

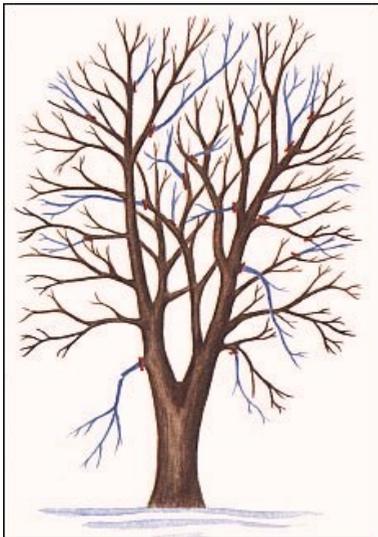


Basingstoke and Deane

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. The number of pruning cuts should be kept to a minimum and as small as possible. 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, you are advised to seek the advice of an arborist. It is also advisable to check with the council whether the tree that you wish to prune is protected, in other words whether it is subject to a tree preservation order or is growing in a conservation area. If the tree is protected you may need to make a formal application to the council before carrying out any work. Contact details can be found on the back of this leaflet.

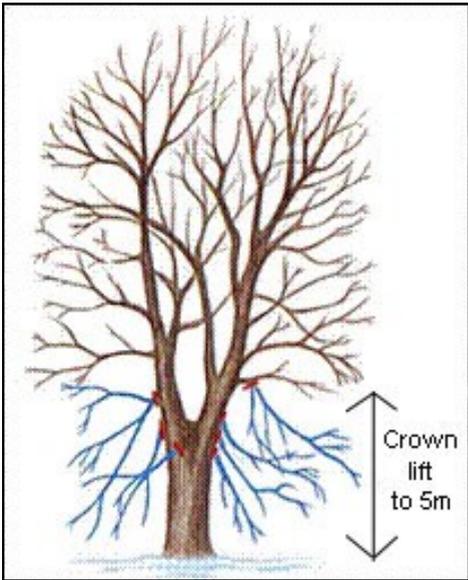


Crown thinning

Crown thinning can be used to reduce the overall density of the crown. It is important that this is carried out carefully to leave an even density of foliage with a well-spaced and balanced branch structure. The percentage of the leaf bearing structure to be removed should be kept to a minimum and should not exceed 30%. Crown thinning is not the most suitable method to reduce the overall loading on a defective branch since it does not reduce the leverage and can sometimes increase the probability of branch failure. It should be borne in mind that crown thinning is rarely a one off operation, repeat pruning might be necessary on species that produce epicormic (secondary) shoots.

Branches to be removed shown in blue

Crown lifting

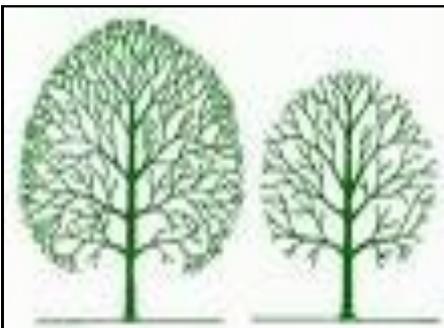


Branches to be removed shaded blue

Crown lifting involves pruning to achieve a desired vertical clearance above the ground. Crown lifting is expressed as the desired clearance (e.g. crown lift to 5m). Extensive crown lifting should be phased over a number of years to enable the tree to adapt to the wounding and branch removal. Crown lifting should be avoided in mature or old trees whenever possible because it can increase the probability of stem failure. As a guide, crown lifting should not exceed a third of the height of the tree.

Crown cleaning - This involves only removing dead, damaged or diseased branches.

Crown Reduction

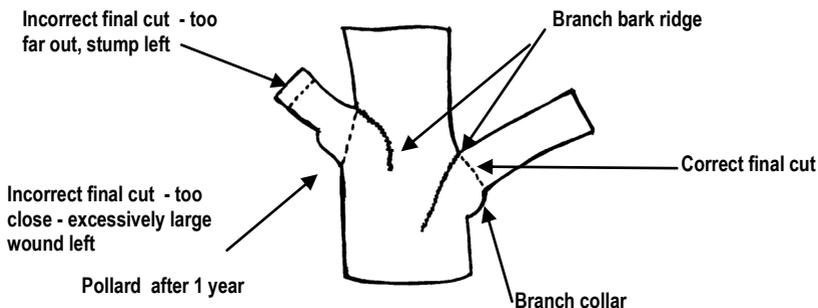


Crown reduction can alleviate biomechanical stress by reducing both the leverage and the sail area (crown) of the tree which can create a desired appearance or to make the tree more suited to its surroundings. The general principle is that following reduction, there should still be a strong framework of healthy, small-diameter branches and twigs (leaf-bearing structure) to maintain the vitality of the tree. In addition to reducing the height and spread of the tree, crown reduction can apply to just a portion of the crown, for example, to create a more balanced appearance. Some species, such as beech or silver birch are not appropriate candidates for crown reduction and re-shaping. The specified end result can be stated either as the tree height and branch spread which are to remain (e.g. reduce the crown to 10m in height and 7m in spread) or the average equivalent of branch length to be removed (e.g. reduce the branches by 2m). End results can also be specified for individual branches if the growth pattern of the tree creates a need for this. Where clearance from a specific object of another tree is required, the desired clearance between the tree and the object should be stated (e.g. reduce the branches to give a 2m clearance from the roof of the house).

Formative pruning

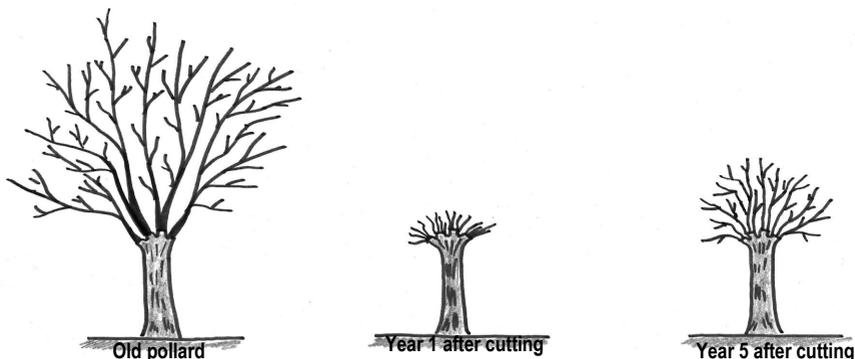
Formative Pruning is normally restricted to young trees where the objective is to prune out any potential weaknesses to improve the long-term structure and viability of the tree. Where extensive pruning is required, this should be carried out in stages to avoid removing too much leaf cover in one go. None of the selected branches to be removed should exceed 20mm in diameter at the point of attachment. At least two thirds of the height of the tree should always consist of live crown.

Pruning cuts



Pollarding and coppicing

Pollarding 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. Coppicing is where the tree is cut down to leave just a stump and allowing it to re-grow. Similarly, coppiced stools should be re-cut on a regular cycle.



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

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

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: 01483 326200

E-mail: southeast.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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)

The Malthouse, Stroud Green, Standish, Gloucester GL10 3DL

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

Community Services

Natural Environment Team (Trees)

Civic Offices, London Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 4AH

Tel: (01256) 844844

Fax: (01256) 845200

Email: communityservices@basingstoke.gov.uk

Website: www.basingstoke.gov.uk