

Twigworth Green

Follow-Up Report of Dead or Damaged Saplings & General Landscaping

22 April 2026

Cllr John Redfern - Twigworth Parish Council



Condition of Tree Saplings across the Twigworth Green Development

Following the previous report (Aug 2025), Vistry undertook remedial action which resulted in the replacement of approximately 90% of the previously identified affected saplings. This intervention was a positive step toward addressing earlier concerns.

However, with the arrival of spring and the onset of new growth, a subsequent and more detailed site survey has identified ongoing and significant issues. A notable proportion of saplings across the development are either dead or in visible decline. Many exhibit no signs of life, including brittle stems, absence of foliage, and dry root systems. In addition, several surviving saplings are showing clear indicators of stress, such as wilting or sparse leaves, discolouration (yellowing or browning), and stunted growth.

Findings

The primary cause of sapling failure appears to be inadequate post-planting care, particularly insufficient watering and lack of nutrient provision during the critical establishment period. Without timely and structured intervention, further deterioration and loss of saplings is highly likely.

Site observations identified the following contributing conditions:

- Soil in many planting areas is dry, compacted, and deficient in organic matter
- There is little evidence of a consistent or effective watering regime; saplings appear to have relied largely on natural rainfall, which has proven insufficient (notably during Summer 2025)
- Minimal or no mulching has been applied, resulting in poor moisture retention and increased competition from weeds

Key Factors Contributing to Sapling Failure

The decline and loss of saplings can be attributed to:

- Failure to provide regular watering during the critical first 1–3 years after planting
- Lack of soil conditioning and fertilisation, limiting essential nutrients required for root establishment
- Absence of a structured maintenance plan, including routine monitoring, watering schedules, and seasonal care
- Exposure to prolonged dry conditions, potential heat stress, and competition from surrounding vegetation

Suggested Actions

To prevent further losses and ensure successful establishment of planting, the following actions should be considered:

- Vistry should undertake a comprehensive survey to verify the extent of sapling loss and decline identified in this report
- All dead and failing saplings should be replaced within the next appropriate planting season

A structured and documented maintenance plan should be introduced, including:

- Regular watering schedule (particularly during dry periods)
- Soil improvement measures, including conditioning and fertilisation
- Application of mulch to retain moisture and suppress weeds
- Ongoing monitoring and reporting of sapling health

A minimum 3-year establishment and aftercare programme should be implemented to ensure long-term viability.

Conclusion

Although the initial replacement works were welcomed, the current condition of the saplings points to wider shortcomings in aftercare and ongoing maintenance.

Prompt, coordinated action is needed to prevent further decline and to give the planting scheme the best chance of success.

Areas handed over to Gateway which have dead or damaged trees, poor shrub areas or general landscaping issues, must be handed over in good order - any costs for remedial works, identified pre handover... should not be borne by the residents.

The following photos are indicative and should not be considered to be definitive

