



DOWN TO EARTH

— ROOTED 1979 —



Defining the landscape

www.downtoearthtrees.co.uk



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— ROOTED 1979 —

Established in 1979, Down To Earth Trees are one of the longest established arboricultural companies in the South East, renowned for our high standards and the passion with which we take care of trees. Our highly skilled and specialist teams provide a wide range of tree management, consultancy and arboricultural services, backed by unrivalled levels of experience. In 1987, we became one of the first companies to earn the prestigious Arboricultural Association Approved Contractor accreditation. This status means we carry out all services to a high level, delivered in a safe and professional manner. From tree management to tree survey and consultancy services, we know what it takes to achieve top-quality results, and ensure the customer is provided with the highest quality of service.

All our tree surgeons have been trained to the highest standards and are fully qualified to undertake specialist tree management. We always strive to leave your site as tidy as possible and take extra care to minimise disturbance to your property, its surroundings and the environment.

You can be assured that for all jobs, Down To Earth Trees operate within the latest industry guidelines and adhere to arboricultural best practice at all times. Each job is assessed individually, at a mutually convenient time, by our friendly arboricultural managers, and all quotes are based on your specific requirements.

For more information please contact us on +44(0)1959 524 623
or email enquiries@dtetrees.co.uk

TREE SURGERY

It is generally desirable to allow a tree to grow naturally both for aesthetic reasons and for the health of the tree, with a non-intervention approach adopted where necessary. There are, however, times when tree pruning is required: to increase light to a property, to maintain a more compact crown size or to remove damaged branches following high winds, for example.

The benefits of engaging professional, qualified and fully insured tree surgeons cannot be overstated. Down To Earth provide expert advice and guidance on all aspects of tree management to both domestic and commercial clients on the recommended extent of pruning, timing and likely effect on the tree.

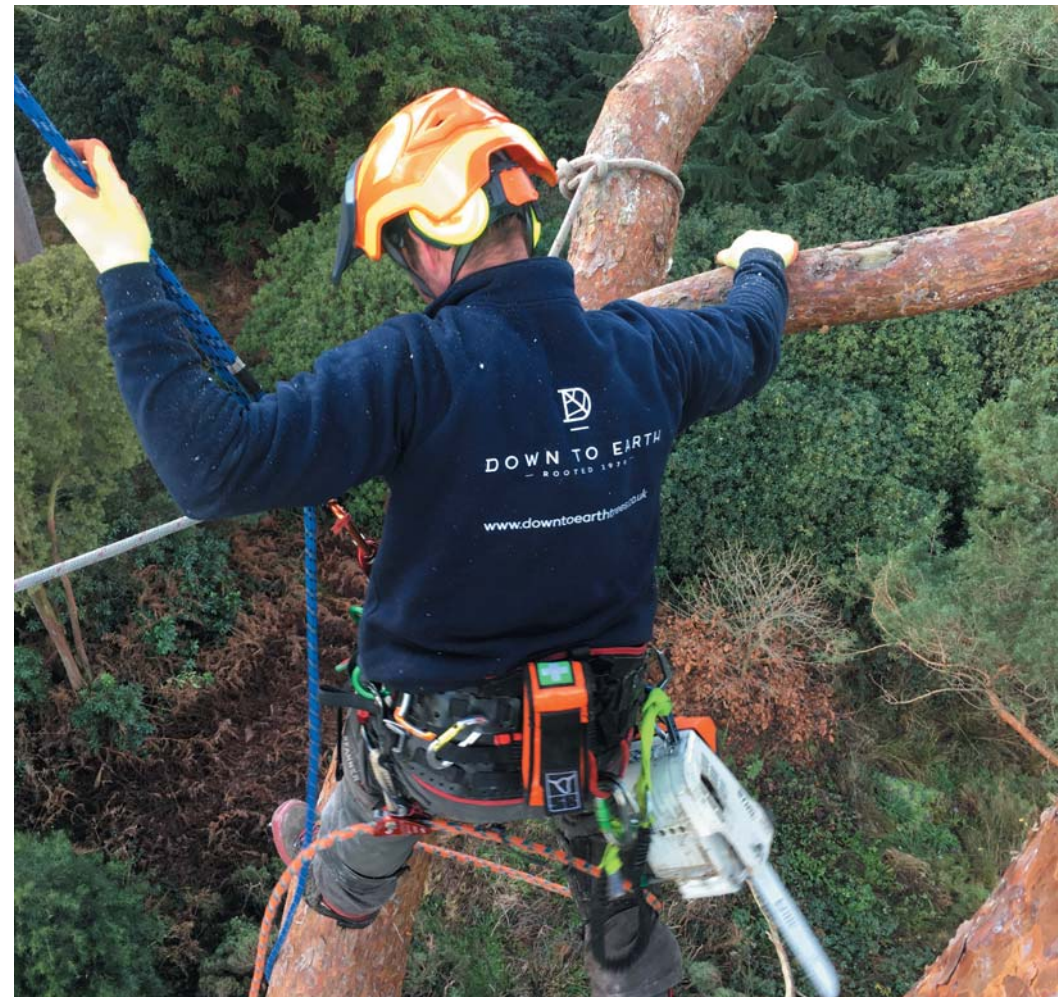
Our skilled tree surgeons undertake work to the highest possible industry standards and help you achieve the best solutions with regard to your tree management. If you care about your trees, you'll care about who works on them.

