Useful contacts

Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service (AAIS)
(A registered charity that carries out research and disseminates information to the arboricultural and forestry industries on behalf of the Government)
Alice Holt Lodge, Wrecclesham, Farnham, Surrey GU10 4LH
Tel: 01420 22022 Tree Helpline 09065 161147 (calls charged at £1.50 per minute).

Arboricultural Association
(A registered charity concerned with raising the standards of tree care in the UK)
Ullenwood Court, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucester GL53 9QS
Tel: 01242 522152 – Fax: 01242 577766
E-mail: admin@trees.org.uk
Website: www.trees.org.uk

Borough of Basingstoke and Deane (Contact Centre)
Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AH
Tel: (01256) 844844
Fax: (01256) 845200
Website: www.basingstoke.gov.uk

Borough of Basingstoke and Deane
Neighbourhood Development (Protected trees)
Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AH
Tel: (01256) 844844
Fax: (01256) 845200
Email: neighbourhood.dev@basingstoke.gov.uk
Website: www.basingstoke.gov.uk

Basingstoke and Deane

Guide to proper pruning

In many cases the best form of tree management is not to prune at all. Pruning disrupts the natural state of the tree and also creates opportunities for decay fungi to enter the tree.

Occasionally pruning may be required to correct structural problems in the crown of the tree, to prevent physical damage to adjacent buildings or to increase the headroom beneath the crown.

If you feel you must prune your tree, it is best to mimic nature. You should decide what you want to achieve first and only carry out work that will do this. Crown reduction (i.e. making a tree smaller in size by overall pruning) is generally a bad form of tree management, as it is very unnatural for the tree and often stimulates vigorous re-growth.

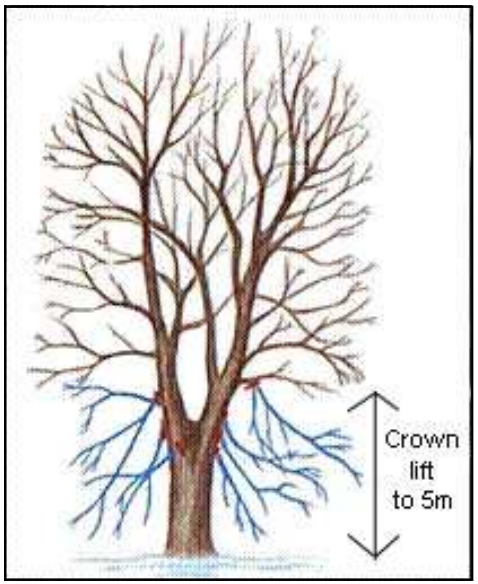
It is advisable to check with the council to find out whether the tree is protected i.e whether it is covered by a tree preservation order or stands in a conservation area. If the tree is protected you may need to make a formal application to the council before pruning. Contact details are on the back of this leaflet.

Branches to be removed shown in blue

Crown thinning

Crown thinning involves the removal of crossing, weak, duplicated branches and some secondary branch growth and has the effect of reducing density of the crown. The overall height and spread of the tree remains unchanged. Careful consideration is needed when considering whether or not to crown thin. This is because the growth within the canopy plays a vital role regulating water loss in dry weather and the over thinning of these branches can put the tree under additional stress. The amount of crown thinning is expressed as a percentage for example, crown thin by 10%.

Crown lifting



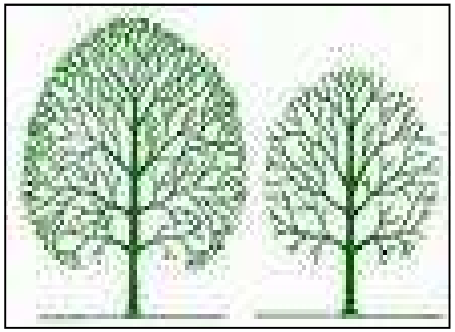
Branches to be removed shaded blue

Crown lifting involves the removal of lower branches to raise the base of the crown for example, to increase the headroom over a road or footway and is usually expressed in metres. This is achieved by removing all main and secondary branches below the desired clearance. For example, crown lifting a tree to 5 metres would give a clearance between the ground and the lowest branches of 5 metres.

Crown cleaning

This involves only removing dead, damaged or diseased branches.

Crown reduction

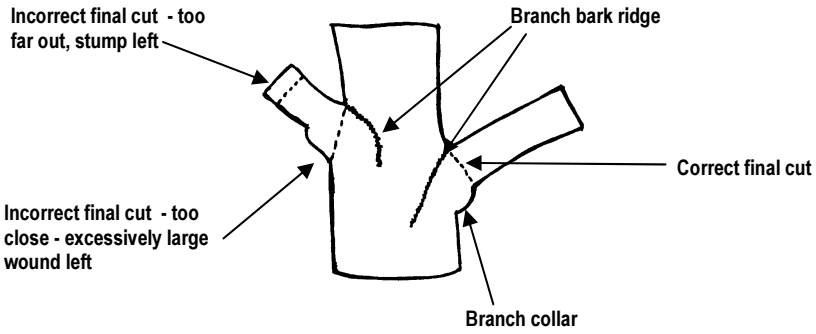


Crown reduction involves reducing the height and spread of a tree. This can apply to the whole crown or just a part of it where for example, it is touching a building or is close to overhead power lines. It is important to carry out the work carefully to ensure that branches are pruned back to growing points to help leave a flowing branch line to avoid leaving stubs. Some species such as Beech and Birch do not tolerate extensive pruning. The amount of crown reduction is normally expressed as a percentage of the average crown radius or height.

Pollarding

This is an old system of tree management that usually starts when the tree is young and involves pruning branches back to the same point on a regular cycle. The 'pollard heads' store energy to help the tree re-grow again. Once pollarded, a tree should be re-cut on a regular cycle to prevent the re-growth getting too heavy and breaking out. Some species such as Beech and Birch do not respond well to pollarding which can lead to their death.

Pruning cuts



If you are unsure about what work is needed or whether the tree(s) will tolerate it, you should obtain qualified arboricultural advice

TREES ARE OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT AND OUR FUTURE AND DESERVE OUR CARE AND RESPECT