Ironbridge Road



Ironbridge Road



Dead Tree



Dead Trees

Apley Road



Broken Trees



Dead Trees

Elderberry Gardens - Bridle



Missing Trees

Sorrell Street



Dead Trees

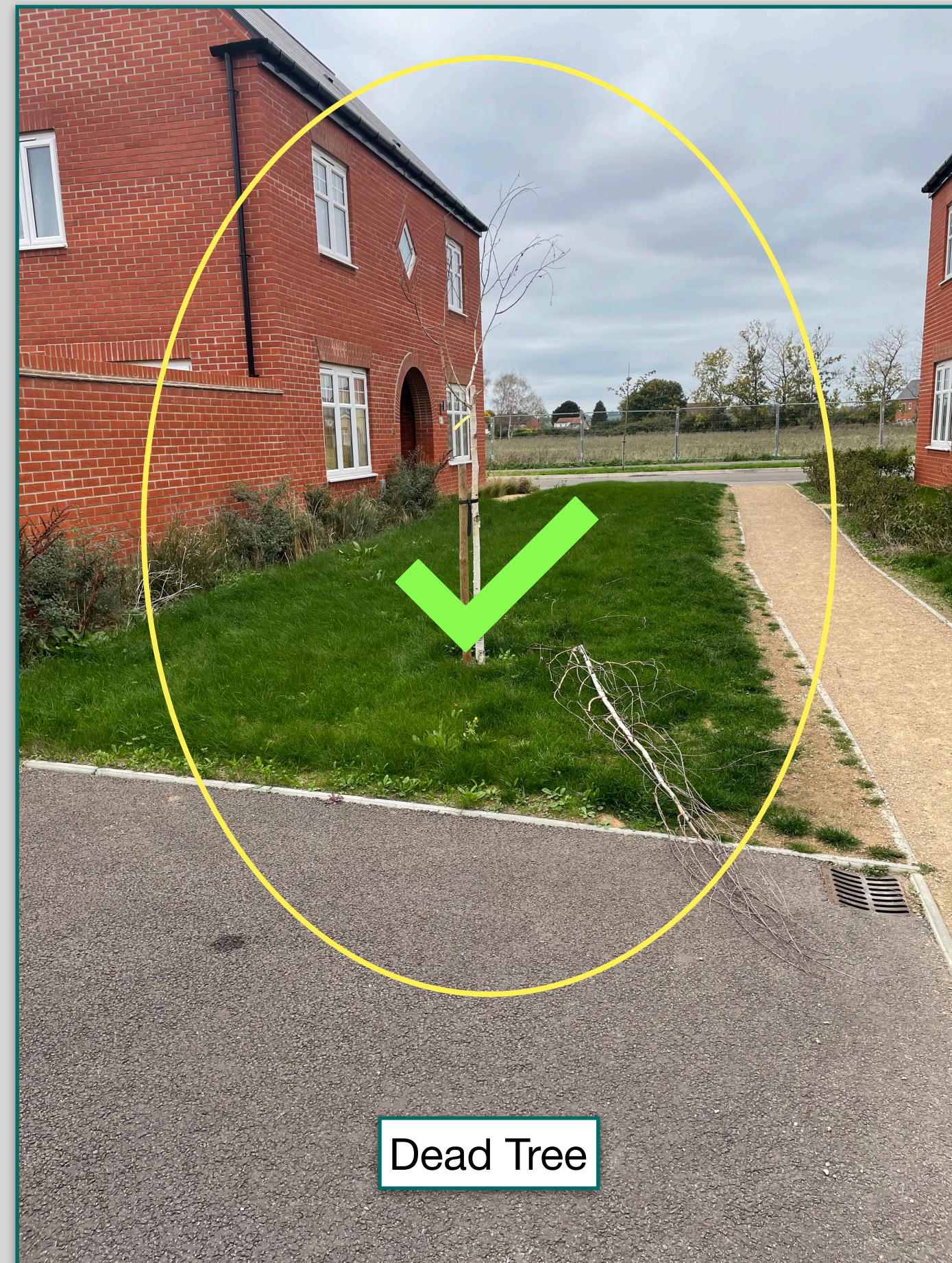


Weaver Crescent



Dead Trees x 6

Halfpenny Close



Carrington Road