EMERGENCY CALL-OUT SERVICE

In 1987, 1991 and early 2019, the UK was severely affected by a series of very strong wind events which caused widespread damage and numerous tree failures.

Down To Earth provide a 24-hour emergency call-out service during such events to deal with hazardous trees which require urgent attention, or simply to reassure clients.

As one of the largest tree-contracting companies in the South East, we have a team of operatives trained and qualified in dealing with multiple windblown trees and emergency tree-work operations. This means we have the capacity to deploy crews at any time of the day or night to deal with a high-priority job. In addition, our extensive fleet of industry-specific equipment includes large crane trucks and high-capacity woodchippers, thereby minimising the inconvenience and worry of a fallen tree for both domestic and commercial clients.



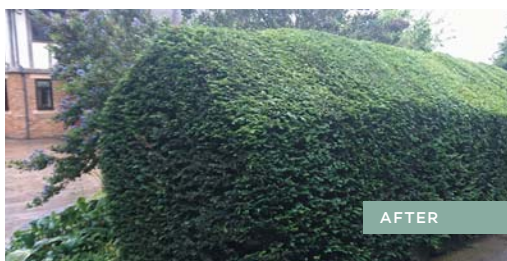
"I would recommend Down To Earth without hesitation. They were efficient, professional, courteous and excellent value. This was an emergency call out as the tree had been hit by a lorry and damaged beyond saving. The tree was swaying in high winds and overhung a path used by schoolchildren. Their representative arrived within the hour, gave me a clear estimate and arranged for the tree to be taken down and the stump ground down before the children came out of school. There was no mess: all the debris was cleared away."

HEDGE MAINTENANCE

Down To Earth offer a hedge-cutting service either as a 'one off' or on a regular basis.

The most important aspect of hedge cutting is timing as different species of hedge plants require management at differing times of the year. A further consideration is bird-nesting season; we would recommend that work to hedges is avoided between mid-February to mid-August, depending on the species of bird, unless you can be sure there are no nesting birds present. It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to cause damage to or disturb nesting birds. Down To Earth will be pleased to advise on timing if required.

When trimming hedges, most of the time a stepladder and long-reach hedge-cutting equipment will suffice; there are times, however, when particularly if a hedge is high and/or very wide, we will need to use a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP). This is required by law under the 'Working At Height Regulations 2005'. Such equipment is essential to safeguard our operatives and to ensure that the hedges we work on are professionally managed.



