

Tree incidents involving fatalities or serious injuries to members of the public

Known investigation and/or enforcement action by HSE or local authorities 1999—2025

Date	Place	Deceased/ injured	Description and links	Tree	Weather	Legal action
03/12/1999	Kings Heath, Birmingham	Kenneth Davis, 56, Ellen Davis, 79, Alan Poole, 59	Diseased tree toppled onto cars on main road. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • BBC News #2 	Ash	High winds	Inquest August 2001 – verdict of accidental death on all 3 victims. In August 2001, HSE served Improvement Notice on Birmingham City Council. In July 2002, HSE prosecuted the Council for a breach of HSWA, section 3(1) – Council fined £150,000 after guilty plea, with costs of £56,000.
14/03/2002	Sevenoaks, Kent	Richard King, 20	Lorry driver’s passenger, parked in lay-by, killed by falling tree. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Online #1 • Kent Online #2 • Corporate Accountability 	Oak (a later report states beech)		Inquest September 2003 – verdict of accidental death. In June 2005 a judge ruled Sevenoaks District and Kent County Councils could not be held criminally liable where no civil liability existed – HSE failed to establish that highway authority had a duty of care in the particular circumstances.
27/10/2002	Felixstowe, Suffolk	Benjamin Davey, 3	Tree fell on child in pushchair at The Grove during storm. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • Ipswich Star #1 • BBC News #2 • Ipswich Star #2 	Ash, 23 m high		Site owned and managed by Suffolk Coastal Council. In November 2002, HSE served an immediate Prohibition Notice on Suffolk Coastal District Council. Inquest April 2003 – verdict of accidental death. Tree was suffering from honey fungus.
27/10/2002	Oxford	Angela Regoczy, 22	Diseased tree fell onto parked car in city centre, crushing roof. 3 other family members injured. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Mail • Oxford Mail 	Horse chestnut, 24 ton tree	Storm conditions	Council admitted liability 2004. Inquest August 2006 – death by misadventure but evidence of disease and decay in 1999, although tree not felled. HSE decided not to prosecute March 2008.

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30/01/2003	West Ashtead Primary School, Ashtead, Surrey	Rianna Davenport, 8	Gust of wind caused tree to fall on children queuing for lunch in playground; other children injured. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • BBC News #2 • BBC News #3 	Corsican pine, 50'		Inquest September 2003 – verdict of accidental death. In April 2003 HSE served Improvement Notice on Surrey CC for several failings in system for tree management, but decided not to prosecute (Jan 2004) on basis that tree was healthy when it fell.
01/01/2005	Dunham Massey Park, Cheshire	Timothy Sutton, 8	Boy walking with 12 members of his family in Dunham Massey Park (National Trust), near Altrincham, Greater Manchester, when he was hit by a falling tree. His mother, elder brother and younger sister were also hurt. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telegraph and others 	Beech	Sudden strong winds associated with cold front – possible tornado	Inquest July 2006 – narrative verdict. Lengthy HSE investigation ended with decision not to prosecute March 2009.
13/10/2005	Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham	Daisy Hill, 92	Elderly woman crushed by falling tree whilst sat on park bench. Carer also injured. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News • Birmingham Mail • Irwin Mitchell 	Beech, 60' tree, 100 years old		Inquest December 2006 – verdict of accidental death. July 2009 – carer received £23,000 in out-of-court civil settlement. HSE considered prosecution.
28/06/2007	Felbrigg, Norfolk	Daniel Mullinger, 11	Boy died on school trip to outdoor activity centre. An 11-year-old boy was killed and three other children were injured when a bough from a beech tree fell on them during an outdoor activity trip in the wood on the Felbrigg estate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telegraph and many others • Bailii 	Beech		Accident investigated by N Norfolk DC with HSE assistance. Inquest June 2008 – verdict of accidental death. Lengthy civil case – Bowen v National Trust, ended in 2011 with a judgment that NT was not negligent or in breach of its duty of care.

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22/02/2008	Whitburn, West Lothian	Alexander MacDonald, 25	Van driver trapped by falling tree on A705. Tree within wood owned by Woodland Trust. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edinburgh News • Daily Record • Scotsman 	Beech , 50' high, evidence of meripilus in roots	High winds	Prosecution of Woodland Trust (WT) by HSE announced August 2011, concluded May 2012, WT acquitted – no case to answer.
24/08/2010	Manor Wildlife Park, Tenby		Tree fell on mother and child visiting wildlife park. Child sustained serious head injuries, mother head injuries and fractures. Many media reports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • BBC News #2 	Beech		Prosecution by Pembroke CC Nov 2012. Manor House Wildlife Park Ltd. fined £70,000 and director Colin MacDougall a further £4,000.
30/06/2011	Yaxley, Cambridge- shire	Sophie Howard, 13	Girl struck by falling trunk of poplar tree whilst sat on bench in parish council recreation park; fatal head injuries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 <p>There are very many links to this accident at its main stages – the incident, the inquest and the civil case – here are links to the most informative accounts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #2 • BBC News #3 • BBC News #4 <p>Case mentioned in contribution to UKTC archive in 2014, questioning the causal attribution of summer branch drop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Care 	Black poplar 1' thick trunk or branch (reports vary), 20' long, fell 50'.		In July 2011, HSE served an Improvement Notice on Yaxley Parish Council citing lack of an effective system for managing trees; complied with by October 2011. Tree subsequently removed and others pruned. No record of any subsequent prosecution on HSE database. Inquest Dec 2011. Tree consultant appointed by the Coroner told the inquest that there were signs of fractures associated with 'summer branch drop'. Coroner recorded a narrative verdict. In Nov 2012, Yaxley Parish Council agreed to pay the family an out-of-court settlement.