Ironbridge Road



Leighton Close & Dolwen Walk



Comfrey Gardens



The trees do not look to be healthy and should be inspected

The shrub areas also look to be in a poor state and should be inspected

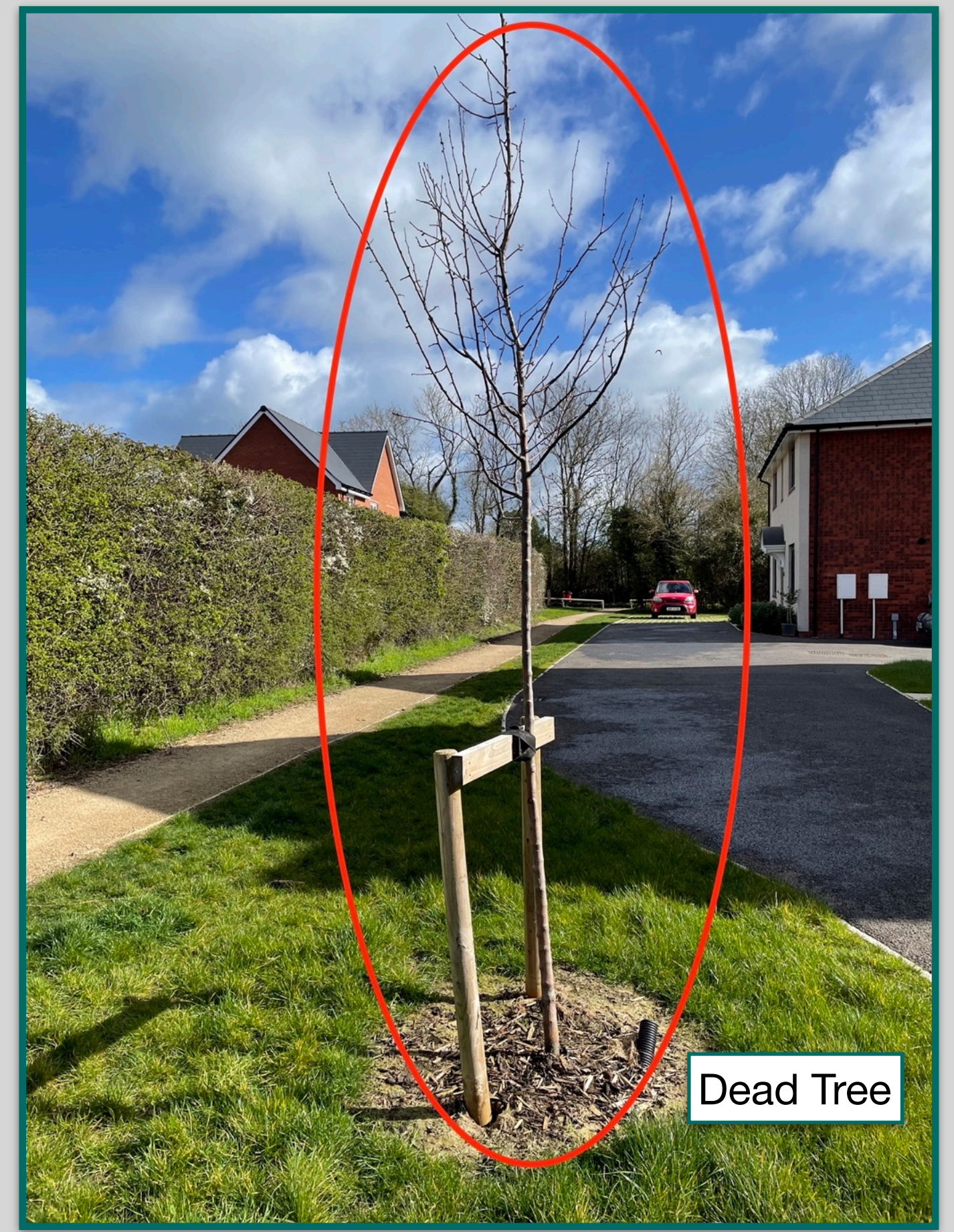
The grass areas are patchy due to poor seeding