"I have been using Down To Earth Trees for the past 10+ years. I am very particular and like all my holly trees shaped and my four hedges cut very tightly. Down To Earth, Chris in particular, understood my requirements totally, i.e. one of the hedges had been sloping upwards, and he used different hedge cutters until he found one strong enough to cut the hedge so that it was all one height, which more than exceeded my expectation."

STUMP GRINDING & REMOVAL

Although stumps can be left in the ground after tree felling, the decision to leave them in situ can, in some cases, be problematic. It's not just their unsightly nature and potential obstruction of future landscaping projects; the likelihood of the stump forming new shoots and possibly spreading root diseases such as Honey fungus needs to be considered.

The small additional cost for expert stump removal at the same time as the tree is felled often makes the most economic sense. Stumps are often large and heavy and as such require the right equipment and techniques to be successfully removed. Down To Earth own four specialist stump grinders – two of which are large tracked machines for jobs where access to big stumps is across rough terrain, while our smaller grinders are perfect for hard-to-reach stumps where access is limited. Our arborists receive regular update training on the best stump-removal techniques and how to minimise ground disturbance to leave a completely clear patch of ground where the tree once stood.

All sites are scanned for underground services prior to works commencing using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT) and adequate guarding is put in place around machinery to protect people and property. Clients can choose to have the grindings left on site as they make a very good mulch or removed if required.



"Excellent job removing the tree stump, in and out in no-time, total professionals and I have now regained a large part of my garden back! Thanks again!"

COMMERCIAL SITE & LAND CLEARANCE

Our commercial site clearance and large-scale felling teams will leave your site clear of trees and vegetation, working within the remit of any existing planning constraints to prepare the area ready for your construction project, while retaining and protecting trees as required to enhance the development.

This service can be offered as a package in conjunction with our Consultancy team, where existing legislative constraints require an Arboricultural Impact Assessment or Arboricultural Method Statement to satisfy planning requirements, or as a standalone site supervision and monitoring service to safeguard and protect the retained trees.

Utilising company-owned equipment, our high-capacity woodchippers, crane trucks and tractor-mounted forestry mulchers provide a cost-effective and professional solution to land clearance projects. All waste created as a result of our arboricultural operations is recycled and used as a biomass product to create energy which is returned to the National Grid.



VETERAN TREE MANAGEMENT

The UK contains Europe's largest collection of ancient and veteran trees and as well as providing us with a glimpse of historic landscapes, complex interrelationships develop over time between these trees and other plants and organisms. Down To Earth are passionate about the cultural and historical significance of ancient and veteran trees and the management techniques required to preserve, restore and maintain them.

As specialists in this area, we have the skills and experience to appropriately administer such techniques and have been undertaking several ongoing contracts for the last few years. These include managing the veteran tree stock at Ashted Common for the City of London Corporation Commons Sites, delivering a ten-year veteran tree project for the Trustees of a private estate which has an incredible number of veteran Common oak on the urban fringes of Keston, in the London Borough of Bromley, and a six-year project involving the restoration of circa 300 lapsed Hornbeam pollards at Bockhanger Wood, Ashford.

As well as having a team of experienced operatives to deliver your management project, our in-house consultants can provide comprehensive and prioritised management plans, including ecological and protected species surveying to create clear work specifications and method statements to ensure the works are undertaken correctly and sympathetically.

Veteran and ancient trees should be held in high regard if only for their social value and great ecological importance. Like us, trees need a little extra care when they grow old so that they are properly preserved, restored and maintained. This is where we step in.



TREE PLANTING SERVICES

We are able to advise on all aspects of planting – from a single tree to an entire woodland. When considering planting a new tree, groups of trees, shrubs or a formal landscaping plan we would recommend that the following points be carefully considered.

SUITABILITY: Will the tree ‘look right’? Often an exotic species in a rural situation will look out of place; while on the other hand a native tree in a very formal garden will look equally odd. There is a huge array of species options available to ensure the right tree is chosen, which may include seasonal variation and interest (for both amenity and wildlife) and to ensure it is the ‘right tree in the right place’.

