



**SAVE
OUR
TREE**

PRESS RELEASE

18 May 2021

#SAVE DATCHET TREE

170-year-old Wellingtonia in Royal Borough at risk of destruction as Royals announce Tree-bilee

Prince Charles has launched the Queen's Green Canopy Scheme at Windsor, pledging support for trees and emphasising their importance for the environment, yet the local council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, has granted permission to Direct Line to destroy a 170-year-old landmark tree overlooking the Castle.

A case of 'greenwashing'?

RBWM, which announced a climate emergency in 2019 has just sent a newsletter to residents urging them to protect the natural environment as part of its climate-change campaign. At the same time, its officers have granted permission to fell a giant Wellingtonia, (*Sequoiadendron Giganteum Wellingtonia*). This is one of the tallest and oldest trees in Datchet and an important part of the village's environmental heritage. The tree, which has a Tree Preservation Order, is in the protected Conservation Area and is listed on the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory.

Direct Line, the insurance company behind the application to fell, has announced its commitment to carbon neutrality with a 'Planet Mission' to understand and manage the impact of climate change and give back more to the planet than it takes out. The Wellingtonia is implicated in minor subsidence at a building it insures but other solutions are available which would allow the tree to be kept.

Saturday 22 May, The Green, Datchet

Residents, Borough and Parish councillors are objecting to RBWM's planning officers' decision and a campaign to protect this landmark tree which started in the village is now gathering wider attention. On Saturday, residents will be adding messages of protest to a banner on The Green which is funded by Datchet Parish Council. Children are also being encouraged to bring their 'Save the Tree' pictures. #SaveDatchetTree has been set up on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter; banners have been hung around the village; and residents are writing letters of protest to RBWM and Direct Line asking both to honour their environmental and climate commitment and find alternatives to felling the tree.

Saving this tree is within RBWM's power

A giant cedar in Windsor was saved in nearly identical circumstances. #SaveDatchetTree is simply asking that RBWM gives Datchet's landmark Wellingtonia the same consideration. Felling this tree would detract from the natural environment and would show disregard for the intrinsic character and beauty of the riverside area and the wider benefit of its trees.

GREENWASH, verb, to make people believe that your company or organisation is doing more to protect the environment than it really is.

For further information, please email: savedatchettree@gmail.com