

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan MP

Labour MP for Balham, Earlsfield, Furzedown, Tooting and Wandsworth Common

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Councillor Jonathan Cook
Cabinet Member for Community Services
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
SW18 2PU

Dear Councillor Cook,

Trees on Chestnut Avenue

I am writing to you regarding the trees on Chestnut Avenue.

Before taking any decision, we need to be sure that the consultation has taken into account the views from as many local residents as possible, as well as ensuring decision makers and residents are presented with an accurate and comparable report with respect to the condition of the trees.

The consultation process

Many residents are concerned that the consultation process was not thorough enough. Many nearby roads didn't receive letters, so missed responding to the process before the deadline.

The Council consultation did not allow for residents to rank their preferred options, whereas the Friends of Tooting Common consultation did – coming to different conclusions. There needs to be a review into the way the Council conducts its consultations, we need our consultations to give an honest representation of community feeling.

The 2015/2016 tree survey

There is significant disparity between the findings in 2015 reports compared with the 2016 report. This was stated to be attributed to a more thorough tree condition survey, however it was conducted by only one agency compared with two in 2015.

Furthermore, not one of the agencies conducting surveys in 2015 were brought back to follow up in 2016 – so it is difficult to accurately suggest the conditions of the trees have deteriorated during this 12-month period.

Moving forward

We are all in agreement, any trees in a truly 'poor' condition should be cut back and replaced. Everyone will agree that safety should be our top priority, but the threat of falling branches should not be used to circumvent a proper survey.

Before any action is taken, I want another survey to be conducted, using one of the original agencies plus another independent agency. Once completed, the results can be compared to determine if the tree condition has significantly declined. I would like a public meeting to be arranged to discuss the results, answer any questions and look to find a consensus.

I look forward to your urgent reply.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rosena C. Allin-Khan".

Dr Rosena Allin-Khan MP

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