

Old and Valuable Tree in Central to be removed by LCSD

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) will remove an Old and Valuable Tree (OVT) at Justice Place in Central on June 1, in view of its very poor structural and health condition.

The tree concerned is a big-leaved fig (*Ficus virens*) listed on the Register of OVTs (registration number LCSD CW/142).

The original height of the tree is 13 metres. However, the tree crown was heavily damaged during super typhoon Mangkhut in 2018. Over the past six years, the LCSD had carried out regular inspections and maintenance of the tree, including the application of compost to improve the growth environment, control the spreading of fungal pathogens by application of fungicides, and conduct pruning operations to reduce and remove decayed branches to alleviate the tree risk, etc. However, the health condition of the tree has continued to deteriorate, with the roots and trunk affected by fungal infection, with most major branches damaged or collapsed. Only the tree trunk remains standing with a height of a mere 4.5m, which is considered irrecoverable.

Having consulted the Urban Forestry Advisory Panel through the Tree Management Office and the Central and Western District Council on the removal proposal, and being supported, the LCSD plans to remove the tree on June 1 and replant a common saraca at the location.

A spokesman for the LCSD reiterated that the department will continue to adopt a prudent approach in inspecting and managing trees under its care. Removal of problematic trees will be undertaken only when no other viable risk mitigation measure is available.