

Care for Damaged Trees

Bark Wounds

If areas of protective bark have been damaged or removed, the wound should be cleaned by cutting back to sound wood

Rots and Cavities

These can weaken the tree seriously. All obviously decayed wood should be removed. If the cavity is likely to be very deep, the tree's safety should be assessed.

Split Branches, Heavy Limbs

Bracing can be carried out to weak forks or heavy horizontal branches. Cable braces can be attached to eye bolts or screws inserted through the limb or solid tie rods can strengthen weaknesses. Small leaning branches can be supported by props from ground level.

Tree Felling

Many important amenity trees are protected by Tree Preservation Orders or by their location in a conservation area or by planning conditions. It is always best to check with the Borough's Environmental Services Department (see 'Trees, the Law and You' leaflet). Where felling can be justified and has been agreed, the method will depend on the size of the tree and its surroundings, but should only be carried out by professionals.

The Dos and Don'ts of Tree Care and Maintenance

Do – Inspect your trees on a regular basis

Do – Make sure any work on trees is justified

Do – Take great care working with trees and on most jobs employ professional contractors

Do – Avoid any unnecessary damage to trees

Don't – Neglect your tree

Don't – Attempt dangerous work

Don't – Employ unapproved contractors

Don't – Fell trees except where really necessary or due to their dead, dying or dangerous condition

Acknowledgements

'The Pruning of Trees, Shrubs and Conifers' – G.E. Brown - Faber & Faber

A directory of arboricultural consultants and contractors is issued by the Arboricultural Association Brokerswood House, Brokerswood, Nr. Westbury, Wiltshire

Further Information

The Council's Arboricultural Officer will be happy to advise what kinds of pruning works may be acceptable when trees are protected by preservation orders or other conditions, and for which consent is required. You can contact him by writing to:

Director of Leisure Services

Borough Offices

Bishops' College,

Churchgate,

Cheshunt,

Hertfordshire EN8 9XE

Tel: 01992 785508

Fax: 01992 641833

Minicom: 01992 785581

E-mail: leisure@broxbourne.gov.uk

Website: www.broxbourne.gov.uk

One stop shops

Other leaflets in this series together with a wide variety of other publications are available from One Stop Shops.

Wolsey Hall, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt

Unit 42, Tower Centre, Hoddesdon

123 High Street, Waltham Cross

Monday-Friday 9.30am- 5.30pm

Saturday 9.00am- 1.00pm

(Waltham Cross 9.00am- 4.00pm)

All One Stop Shops close at 3.30pm on the last Thursday of each month for staff training.

To receive relevant e-communications from the Council, please register at www.broxbourne.gov.uk/emailalerts. E-communications are emails that provide information about Council services and events. All information supplied will be processed and held in accordance with Data Protection regulations.

This publication is available on request in large print and braille. Questa notizia si può ottenere in Italiano e anche in ingrandimento.

TREES AND MAINTENANCE

One of a Series of Leaflets on Trees
Published by The Borough Council



Introduction

This Borough has a wealth of fine trees, which make an important contribution to the landscape. Many have grown to large proportions and have a long life. However, care and maintenance is often important if they are to remain healthy, safe and attractive. Trees growing in towns and gardens and in close proximity to roads or intensive agriculture may become damaged and require care. When trees age care and surgery may prolong life and safety until they ultimately have to be removed. There are also situations where large forest trees are growing too close to buildings where careful pruning may be appropriate. This leaflet aims to explain to the public and developers the measures that can be taken to achieve this, but in most cases actual work to trees should only be carried out by qualified operators.

Inspection of Trees

As trees develop and mature it is advisable to carry out regular checks to ensure they are in good condition and not likely to break or blow over. This is important especially as the tree owner could be liable if the tree was showing signs of weakness and could cause an accident. Any trees close to buildings or roads should be inspected twice a year, once in summer to examine the leaf cover and signs of deadwood, and once again in winter when the branch structure can be seen. Even trees that appear to be healthy and safe at a distance should be checked carefully. Signs of disease or damage manifest themselves in a number of parts of a tree as follows:-

Leaves – smaller than usual, discoloured or wilting or dead leaves can indicate symptoms of trouble elsewhere e.g. root damage. The causes should be fully investigated.

