

## Tree Management, Advisory & Woodland Services

### St Nectan's Glen Tintagel Cornwall

The waterfalls and hermitage at St Nectan's Glen, just outside of Tintagel, attracts numerous visitors throughout the year, but especially during late spring, summer and early autumn. Access to the waterfalls requires visitors to walk through a steep-sided, heavily wooded valley, via a pedestrian footpath. The walk through the Glen is picturesque and is a significant part of the appeal of visiting the site. St Nectan's Glen is now frequented by an increasing number of tourists, as the site is evolving under a change of ownership.



I contacted the owner in 2015 to discuss the general proactive tree management of the Glen and whether there was any formalised tree inspection regime in place.

My services were subsequently engaged to help the owner dispense his statutory duty of care to ensure that no persons, whether staff or visitors, were put at any unnecessary or foreseeable risk of harm posed by the trees on the site.

Tree risk management must be based on understanding that no tree can be guaranteed as 100% safe and balancing the statistically low level of risk associated with complete or partial tree failure against the myriad benefits that trees provide, and it is the trees that make the Glen the very special place that it is.

The first role of the risk management process was to initially risk-rate priority areas for inspection with respect to the nature and frequency of use. With the woodland divided into designated priority zones the safety assessment could then be undertaken in a time and cost efficient manner; only trees that were located in the higher priority areas required inspection and were surveyed.

All of these higher priority trees were tagged to aid future identification; plotted using GIS and visually inspected for any obvious, significant defects. All of the survey findings and recommendations were supplied in a table format and submitted to the owner along with a detailed written report.

A schedule of proportionate remedial action was deemed necessary for a number of the trees and these works were undertaken within an agreed timescale, following consultation with the north Cornwall trees and woodlands officer.

By instigating a formal inspection process and undertaking all recommended remedial works, the owner effectively dispensed his duty of care by taking the actions of a 'reasonable and prudent' landowner in a proportionate and cost effective manner.

Following this inspection process and developing a working relationship with the owner, I subsequently became involved in securing a grant from the Forestry Commission to create and plant a new, 1 hectare, native woodland adjacent to the Glen.