SOIL: Will the chosen tree or shrub grow in the soil you intend to plant it in? Many shrubs do not tolerate highly alkaline soils (such as chalk).

SIZE: When fully grown, will the tree or shrub ‘fit the space’ or become a nuisance and require regular maintenance?

LIGHT/NUISANCE: Is the tree likely to block out a view or light in future years or could

it overhang (and become a nuisance) to you or your neighbour?

MAINTENANCE & AFTERCARE:

Trees need watering! Many fail if not watered or left untended. Do not plant in grass sward and ensure grass is not allowed to grow up to the tree (keep a radius of at least 0.5m clear of all grass). An application of slow-release fertiliser and/or mulch in the spring will help a new tree on its way.

COST: Planting larger specimens has the advantages of instant impact and scale but the disadvantages of higher cost, aftercare and risk of failure; whereas a smaller specimen is cheaper, requires less maintenance and is more likely to succeed. It is essential to plan accordingly, so please ask for our assistance in planning your garden planting proposals.

At Down To Earth Trees, we believe trees are the most striking living features of any urban environment. But they require proper planning, care and maintenance to ensure they are a safe addition to your garden or property.



“Down To Earth planted two large 4m+ trees on a steep bank with difficult access. Alex visited the site and advised on the choice of trees. Communication was excellent. The work was carried out by Alex and Jack with care, all very professional and tidied up afterwards. Very pleased with the new trees.”

TREE SURVEYS & CONSULTANCY

Down To Earth provide a wide range of professional tree survey and consultancy services which can be tailor made to your specific requirements. We offer fully qualified and insured advice in relation to tree safety, risk assessment, local authority planning recommendations and general tree management or woodland advice.

Down To Earth deliver high quality consultancy advice and detailed reports on all tree-related matters to an extensive list of private and commercial clients. Our combined wealth of experience has been providing cost-effective solutions for all aspects of tree care and management for over 40 years. We're happy to undertake any size of tree surveying work, from small residential tree-stock surveys, through to very large development sites requiring detailed advice regarding the protection of high-value tree stock.

OUR TREE SURVEY AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Tree Safety Surveys
- Commercial Tree Risk Assessment Surveys
- Formal Tree Health and Condition Surveys
- BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations
- Veteran or Notable Tree Surveys with Experienced Management Advice
- Woodland and Wildlife Conservation Surveys
- Latest Pest and Disease Research
- Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Area applications and Local Authority liaison
- Internal Decay Detection Testing
- Legal Advice in Relation to Trees



“WHY DO I NEED TO HAVE MY TREES SURVEYED?”

Managing the potential risks posed by trees is the legal responsibility of the tree owner or manager of the land on which they grow. All tree owners or those in a responsible position have a ‘duty of care’ to ensure their trees are kept in a reasonably safe condition. Down To Earth Trees provide no-nonsense guidance to the tree

owner to ensure moral and legal tree-related responsibilities are fulfilled.

“WHAT IF TREE ROOTS ARE DAMAGING MY BUILDING?”

Trees can have an adverse effect upon a building’s stability, depending upon the type and size of tree, type of sub-soil and distance from the building. These issues are multi-disciplinary, and by combining the expertise

of building surveyors as well as arboriculturists, we can properly address the likely causes and implement appropriate remediation measures.

In addition to problems of subsidence, the close proximity of trees may cause direct damage to structures due to the incremental growth of roots or stems.

Please contact us should you have concerns about trees in relation to buildings.

BS5837 SURVEYS

UNDERSTANDING BS5837

BS5837, or to give it its full name: British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations', is the current industry guidance document which is used by local planning authorities and all those involved in planning, from large-scale developers to individual homeowners, when it comes to assessing, protecting and replacing trees in relation to development.

BS5837 tree surveys need not be arduous. Good quality trees retained appropriately can add thousands to the value of a development, so even for purely economic reasons they are worth preserving as the return on investment can be significant. Problems often occur when tree protection occurs as an afterthought, or worse, when good quality trees aren't protected at all. We encourage all of our clients to contact us for advice sooner rather than later, ideally before any plans are drawn up.

