

Works to Our Trees

When carrying out any works to trees, either in respect of the rights and duties mentioned above or for any other reason, care must be taken to ensure that no harm is caused to any persons, animals or property. Such harm may be direct (where, for example, a branch is lopped and hits someone on the ground) or indirect (where work is carried out that leads to the tree being destabilised and requiring subsequent removal).

Before carrying out any works to a tree, checks should be made that it is not subject to a Tree Preservation Order or within a conservation area. If there is a preservation order on the tree, it will be necessary to apply for consent from Planning Services for most works to it; and if it is in a conservation area, they must be given details of the works and six weeks' notice for standard works. Where consent is required, Planning Services should reach a decision principally on the basis of the amenity value of the tree.

Certain species are protected by law, and harming or destroying them, their nests, roosts or their habitats is a criminal offence. If works are proposed to a tree that forms a habitat for wildlife, nesting sites for birds or a home for other plants, any of which are protected, English Nature, or other statutory or advisory bodies should be consulted. If a tree is known to support, or suspected of supporting, bats, then English Nature (or other statutory nature conservation organisation) must be consulted.

Both the person doing the work and (in most cases) the owner of the tree may be prosecuted if an offence has been committed. To avoid such possibility, each should find out whether additional statutory controls apply to the trees or their associated wildlife and ensure that all necessary consultations have been done and consents received, before starting work.

Trees are a valuable part of the urban landscape, and once they are removed it can take decades before another tree can reach a similar size; and the impact this can have on the visual amenity of an area can be every bit as significant as the loss of that habitat for wildlife.

A single tree can be the home to many different species including insects, birds, fungi, mosses and lichens. A good example of this is the English Oak, which has around 400 species of insect associated with it. The larger a tree, the greater its contribution to improving air quality: removing dust from the air and producing oxygen.

Mature trees are local landmarks and may have historical significance as the last remnants of what was once open countryside or woodland; old estate boundaries or the recognisable site of a historic event. Because of these special values, the removal of mature trees should be given careful consideration. These trees will take a lifetime to replace; and even if they are not felled, can suffer just as much through unnecessary works that open them up to disease and infection. The best work that can be done to a tree is no work.

When works can't be avoided, it is crucial to ensure that works are carried out by a trained arborist with the appropriate equipment, knowledge and insurance to safeguard those around them, and minimise the trauma to the tree. Poor quality of work will have a significant visual impact, as well as threaten the future life of your trees.

Our Contractor

Once works have been identified by the District Council, arrangements will be made for works to be slotted in to a program of works across the District. These will be scheduled on a combination of their priority and geographic location to make them as efficient as possible. Any immediate hazards will be dealt with as quickly as possible, and the area will be made safe as soon as we have been notified.

All of our tree works are carried out by Warwickshire County Council's forestry team, who also manage the County Council's highway trees and provide services to many of the local schools. Over the last ten years they have carried out works on the majority of District Council owned sites, and have both the local knowledge to help them plan works effectively, and the technical expertise to ensure that work is carried out to the highest standards.

Private Tree Works

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Finding a Contractor

Anyone can call themselves a tree surgeon (arborist) and place an advert in Yellow Pages or on the internet and offer a service. An advert alone does not guarantee quality of work, or that it will be carried out safely.

Competent arborists will have certificates which show that they have been trained and assessed. They will often have other academic qualifications in arboriculture and will use safety equipment to protect you, your property and themselves.

Reputable tree care professionals will be pleased to furnish copies of their insurance, qualifications and professional membership certificates and will work to nationally recognised standards.

There are three accreditation schemes currently in place to help support your choice of an appropriate contractor, but these are voluntary schemes and should be used as guidance rather than specific criteria to measure against.

Arboricultural Association Approved Contractors

The Arboricultural Association maintains a list of Approved Contractors that have been through a rigorous vetting programme run by the Association. Contractors are regularly assessed for their health and safety procedures, office and business practices and the quality of their tree work.

The Arboricultural Association expects very high standards which restrict the number of successful applicants. Because of the irrevocable nature of all operations concerning tree care these standards are carefully maintained by ongoing inspection of the contractors.

Trustmark Registered Tree Care Companies

Trustmark is a new scheme supported by Government, the building industry and consumer groups to help you find reliable and trustworthy tradespeople. Trustmark registered companies will have had their technical skills, trading record and financial position checked by an Approved Scheme Operator and have signed up to a code of practice covering areas such as insurance, health and safety and customer care.

ISA Certified Arborists

The International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist programme seeks to assess the technical knowledge of individual arborists. Certified Arborists have passed an exam covering all aspects of tree care and are expected to maintain their knowledge up to date through continuous professional development.