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09/06/2015	Low Hall, Waltham- stow	Lukasz Costazzo, 30	Man killed by falling tree in Low Hall conservation area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian • Proarb Magazine • The London Press • BBC News 	Willow		HSE served notice June 2015 on Waltham Forest Council. Lengthy investigation process considered prosecution for corporate manslaughter and H&S, but eventual decision that there was no realistic possibility of conviction. Inquest finally took place May 2023, verdict of accidental death.
10/11/2016	Arrowe Park Road, Wirral	Lucia Jayne Stear (unborn baby, 36 weeks)	Woman struck by falling branch whilst driving. Unborn baby delivered in hospital next day but did not survive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • Liverpool Echo • BBC News #2 • IOSH Magazine 	Horse Chestnut		Reg 28 Report to prevent future deaths submitted by Coroner Sept 2019. HSE prosecuted Wirral Borough Council in July 2020 for breach of HSW s3(1). Council fined £100,000 and ordered to pay costs of over £49,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE #1 • HSE #2
19/09/2018	Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Co Armagh	Matthew Campbell, 24	Electrician employed by Lagan Construction Ltd. killed by falling beech tree during Storm Ali whilst at work (not on trees). The work was part of a water mains rehabilitation project for the forest park café and amenities. His line manager was also seriously injured. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armaghi • Construction Ireland • Belfast Telegraph #1 • ITV • Belfast Telegraph #2 • BBC News 	Beech		HSENI laid charges Nov 2022. Prosecution of NI council and construction firm Nov 2023 following 'not guilty' pleas June 2023. Council changed plea Dec 2023, trial of Lagan Construction was January 2024 (late change of plea). Newry, Mourne & Down District Council pleaded guilty to failing to ensure the health and safety of non-employees and failing to make appropriate risk assessments. Lagan Construction Ltd. pleaded guilty to failing to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees. Newry, Mourne & Down District Council was fined £10,000 for each offence and Lagan Construction Ltd. was fined £30,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPS NI • HSE NI

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03/10/2019	Isabel Trail, Eccleshall Road, Stafford	Neville Scattergood, 58	Man walking on footpath struck by falling limb of oak tree, died of cardiac arrest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • BBC News #2 • BBC News #3 	Oak		Inquest June 2021, verdict of accidental death. HSE prosecuted local authority December 2021 for breach of HSW s3(1); Staffordshire CC fined £300,000, with costs over £13,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE #1 • HSE #2 • HSE #3
28/08/2020	The Carrs, Wilmslow, Cheshire	Christopher Hall, 48	Man sustained serious injuries when struck by a falling mature lime tree while walking in a local park, and died shortly after. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE 	Lime		HSE prosecution of Cheshire East Council in November 2024; council fined £500,000, costs of over £7,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE
25/09/2020	Gosforth, Newcastle-on-Tyne	Ella Henderson, 6	Child injured by falling tree in school grounds, died the following day in hospital. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News #1 • Chronicle Live • BBC News #2 • BBC News #3 • The Guardian • IOSH Magazine 	Willow, tree rotten. Inspected Feb 2018 - scheduled further examination did not take place		HSE investigation in progress (Sept 2021); prosecution announced Nov 2022; HSE prosecuted Newcastle City Council 10.01.23 for breach of HSW s3(1) – guilty plea, fine of £280,000, costs of over £8,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE #1 • HSE #2
08/07/2021	Bitterne, Southampton		8 year old girl out jogging with her father when decayed lime tree fell on her – girl seriously injured, leg amputated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE 			In Jan 2023, BUPA Care Homes Ltd. was prosecuted by HSE for lack of a system for tree safety management, breach of HSW s3(1). Company fined £400,000, costs of over £3,000. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE #1 • HSE #2
11/08/2025	Witton Country Park, Blackburn	Madia Kauser, 32	Woman saved her child but was killed by falling branch of beech tree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News 	Beech		HSE served Improvement Notice on Blackburn with Darwen BC 02.10.25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC News • HSE