The guidance within BS5837 outlines the information required to be collected and submitted by the applicant at various stages throughout the planning process. The amount of information the local planning authority can request can vary depending on the scale of the development and the likely impact on existing trees, but it usually involves the production of a series of documents in a logical order.

WHY PROTECT TREES DURING DEVELOPMENT?

It is widely known that trees offer many benefits to the built environment, including providing visual amenity, beneficial shading, noise abatement, softening or complementing, and adding instant maturity to new developments. By virtue of their intrinsic beauty, trees can increase property values and selling prices by between 5% and 18% (CABE Space, 2005 and Morales et al, 1983). More recently, iTree has been used in London to fully quantify the millions of pounds in ecosystem services that trees provide year on year. We help homeowners and developers throughout London and the South East in obtaining planning permission for projects of all sizes.



THE BS5837 PROCESS EXPLAINED

BS5837 TREE SURVEY

The survey includes a site visit to collect data on all trees, including accurate location, species, dimensions and condition. The output includes a written report with a Tree Constraints Plan (TCP), a plan view showing all surveyed trees including constraints such as Root Protection Areas (RPA), which is especially useful in the early stages of planning.

ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (AIA)

The initial proposed layout is overlaid onto our TCP to highlight direct and indirect impacts both to trees and the proposal. Those impacts are then evaluated and we may recommend mitigation measures to improve the long-term relationship between trees and development, especially where we believe that such impacts can risk the LPA looking unfavourably on a proposal. The AIA may also include a plan of retained trees and RPAs overlaid onto a proposed layout.

ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT (AMS)

The AMS considers all parts of the development, including any remaining conflicts, access requirements, site storage and working methods, and sets out the specification for all proposed operations within or near the RPA to be undertaken in a way which minimises the risk of adverse impact on retained trees to an acceptable level. This is often produced alongside the Tree Protection Plan, which is very effective at visually representing the key areas requiring mitigation.

TREE PROTECTION PLAN (TPP)

A plan-view document which indicates the precise location of the protection measures for all retained trees. The TPP will incorporate the mitigation set out in the AMS to ensure adequate tree protection is maintained throughout the proposed development.



"...providing a first class friendly professional service, and straight forward advice..."

ARBORICULTURAL SITE SUPERVISION

Down To Earth also supply additional arboricultural input to help clients obtain planning on particularly tricky sites or where this may be a condition imposed as part of the planning permission. Site supervision can be fairly wide ranging and usually becomes necessary where there is a conflict between a proposal and the RPA, and further information is required to accurately assess the likely impact to trees, or potentially the lack of impact. On one particular site we specified, arranged and oversaw trial excavations using our specific high-pressure air lance (Air Spade) which sensitively exposed root systems and considerably reduced the RPA when it was proven that roots were not present. (Please refer to the Air-Spade Investigations section.)

BS5837 SURVEY CASE STUDY

The client appointed us to assist in obtaining planning permission to build a side and rear extension on their home. The property was within a Conservation area and understandably the local planning authority was keen to preserve local character.

A good quality Arbutus (Strawberry tree) was adjacent to the boundary fence in a neighbouring garden, and a significant overlap meant that its Root Protection Area (RPA) had the potential to be adversely affected by the proposed foundations.

Due to the presence of a hard surface installed years before forming an unfavourable rooting area, our surveyor was confident there were likely to be no significant roots in the area where the footings were

proposed, despite being metres within the RPA.

A trial excavation was put forward. It was later accepted by the Council and following a careful hand-digging exercise it was revealed that no significant woody roots were present, allowing the development to proceed without significant detriment to the health and long-term vitality of the tree. Site supervision is ongoing during the build to ensure that any foreseeable impacts are managed and mitigated to preserve the much-loved garden tree in the long term.

