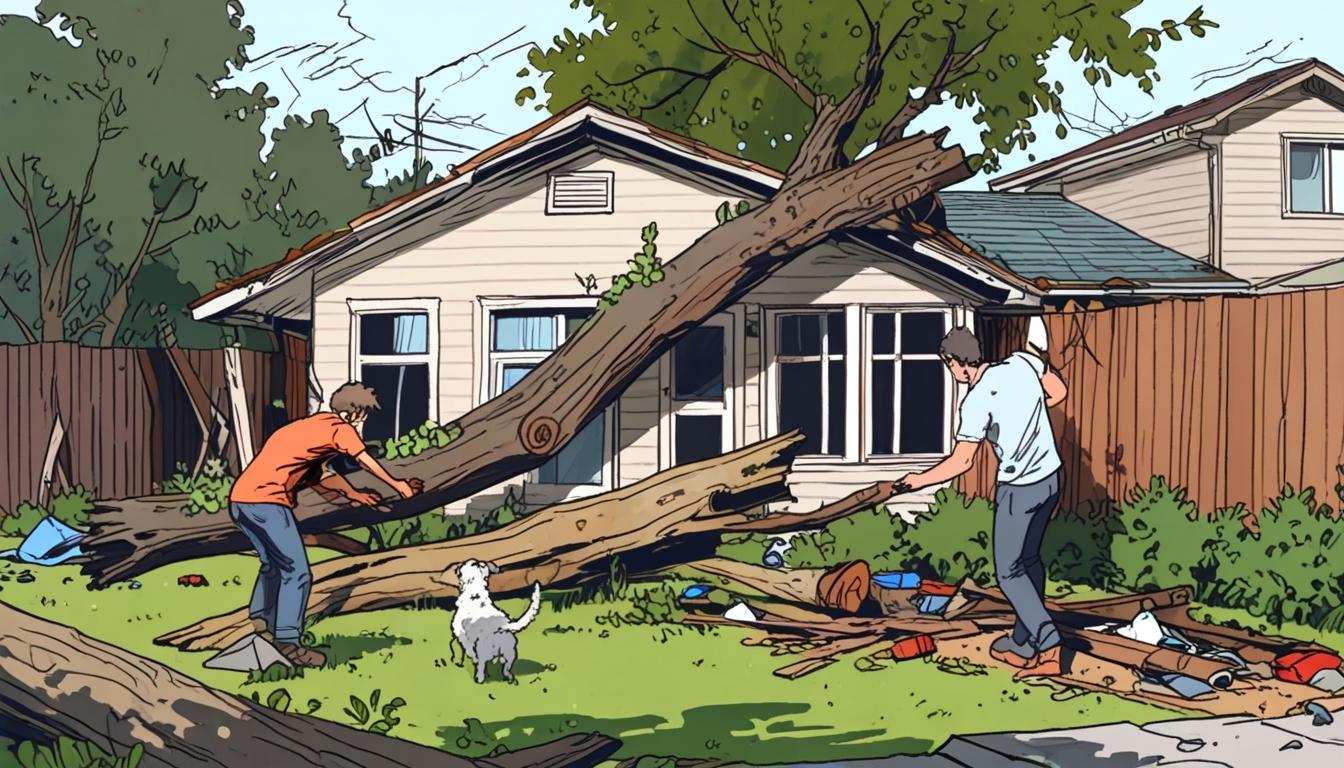
# Resident outraged after tree branch damages home in storm



A resident in New Ferry, Wirral, is expressing his outrage after a tree branch from a nearby football club's property crashed into his home during Storm Darragh, causing significant damage and distress. Paul Stevenson, who has had ongoing concerns about the trees in the area for years, now finds himself facing substantial repair costs and a worrying situation regarding the safety of his property.

The incident, which occurred in early December 2024, resulted in a branch breaking off and damaging both the fence and the patio doors of Stevenson’s house. The impact was severe enough to startle his pet giant schnoodle, named Stormzy, who subsequently bolted from the premises, leading to an extensive search before he was found later in the day. Stevenson stated, “The branches came down and took out my fence at the bottom of the garden and the fence propelled it forward into my patio doors.”

To address the damage, Stevenson had to file an insurance claim, incurring £700 in excess fees to repair the broken windows. He noted that the fence remains unrepaired due to his financial constraints while undergoing cancer treatment.

Stevenson, alongside his neighbour Bernie Roach, has repeatedly raised concerns regarding the trees that border the pitches of Oval Football Club on Graylands Road, citing that their overhanging branches pose a clear risk. Stevenson pointed to a particular branch with a “huge crack down the middle” and argued that if it had been removed, the incident could have been avoided. He expressed trepidation about the potential for similar incidents in the future, stating, “I am worried about this happening again. There's two trees that back onto my properties and are hanging over my garden.”

Roach echoed Stevenson's frustrations, commenting to the Liverpool Echo that maintenance crews visit the area regularly to mow the grass but neglect to address the tree situation. “They are here twice a week doing the grass but they do not touch the trees,” Roach noted, adding that action only seems to be taken when a dangerous situation arises.

Support for Stevenson has come from local councillor Jo Bird, who remarked on the importance of well-managed trees for both community wellbeing and environmental health. Bird stated, “Like any good neighbour, I would expect Wirral Council to pay for any damage caused by its trees.”

In response to the situation, a spokesperson for Wirral Council conveyed their assessment of the claim, which they have denied. They indicated that their investigation considered the adverse weather conditions, highlighting that Storm Darragh had produced gusts reaching up to 70mph and that several branches from the ash tree behind Stevenson's residence fell during the storm. The council maintained that their tree inspection records were current and showed no significant defects prior to the storm. They acknowledged the challenges natural weather events pose, explaining that even healthy trees can unexpectedly shed branches under such extreme conditions, which is often deemed unavoidable.

Stevenson expressed disappointment in the council's decision on his claim, describing the outcome as not only disheartening but also frustrating. He lamented the lack of maintenance provided to the trees, saying, “If they aren't next to a main road, there's zero maintenance to the trees. All the time I have lived here, I can't remember the council coming round to touch the trees.”

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.foxweather.com/weather-news/storm-darragh-england-ireland-uk> - This article supports the claim that Storm Darragh was a powerful storm impacting the UK, causing significant damage and disruptions. It mentions the storm's effects on England and Wales, which aligns with the context of the damage experienced by Paul Stevenson.
* <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/storm-darraghs-destruction-winds-of-93mph-leave-thousands-without-power-uk/> - This article corroborates the destructive nature of Storm Darragh, mentioning its high wind speeds and widespread impact across the UK, which is consistent with the severe weather conditions described in the scenario involving Stevenson's property.
* <https://wirralview.com/environment/storm-darragh-aftermath-numbers> - This source discusses the aftermath of Storm Darragh in the Wirral area, highlighting tree damage and its consequences, which supports the local context of the incident involving Paul Stevenson.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is noted as the original article about Paul Stevenson's situation, but it is not used here as we are seeking external corroboration.
* <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/liverpool-weather-storms-and-floods-22483261> - This source would typically cover local news, including weather-related incidents and community concerns, potentially providing background information on tree maintenance and resident concerns in the Liverpool area.