

Construction close to trees

Trees are easily damaged by construction works, regardless of their scale. Digging a garden pond may cause damage to trees in the same way as building demolition and construction.

It is important to ensure that trees are adequately assessed before ANY work takes place.

This is a complex topic. The specialists who can help you are:

- **a competent Arboricultural Consultant**
- **your Local Planning Authority**

Trees near buildings and people

The proximity of trees to buildings can cause nuisance and inconvenience – for example through direct building damage, heavy shade or falling debris. Trees in adjacent property overhanging boundaries or blocking light are frequently a cause of annoyance or inconvenience, and there may be remedies available to alleviate this. For further advice contact a competent Arboricultural Consultant or a competent Arboricultural Contractor.

As a tree owner you have a legal duty of care to do what is reasonable to prevent harm being caused to others by your trees.

If located close to people or objects of value, the risks posed by the trees should be assessed by a competent Arboricultural Consultant. The frequency and level of this assessment will vary from location to location and tree to tree. On occasion, remedial work or tree removal might be required.



Building subsidence and heave

Occasionally trees can cause subsidence or heave damage to structures. If you notice cracks to your building, the first thing you should do is contact your building insurers who will investigate.

If agents for your neighbour's house ask you to carry out work to your trees because of alleged damage the trees have caused, you should advise your own building insurers and if necessary instruct a competent Arboricultural Consultant and possibly a Structural Engineer to assess the situation.

Subsidence and heave require a multi-disciplinary approach, involving a range of professionals. The following professionals should be able to help you:

- **a competent Arboricultural Consultant**
- **a competent Structural Engineer**
- **a competent Geotechnical Expert**
- **your Buildings Insurance Company**



Arboriculture

The cultivation and management of trees and woody plants to enhance the landscape for mankind.

The Arboricultural Association

The largest UK body for the arboricultural profession, it sets standards for its 2,000 members, regulating arboricultural practitioners listed in its national Directory of Registered Consultants (advisors) and Approved Contractors (tree surgeons) and providing support to its members and society through technical publications and training.



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An introduction to trees and their management

www.trees.org.uk

Help and advice



An introduction to trees and their management

Trees are valuable assets providing many benefits such as an attractive outlook, shade, wildlife habitat and health benefits. They shape the character of the wider landscape, provide focal points as individual specimens and add financial value to properties.

This leaflet provides general guidance on where to find useful information about common aspects of tree management for members of the public who own or have an interest in trees.

If you need specialist arboricultural services it may help to understand the difference between arboricultural consultants and contractors.

A **competent Arboricultural Consultant** is a person who, through relevant education, training and experience, has gained recognised qualifications and expertise in providing management advice about trees. You may check the professional or academic level of arboricultural qualifications at www.trees.org.uk

An **Arboricultural Association Registered Consultant** is a competent consultant who has achieved this status following a rigorous vetting process. The list of Registered Consultants is available on the website.

Competent Arboricultural Contractors have certificates indicating that they have been trained and assessed. Some also have other academic qualifications in arboriculture. They will use safety equipment to protect you, your property and themselves.

An **Arboricultural Association Approved Contractor** is a competent contracting company which has achieved this status following a rigorous vetting process. The list of Approved Contractors is available on the website.



Selecting the right tree for the right place

Planting a tree in your garden is a decision requiring forethought and planning. Consideration must be given to the surrounding landscape and buildings, space available, soil type and location of the particular site. Careful thought will help to ensure that an appropriate species is selected for the particular location, so giving the tree the best chance of successful establishment and future growth.

Advice and information on this subject can be obtained from sources including

- a **competent Arboricultural Consultant**
- www.trees.org.uk

Tree planting

It is essential that young trees are given every opportunity to survive planting. Poor planting practices can result in long-term problems and even the death of the tree.

Information on how to plant your trees can be obtained from:

- a **competent Arboricultural Consultant**
- a **competent Arboricultural Contractor**
- **specialist tree planting contractors**
- **tree nurseries**
- www.trees.org.uk

Maintenance in the first few years following planting is crucial to ensure establishment. Young trees need TLC:

- **tending – check stakes, ties, guards and prune out broken and diseased branches**
- **loosen ties and remove the stake altogether if the tree is stable**
- **clear vegetation from around the base**
- **add water when required**



Tree maintenance

Most trees do not require regular pruning but there are occasions when tree work is necessary. You must take great care in deciding who you will take advice from.

Trees can suffer ill health from pests and diseases and or as a result of climatic or environmental changes.

If your tree looks unwell, appears different to normal or you consider that tree works might be required, you can obtain guidance and advice from the following sources:

- a **competent Arboricultural Consultant**
- a **competent Arboricultural Contractor**
- **AA Leaflet Tree Work-Choosing your arborist**
- www.trees.org.uk



Legal protection of trees

Some trees are protected by legislation, and it is essential that you establish the legal status of trees prior to carrying out works to them. Unauthorised work to protected trees could lead to prosecution, resulting in substantial fines and a criminal record.



Advice on legal protection to specific trees can be obtained from a competent Arboricultural Consultant, an AA Registered Consultant, a competent Arboricultural Contractor, an AA Approved Contractor or from your Local Planning Authority.

Legal protection may take one of the following forms:

- **Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)**
- **Conservation Areas (CA)**
- **covenants, deeds and leases**
- **planning conditions**
- **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**
- **felling licences**
- **specific legislation to protect wildlife (covered in the next section)**

Trees and wildlife

Trees provide a wide range of habitats for many species, some of which are legally protected such as bats, nesting birds, badgers and dormice. It is your responsibility to ensure that you do not contravene this legislation.

Further information can be obtained from:

- **AA Guidance Note 1 Trees and Bats**
- **Bat Conservation Trust**
www.bats.org.uk
- **Forestry Commission**
www.forestry.gov.uk
- a **competent Arboricultural Consultant**
- **an AA Registered Consultant**
- a **competent Ecologist or Environmentalist**