AERIAL TREE INSPECTIONS

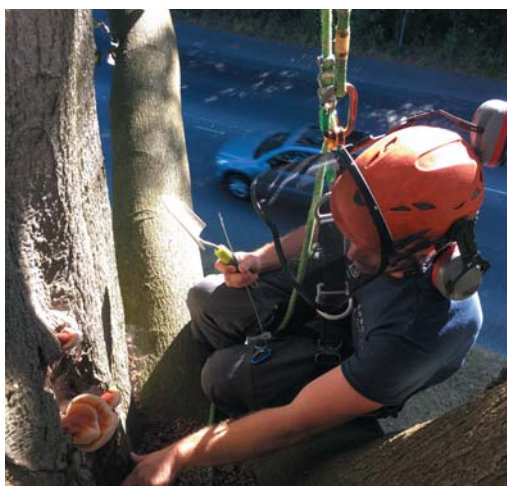
As part of our consultancy services we provide Aerial Tree Inspections (ATI). These are an advanced method of tree assessment and are carried out by our consultants, who are fully qualified in this area having previously worked as tree surgeons, with extensive knowledge of the working dynamics and individual characteristics of each tree species. This ensures clear and concise recommendations are made on the future management of your trees.

This form of inspection is generally undertaken on mature or veteran trees where characteristics which can create a safety issue are more common. An initial ground-based visual inspection will be carried out by one of our arborists or consultants; if this inspection highlights a defect such as a large wound, cavity, splits or decay fungi, a more detailed inspection can be carried out by means of an ATI resulting in an assessment of the tree condition and a specific work recommendation.

The recommendation will help to bring trees to an acceptable level of safety whilst fulfilling a client's 'duty of care', or confirm that the area of inspection is sufficient and requires no further work at this stage meaning unnecessary preventative works do not need to be carried out.

OUR TEAM OF CONSULTING ARBORISTS CAN DELIVER:

- Unparalleled arboricultural knowledge and expertise on the identification of tree-related defects
- Clear interpretation of the tree-related defects identified and presented within a written report
- Detailed investigations using decay detection technology where applicable
- Remedial measures required post-inspection
- An ATI report that can assist with a Tree Preservation Order or Conservation Area tree work application providing justification for the works



TREE HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Down To Earth provide a range of professional tree healthcare services to complement our tree surveys and consultancy division. Working in conjunction with Hansatech Instruments, world leaders in the manufacture of scientific instrumentation used globally in both plant and biomedical scientific research programmes for over 40 years, we are able to offer a pioneering diagnostic tool which can detect early signs of stress in trees to facilitate prudent preventative management.

There are many factors that can cause stress to trees: poor soil, nutrient deficiency, drought, pests and diseases; these can manifest as visible symptoms such as small, sparse leaves or dieback. But what if we were able to detect stress levels long before they became visible, thereby allowing us to intervene sooner and remedy the problem before it gets worse?

Down To Earth can carry out tree-vitality monitoring and stress detection on any number of trees using state-of-the-art Chlorophyll Fluorescence testing equipment. Testing allows us to compare the gathered data to a strong baseline of thousands of trees of the same species and detect very small deficiencies in vitality. Where appropriate, we can recommend and implement treatment methods to improve and maintain good tree health. Repeat testing can also be used to confirm how effectively a treatment is working.

Arborcheck employs research techniques that are used widely by scientists all over the world as a means of detecting physiological damage caused by biotic or abiotic stress factors.

PRE-VISUAL DETECTION OF MANY FORMS OF BIOTIC AND ABIOTIC STRESS FACTORS

Photosynthesis can be inhibited by different stress factors in a variety of ways. Issues such as drought and nutrient deficiency starve the tree of the raw materials required for photosynthetic processes to occur, whilst stress caused by herbicide damage can physically break down the structures within the leaf itself.

RESULTS COMPARED TO EXTENSIVE SPECIES-SPECIFIC DATABASE OF BENCHMARK VALUES

The real power of Arborcheck lies in its ability to analyse recorded data from a particular tree against a species-specific Database of Benchmark Values (DBV). The DBV contains optimum chlorophyll fluorescence and chlorophyll content data for over 275 individual species/cultivars collected over a seven-year period and revised annually as new data is collected.

