



THE HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF

THE INNER TEMPLE

Wind Policy

1. Purpose:

- 1.1 To ensure that the Inner Temple Garden responds to high winds, gusts and related risks, which may present a potential hazard to the safety of members of the public, the residents, professional tenants and staff.

2. Principles

- 2.1 This policy has been compiled with input from tree consultant, John Robinson of DTE Trees, to follow best practice. This takes into consideration the age and health of the tree collection, including the Massaria disease present on the Plane Trees (see point 4.1).
- 2.2 It also takes into consideration the National Tree Safety Group 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees' Guidance. In addition to the policies in place at RHS Wisley, the Royal Parks and Forestry Commission.
- 2.3 Wind speed, including gusts will be assessed using the Beaufort land wind speed scale. The Beaufort wind scale is a standard scale, running from Force 0 (calm) to Force 12 (hurricane).

3. The Policy

- 3.1 **If the Met Office predicts gusts of Force 8 (38mph or higher) the Garden will close.**
- 3.2 **The combination of forecasted wind speeds including gusts by the Met Office of Force 7 (32 to 38 mph) and other onsite factors (see points 4.1- 4.7) may also determine the closure of the Garden.**
- 3.3 Please note the predicted gusts may not hit the Garden but if predicted by the Met Office the Garden remains closed.
- 3.4 In terms of the trees across the wider estate (outside of the Garden), it is not deemed reasonable to close whole other areas of the estate as this would restrict access to residences and places of work.
- 3.5 However, if during either the annual full site Tree Condition Inspection and/or London Plane Massaria Inspections, any tree that has been highlighted for recommended tree safety works (and these works have not yet been carried out), during weather events as outlined above, areas surrounding the identified tree(s) will be cordoned off to restrict access surrounding these specific tree(s), and/or signage put in place if cordoning off the area under the tree fully would impede access to residencies and places of work.
- 3.6 The City of London has also been consulted and it would not be deemed reasonable for the City to restrict access along the Embankment pavement, which the Plane trees along the Broadwalk in the Garden overhang. In line with their policy, areas which are reasonable to close such as lockable Gardens/parks are closed in high wind situations but other areas, such as public pavements, are not.

- 3.7 The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of either the Head Gardener, nominated Deputy, Porters (i.e. during out of hours), and the Event manager during the events season.

4. Contributing factors causing closure when predicted gusts of Beaufort Force 7 (32-38mph)

- 4.1 Timing of last Massaria disease inspection. The London Plane trees (*Platanus x hispanica*) are infected with the fungal disease called Massaria (*Splanchnonema platani*), which can cause branch drop. To follow best practice, the Inner Temple Garden employs Massaria inspections three times a year. Following this, the identified diseased branches are removed in a timely fashion.ⁱ
- 4.2 Timing of the last annual Tree inspection for all trees.
- 4.3 Direction of wind. In the Garden, the prevailing wind is from the South-West and any other wind direction is unusual and more of a concern.
- 4.4 Time of year. There is high risk if trees are in full leaf which affects the weight and sail of the branches. From April to July there is a particularly high risk as the trees are physiologically weaker than in September, October and November.
- 4.5 Period since last strong wind.
- 4.6 Rainfall prior to forecasted strong winds and how wet the ground is.
- 4.7 Expected number of people using the Garden.

5. Procedure

- 5.1 Garden to be cleared of all visitors, including fob holders.
- 5.2 Porters to deactivate access to fobbed Garden gates. If any trees have been identified as high risk outside of the Garden, then to also co-ordinate taping off the areas under the tree/s and appropriate signage if necessary.
- 5.3 Garden Team or Porters to put up signage on all access gates to explain Garden closure.
- 5.4 Update social media (if closure persists into public opening hours).
- 5.5 Inform Garden Team (including volunteers), Porters and where necessary Catering and Treasury Departments (in the event of a commercial Garden hire or Inner Temple event).
- 5.6 Head Gardener (or Deputy), Porter or Event Manager to complete High Wind Assessment Form and email to Head Gardener/Deputy to file in Garden Shared/Health and Safety/Wind with associated Met Office weather forecasts/weather warnings.
- 5.7 The Garden and other areas cordoned off will be re-opened once it is considered safe to do so, i.e. the wind has dropped below what is outlined in this policy and a garden walk around has been carried out looking for fallen branches, branch hangers, possible up-rooted trees in case areas need to be restricted from access

ⁱ Massaria Inspection Frequency and Scheduling are based on the London Tree Officers Association best guidance, please see link to useful info <https://www.ltoa.org.uk/massaria-disease-of-plane> specifically the practical management guidance document, on page 11 outlines a case study for an organisation with numerous London plane tree stock under their management, with a suggested three ground based inspections undertaken on an annual basis, and aerial inspections (including deadwood removal) only specified for those trees when excessive deadwood is noted during a ground based inspection. Page 19 outlines a useful management flow chart which explains this well.