There were parts of this land that were never seeded and just left

Footpath - Brook Lane to Play Area



Footpath - Brook Lane to Play Area



Sports Field Footpath



Play Area & Green



Play Area & Green



Poor maintenance of shrub areas

Poor Maintenance



Poor Maintenance



Strimming Damage

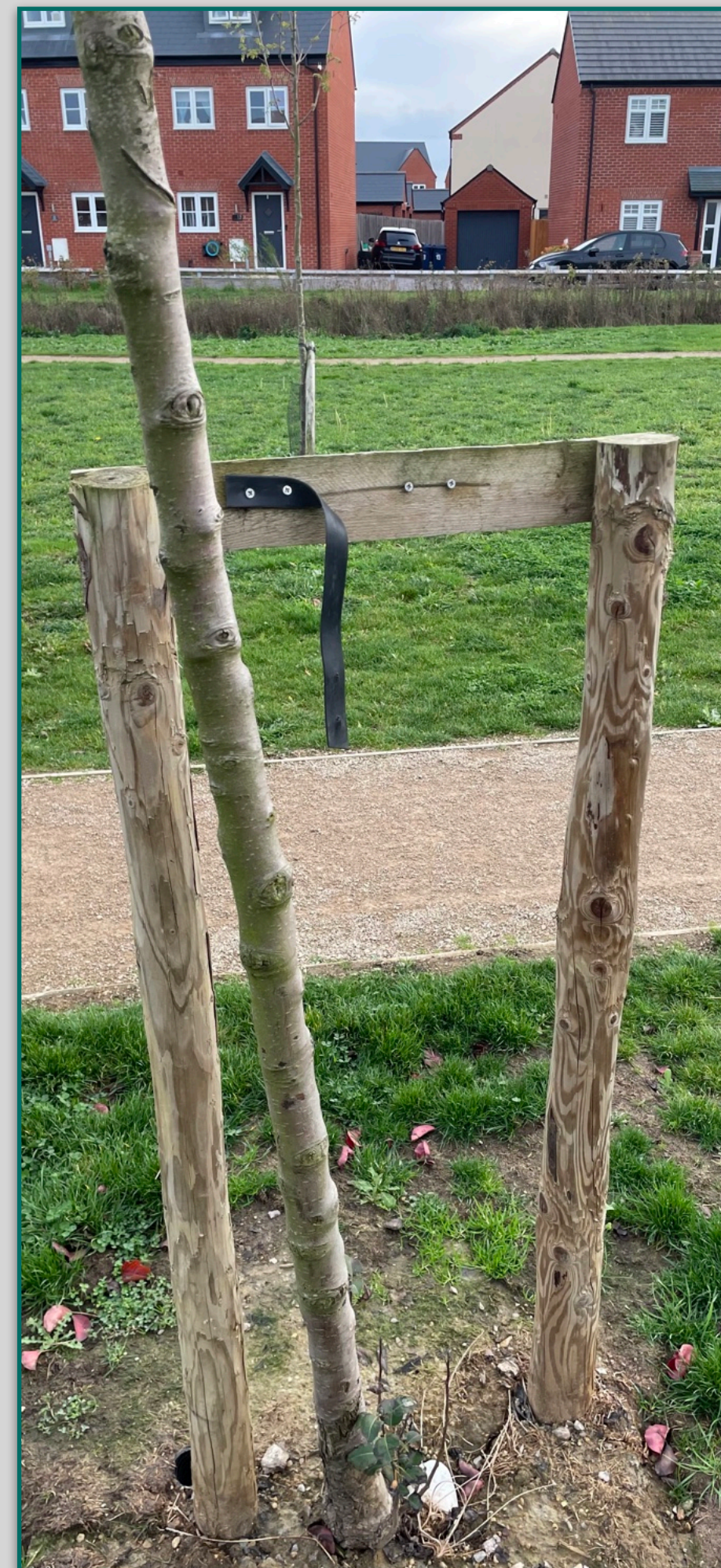
Many young trees have had their bark damaged by strimmers.

This is serious and can kill the tree.

The bark carries water and nutrients, if it's damaged:

- The tree can't move nutrients properly
- The exposed area is open to disease and pests
- If bark is removed all the way around (girdling), the tree will likely die

Even small areas of damage can weaken the tree or stunt its growth.



If a young tree loses its support straps:

- If it's strong enough, it will stay upright and grow stronger with the wind
- If it's not ready, it may lean, grow crooked, or even break

Likewise, straps or ties that are too tight will damage the young trees as they grow

Not paying attention to this has caused many trees to bend or snap