



Safety Alert

Hazardous Tree Removal

31 March 2021

The following pages of this safety alert were issued by Highways England's supply chain partner:

Kier Highways

SHE ALERT

SHE H186 A 2021 Hazardous Tree Removal.
Issued by: Kier Highway SHE Department
Date: 26th March 2021



Hazardous Tree Removal

On the 1st March during night works to remove hazardous trees on the A38, an incident took place. This didn't result in any injuries but damage to a vehicle driven by a member of the public. The incident clearly had the potential to be of a more serious nature and it was luck that prevented this from being the case.

During the cutting of a multi stemmed poplar tree the final section did not behave as expected as the centre of the tree had become a pulp like substance.

As the operative placed his second cut into the trunk, the tree pivoted on its hinge and fell into the carriageway. The single lane closure was not enough to contain the full height of the tree.

The tips of the branches entered the live lane and was struck by a passing HGV causing damage to the front of the vehicle. The branches that struck the vehicle were no more than 4cm thick.

The incident was quickly dealt with and the tree was removed from the carriageway.



Further Detail

- The works were appropriately supervised, and the work area was well lit by a lighting tower and operative's head torches.
- The works were being carried out in-line with the approved safe system of work.
- The tree had been identified as hazardous, though the full extent of the issues was not known, and the report was dated 2019.

Actions to Prevent a Recurrence

- Tree works have currently been suspended on the network.
- As a result of the incident and investigation, a new procedure has been introduced which involves the measurement of trees before felling to determine the adequacy of the control measures are being implemented.
- This is a learning opportunity for businesses involved in tree work planning and delivery.