

rowse tree services



SPRING NEWSLETTER 2012

Issue 8

Pruning is the selective removal of parts of a tree or shrub to remove dead, dying, non-productive stems, maintaining and improving health, reducing risk from falling branches or to form an improved shape or structure.

News:

We have carried out some work at Paignton Zoo felling a diseased Ash near the Tiger enclosure.



Pollarding: a form of pruning where deciduous trees are cut to a pollard head on a regular basis. This is usually started while the tree is young and forms a knuckle which the stems are pruned back to.

Pine Pruning/Niwaki: Japanese style pruning based on an idealized tree form. This may be carried out gradually over a number of years. Branches can be trained out in a similar manner as we do fruit trees, for example, as a “welcome branch” over an entrance.

Types of pruning:

Removal of dead wood: normally only necessary where it is a potential hazard, for example, over roads, paths and buildings. Dead wood is an important habitat for birds and insects and should be kept where possible.

Formative pruning: to remove potentially weak forks and promote a sound structure for future growth.

Crown and canopy thinning: to increase light and reduce wind resistance by selective branch removal within the crown.

Crown lifting: removal of lower branches to a given height for access and aesthetics.

Vista pruning: removal of branches to allow a view through or round the tree.

Crown reduction: reducing height and spread by cutting to a suitable size second or third order branch leaving a crown that is smaller in size and a natural form.



Before



During



After

Pruning

When making a cut look for the branch collar and prune to that. This is because the tree/shrub will form a barrier at this point where as if it is cut flush to the stem it will lead to decay.



Flush cut that has led to decay in a Lime.

Correct pruning position. Branch collar.

It is advisable to reduce the length of the branch before making the final cut to prevent bark ripping down the stem. "Topping" or indiscriminate cutting back to reduce the size of a tree can in the long term make the tree more of a hazard. Removing more than a third of the crown may lead to stress if it cannot gather and process enough sunlight. A large cut to the top of a tree will leave a wound that the tree may not be able to

close and decay organisms can move freely down the stem. A tree that has been topped will not regain its natural form.



This tree will quickly grow a lot of new shoots. The large wounds at the ends of the branch can allow decay organisms in. The latest British Standard recommends that cuts should be kept as small and as few as possible. As a general rule when a branch is cut it should be cut back to a lateral and the wound should be no bigger than one third of the diameter of the branch.

Wound treatments:

Generally exposed wood should be left untreated. Research has shown that dressings do not reduce decay or speed closure and rarely prevent insect or disease infestations.

Timing of pruning:

Avoid pruning during leaf formation in deciduous trees (spring) when energy will be used in forming leaves and bud breaking. Avoid during leaf fall (autumn) for similar reasons.

Once leaves have formed trees can be pruned until autumn colour shows and then after the leaves have fallen.

Next Issue:

Trees and drought .