WIDE VARIETY OF APPLICATIONS

Arborcheck has a wide range of applications including informing biosecurity programmes, selection of planting stock, routine testing of planted stock, routine testing of trees pre- and post-development and regular assessment of physiological health as part of management regimes.



SOIL AMELIORATION

TREATING SOIL COMPACTION NEAR TREES

As well as caring for trees above ground, we also have a team of rooting environment specialists to deal with the effects of compacted soil causing root suffocation and decreased water permeability. The application to both private residential trees and lawns, and commercial sports surfaces such as golf courses, football pitches and bowling greens, offers a cost-effective way of dealing with water-logging and ill-health in trees.

MOST TREE PROBLEMS CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THEIR SOIL

Tree roots need air too. For root growth, an 'ideal' soil should be as much as 50% air and water, presented as many tiny 'pores' throughout the soil structure. When a soil becomes compacted, the pores of air and water naturally present are squeezed out.

Consequently, soil oxygen levels fall dramatically, root activity is quickly diminished and can lead to visible stress symptoms such as stunted leaves, crown dieback and potential attack by pests and diseases due to weakened defences. Most issues, however, are present long before they are visible. This is where our Arborcheck system can be used to detect early signs of stress and dysfunction. (Please refer to the Tree Healthcare Services section)

THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

Significant changes in soil structure can quickly lead to reduced nutrient availability and the loss of beneficial mycorrhizal fungi, which help trees to find water and uptake nutrients. Natural decompaction of soil can take many years, and severely compacted soil may never recover naturally.

Compaction is the most prevalent cause of soil-related tree problems, and yet is easily overlooked and even more easily caused. In fact, a human walking across the ground exerts a similar pressure on a point of soil to a loaded 3-ton dumper truck! Occasionally, soil can withstand this, but it doesn't take much more to cause damage. When soil is wet, compaction occurs even more readily.



HEALTHY SOIL MEANS HEALTHY TREES

As well as effectively loosening compacted soil, the Vogt GeoTech Injector can also administer granular biostimulants such as phosphites, chitin and Biochar directly into the root system of the tree at the same time. This combined approach aims to kick-start long-term soil health by providing vital nutrients as well as habitat for beneficial fungi and soil bacteria to thrive sustainably in a newly created environment.

Carbon Gold enriched Biochar is charcoal used as a soil amendment. Biochar is a stable solid, rich in carbon, and can endure in soil for thousands of years. Like most charcoal, biochar is made from biomass

via pyrolysis. It is unique in that it is made from FSC® compliant, sustainably sourced, untreated woody biomass.

Every batch is subject to rigorous chemical analysis to meet International Biochar Institute standards, and the soil and substrate additives are certified for organic production by the UK's Soil Association, Skal and Demeter.

WHEN YOU CARE FOR TREES, THEY CARE FOR YOU

The results can usually be seen as early as the next growing season. Expect thicker, greener leaves, increased crown density and reduced incidence of pest attack due to a boosted defence system and improved air and nutrient availability. At the very

least, before and after tests with our Arborcheck system can show a tangible decrease in stress levels and an increase in photosynthetic efficiency.

Healthy trees capture more sunlight, uptake and lock away more carbon, capture more pollutants due to an increased leaf area and can reduce reactive maintenance costs in the long run, and most importantly, healthy trees can secure their own future and the many benefits they bring. Whether you have a single specimen tree which is looking sickly, or a large collection threatened by compaction, contact our experts today to discuss your requirements.

AIR SPADE INVESTIGATION

NON-INVASIVE ROOT INVESTIGATION

Down To Earth operate a professional Air Spade Investigation service. The Air Spade consists of a hand-held lance connected to a compressor, not too dissimilar to a pressure-washer but rather than water, the Air Spade fires a continuous jet of compressed air. This jet of air effectively removes soil whilst retaining tree roots relatively undamaged without causing significant damage to trees, allowing sensitive root pruning to take place prior to mechanical excavation within ground occupied by roots. Insensitive mechanical excavation within the rooting area of a tree can render it more liable to collapse or vulnerable to a rapid decline in overall health and condition due to the removal of numerous vital root systems.