Branches – these should be free of deadwood and evenly balanced. Crossing and chafing branches can cause damage. Old broken stumps and obvious rotten areas should be examined.

Roots – these are not easy to check but ensure that the rooting area (approximately equivalent to the spread of the tree often) is free of toxic substances e.g. road salt and herbicides and not too wet or dry.

If you notice any of the above symptoms, or you are in any doubt about the tree's condition or safety, it is best to seek professional advice.

Tree Surgery

Careful and judicious pruning can improve the appearance of trees and many faults and weaknesses can be corrected by skilful tree surgery. Minor works in the lower crown involving light branches could

be carried out by an amateur, but working at height, handling cutting tools and heavy branches can be extremely dangerous. Unless you are properly trained and equipped it is best to employ professionals. There are a number of competent and properly insured tree surgeons and felling contractors. The Borough Council can assist in suggesting firms known to them. A directory of Approved Consultants and tree work contractors is available from the Arboricultural Association, address overleaf.

Time of Year for Tree Surgery

Most pruning can be carried out throughout the year but special care should be exercised with Birch, Sycamore and Maple which will bleed profusely if pruned between early February and late June. Walnuts should be pruned when in August only. Any Cherry is best pruned in May or June after flowering. Reduction into heavy wood is best carried out in the dormant season only. It is easier to prune in winter because the branches are lighter and can be seen more easily.

Types Of Pruning Operations

Cleaning out and removing deadwood

Dead branches, rubbish or climbing plants can develop in the crown. Removing them will help reduce the likelihood of disease becoming established and make the tree safer. All deadwood should be removed back to sound wood.

Crown Thinning

This refers to reduction of the density of the tree (not the overall dimensions) by removing weak, thin and crossing branches and as many of the healthy branches as necessary to achieve the amount of thinning desired. If this is carried out carefully by skilled staff it can reduce the weight of the crown, thus lessening wind resistance and making the tree safer. Thinning is best confined to the smaller branches.

Crown Lifting

Vehicular and pedestrian access can be obstructed by lower branches. They can be removed entirely back to the trunk or alternatively low overhanging branches can be pruned back to the main branches above.

Crown Reduction and Shaping

If trees have completely outgrown their situation and cause serious problems with their size, it may be possible to reduce the overall height and/or spread by skilful crown reduction. It is best to shorten the branches back to other growing side branches. Severe lopping or topping should be avoided, though it may be the only way to save the tree if there is substantial rot in the upper crown.

Pollarding

When trees have been severely lopped or pollarded in the past, it is sometimes possible to re-form an acceptable new crown from the resulting re-growth. This operation can be used with street trees such as Limes and Planes which have been pollarded year after year.

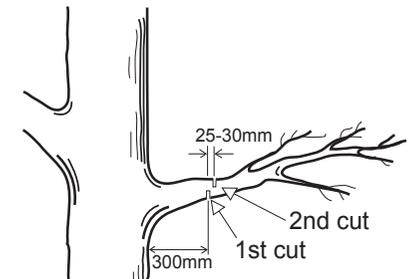
Root Pruning

Where roots of over 25mm in diameter are severed by trenching or reduction of soil levels around the tree, the root ends should be cut cleanly with a saw and immediately covered with soil. If there is a risk of soil erosion because of steep banks, a retaining wall should be constructed.

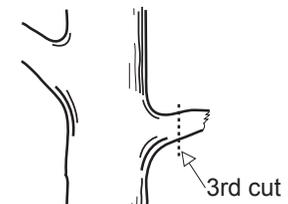
Branch Removal

Incorrect pruning can spoil a tree's natural beauty and give rise to areas of rot and cavities. Basic branch removal should be carried out by a three-cut technique.

- First an undercut is made 300mm out from the trunk and cut up to one third the diameter of the branch.
- Second a top cut is made 12-25mm further out along the branch and is cut down parallel to the first cut. This will then cause the branch to fall and to break along the grain and fall to the ground without twisting or tearing.



- The third should be made at the branch collar.



Treatment of Cuts

On a basically healthy tree a clean cut will be occluded by the growth of new bark and wood from the edges of the wound, and therefore most trees are able to form natural barriers to decay as long as they are correctly pruned.