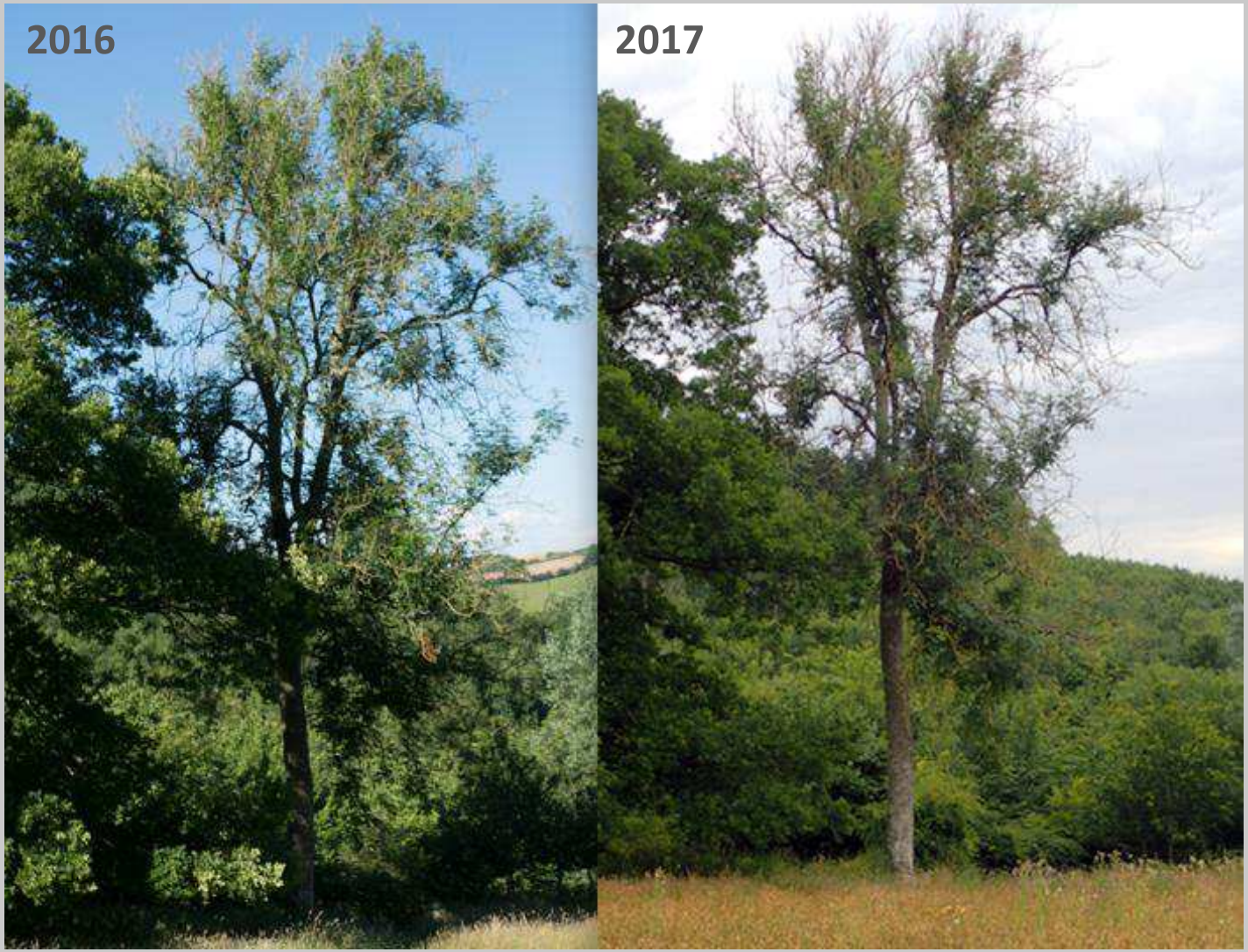
Ash Dieback (Chalara)



Infected mature ash tree in Devon, photographed one year apart. Canopy cover has declined by at least 10%.

Infected ash are vulnerable to co-infection which will hasten decline.

In high use zones infected ash will be hazardous before death due to branch dieback and declining structural integrity.

Ash Dieback (Chalara)

Highway ash tree felled in Norfolk in 2014. The tree shows extensive canopy dieback, dead branches, and the ‘pom-pom’ leaf growth indicative of ash dieback . Tree ring analysis shows the tree has been in poor health since 2003. It is likely the tree was infected a decade before the first UK record.

Action to Manage Tree Health Threat for Hertfordshire

- Tree Health Reports presented to Cabinet Panels from 2012.
- Threats identified to landscape, biodiversity, public safety and highway resilience.
- Recommend long term planning, working with national agencies and local partner organisations
- Tree Health registered as a Severe Corporate Risk in 2016.

Priorities for action to ensure that HCC and partners are prepared to manage tree health impacts (Cabinet Panel recommendations):

1. Assess Financial and Resource Impact

2. Raise Awareness and Understanding

3. Engage with National Agencies and Local Partners

Action to Manage Tree Health Threat for Hertfordshire

Tree Health actions reported to Cabinet Panels in 2016:

Assess Financial Impact

1. Ash trees make up 10% of roadside trees.

2. £10million est. cost for managing ash dieback.

3. Collation of District tree inspection data.

4. Ownership of highway adjacent land reviewed.

Raise Awareness and Understanding

1. Tree management polices and procedures reviewed.

2. Plant procurement policy developed.

3. HCC officer attended tree health conferences.

4. Tree health communication plan and website developed.

Engage with National Agencies and Local Partners

1. Letters written to Secretary of State for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs, and to the Local Government Association, to raise awareness of pressure on Local Authorities presented by the increasing tree health threat.

Action to Manage Tree Health Threat for Hertfordshire

Tree Health actions reported for 2017/2018:

Assess Financial Impact

1. Collation of District tree inspection data completed (15492 roadside ash).

2. Corporate Risk adjust to significant to reflect progress of controls.

Raise Awareness and Understanding

1. OPM survey and management training (FC).

Raise Awareness and Understanding

2. Ash dieback survey and management workshop (Suffolk County Council).

3. Draft tree strategy produced for Property.

4. Tree Health Network Newsletter/Briefings.

5. Biosecurity spec. produced for tree and woodland management.

Engage with National Agencies and Local Partners

1. HCC represented on:

- Defra Ash Dieback Health and Safety Group;

- OPM Evidence and Policy Workshop (FC);

- Landscape Institute Biosecurity Working Group.

Action to Manage Tree Health Threat for Hertfordshire

Future Tree Health Actions:

Raise Awareness and Understanding

1. Review tree risk inspection intervals for high risk zones.

2. Collect high resolution data for roadside ash trees (e.g. height).

3. Bespoke training opportunities for HCC and Local District officers.

Engage with National Agencies and Local Partners

1. Hertfordshire tree health awareness raising event.

2. Develop tree planting (species selection) guidance.

3. Adoption of biosecurity and tree procurement spec. by Local Districts.

Members Visit

Broxbourne Woods, Cole Green Way and Foxes Lane

25th July (Afternoon)