THE AIR SPADE AND PLANNING PERMISSION

The Air Spade is useful for determining the presence or absence of roots within Root Protection Areas (RPAs), which is useful in the latter stages of BS5837 Surveys where a structure is proposed to be installed in the RPA of a retained tree.

Carrying out a trial excavation along the proposed foundation line with an Air Spade allows all significant tree roots to be retained, observed and evaluated, which helps us to draw a balanced conclusion on the likely impact of development on trees, and serves to inform of vital next steps, including mitigation measures.



GETTING TO THE ROOT OF IT

RPAs are only indicative, and in some cases trial excavations within RPAs have revealed no significant roots at all, allowing a development within the RPA to go ahead without worry since it has been proven that there will be no significant loss of roots. Of course, the opposite can occur and significant roots may be found, but once uncovered they can be individually evaluated and either worked around, or pruned as necessary under our guidance.



AIR SPADE INVESTIGATIONS FOR FUNGAL DISEASES

This service is usually specified by the surveyor when, in their opinion, a particular pathogen or disorder (such as previous mechanical damage) warrants a below-ground inspection. The Air Spade can be used to inspect the roots of a tree which are not normally visible. When other signs of defects such as fungal activity highlight a need to go below ground, the Air Spade can carefully remove soil around roots allowing us to get an insight into the problem and draw considered conclusions for future management.

INVASIVE WEED CONTROL

The invasive plants division of Down To Earth provides control and plant removal services throughout South East London and Kent. Our specialist contractors are Property Care Association (PCA) accredited, fully trained and hold all relevant certifications, utilising the most current control equipment and processes.

WHAT IS JAPANESE KNOTWEED?

Japanese Knotweed is a strong-growing, clump-forming perennial, with tall, dense annual stems. Stem growth is renewed each year from the stout, deeply penetrating rhizomes (creeping underground stems). Japanese Knotweed was introduced from Japan in 1825 as an ornamental plant. Its rapid annual growth and relentless spread allows it to easily overwhelm other garden plants. Where established as a wayside weed, native plants are also aggressively over-run.

LEGISLATION

Although it does not produce seeds, knotweed can sprout from very small sections of rhizomes and, under the provisions made within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to cause Japanese Knotweed to grow in the wild. Much of its spread is probably via topsoil movement or construction traffic. An amendment to the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 includes Japanese Knotweed and other invasive non-native plants.

CHEMICAL CONTROL

The most cost-effective method of controlling Japanese Knotweed is with a targeted application of strong herbicide over a period of time. Effective removal can be difficult, as even small parts of the plant's rhizome can harbour enough energy resource to rapidly develop into a new crop, and the use of retail weed killer is rarely effective as it can take several seasons to establish whether your efforts are successfully managing the plant.

Down To Earth provide a considered approach and bespoke project plan for each site, starting with the initial stage of positive identification through to the appropriate disposal of the dead plant. Using specialist stem-injection equipment, you will be able to notice an effect within two weeks of our initial application visit and, through periodic site monitoring, our goal is to have your Japanese Knotweed problem contained and controlled as soon as possible.

DO I HAVE JAPANESE KNOTWEED?

The best time to spot Japanese Knotweed is during mid-summer and early autumn. The key distinguishing features are the red speckled stems and reddish shoots with a zig-zag growth pattern. The large broad leaves have a distinctive flat base which is perpendicular to the petiole (leaf stem).

Japanese Knotweed identification is not always easy. If you are still unsure whether

you have some on your property, please send us a photograph for a free assessment, ideally including a close-up of some leaves if possible, to enquiries@dtetrees.co.uk. If you do have knotweed, then one of our consultants would be happy to help. In the meantime, avoid cutting or pulling up the plant where possible as it has a negligible effect on the plant and makes successful treatment more difficult.





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