

If you have any queries or you are aware of contractors that may be operating in an unscrupulous manner please contact the Tree Officer.

Useful contacts and references:

Contact the Tree Team by e-mail at trees@westberks.gov.uk or phone on **01635 551111** for Council owned trees and general queries.

Contact the Tree Officers for tree works applications, trees and planning applications and trees in Conservation Areas.

The Tree Officer for the Eastern Area is Jon Thomas

Contact Jon at jon.thomas@westberks.gov.uk or on Tel: **01635 519611** ext 2611

The Tree Officer for the Western Area is Andrew Giles

Contact Andrew at andrew.giles@westberks.gov.uk or on Tel: **01635 519349** ext 2349

West Berkshire Council

Environment

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If you require this information in an alternative format or translation, please call 01635 5191111

Environment

Selecting a tree work contractor



There are many terms used by companies offering tree works. The majority operating as 'Tree Surgeons', 'Arborists' or 'Arboriculturists'. All should be experienced to carry out works to a specification or advise on individual cases, many will provide written tree work specifications or surveys if required.

Before employing a contractor, check that the trees are not covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), Planning Condition or within a Conservation Area. If they are you will require written consent from the Tree Officer prior to carrying out any works, a reputable contractor will normally do this on your behalf if required although you must always check before allowing work to proceed.

Selecting a tree contractor

To ensure that you select well trained, experienced and competent Arborists to work on your trees the following should provide guidance to help you in your selection.

Step 1: A tree contractor should be:

- Insured which includes Public Liability & Employers Liability of at least £5 million pounds
- Qualified i.e. they hold National Proficiency Test Council (NPTC) certificates for chainsaw use, tree climbing or machine use. Including tree knowledge demonstrated by them having National Certificates, Diplomas, NVQ's or other qualifications
- A Member of a trade association or professional organisation such as the Arboricultural Association (AA) www.trees.org.uk or the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) www.isa-arboriculture.org
A list of approved tree contractors can be found from these websites
- Be able to provide a written quotation
- Tree contractor should be professional and presentable.

Step 2: Get a minimum of 3 quotes:

- Specific details of the tree works required e.g. 15-20% Thinning
- Details of works per tree
- If felling is required are they dismantling or clear felling
- Do you want dead wood from the tree removal or retained for wildlife
- Do you want the logs stacked on site or taken away
- Do you want the debris chipped and take away
- Are there any special requirements i.e. access restrictions or services to avoid
- Pre-book date for works so ask them when are they available to carry out the works
- Time proposed for the work i.e. how long will it take.



Is this sentence correct?

If in doubt do not select the contractor or ask the contractor for examples of recently completed work, reputable contractors have nothing to hide and should be pleased to answer any queries that you may have

Step 3: Get a minimum of 3 quotes:

- This allows you choice
- You get to select the contractors and avoid 'door knockers'
- It also provides a good way of checking for competitive pricing
- The lowest may not necessarily be the cheapest in the long term
- Always get a written quote
- A chance to meet the Contractors and judge if they are reputable and professional in appearance.

Step 4: What to look for in a quote:

- Look for references like BS3998: Recommendations for Tree Work.
- Quotes should have clear and full details of the work to be undertaken
- A plan should be provided of which trees and where they are located
- Check whether VAT is included
- Have they included to put in a Tree works application or Conservation Area notification otherwise who will be responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions?
- How are they proposing to dispose of the debris?
- Are there any additional charges to consider for example stump grinding?
- Is any special equipment proposed like a Mobile Elevated Work Platform (MEWP)?
- Avoid quotes with terms like "lopping and topping" as these are not standard arboricultural practices and the end result may be unsightly or even hazardous
- Copy of risk assessment or method statement to show what steps will be taken to protect you and your property.