

Professional Tree Survey



Course Objectives:

At the end of the course, candidates will be able to:

- Recognise the role of the tree inspector in risk management.
- Identify the legal framework in the context of statute and common law that affect tree inspection and the duties and liabilities of the owner, manager and inspector.
- Summarise how a tree system functions, what constitutes a safe tree and know that energy is required to keep the tree in a healthy/safe state.
- Adopt a systematic and consistent methodology for carrying out visual tree inspection at an advanced level with the aid of binoculars, mallet and probe.
- Collect data out in the field in accordance with the inspection instructions (having determined the scope and limitations) using a suitable format. (For this course a written survey template with appropriate headings will be used).
- Recognise a range of observable mechanical and biological defects as seen in trees and confirm by the use of textbooks where necessary.
- Identify a range of commonly seen pests, diseases and disorders that affect tree safety, confirm their identity by the use of textbooks, where necessary, and state the arboricultural significance of finding them in the field.
- State the appropriate control/remedial measures required to eliminate or reduce risks identified in the inspection process to an acceptable level. Determine when an aerial inspection is required, also if pro-active management recommendations can be made which may eliminate future defects from forming.
- Prioritise the necessary tree/management works with time scales based on a broad category of risk assessment.
- Identify when it is appropriate to recommend the use of decay detecting or measuring equipment, based on a basic knowledge of the working principles of commonly available equipment.
- Understand that a balance between the remedial measure opted for and the range of benefits/values that a tree may have requires special attention e.g. amenity, wildlife, historical, veteran, rarity and public access.

The above objectives will be assessed during the course, either by written test, practical demonstration or oral questioning.

Who is the course designed for?

Prospective trainees should be experienced and qualified arboriculturists with an in-depth knowledge of plant and arboricultural science, including a thorough knowledge of wood-decaying fungi, identification and interpretation of signs and symptoms of ill health and structural failure across a wide range of tree species and circumstances. They should be thoroughly experienced in carrying out tree inspection and survey.

Course Aims:

This course aims to provide specific tree inspection training at an advanced level for competent arboriculturists to enable them to identify defects from ground level, from a climbed inspection or inspection aided by the use of a Mobile Elevated Working Platform (MEWP)*. The course provides training in how to specify the necessary remedial works and record the inspection process. This would then form a part of a defensible system. At the end of the course candidates will undertake a competence based assessment directly related to tree inspection. The course is not aimed at covering report writing; however, presentation of findings will be examined and advice given.
*Tree climbing and use of MEWP will not be required during the course

Pre-requisites: A minimum arboricultural qualification at level three or equivalent, plus five years' experience in carrying out tree survey and inspection, is expected.

Duration: 3 days

Instructor/Trainee Ratio: Max 1:12 - Min 1:2

- Course Content:**
- Introduction
 - The legal framework
 - The tree:
 - As a dynamic living system
 - An undamaged, self-optimized structure
 - The law of the minimal lever arm and strategy of flexibility
 - Visual Tree Assessment (VTA)
 - Principle fungal decay organisms
 - Mechanical symptoms of defects
 - Tree inspection equipment
 - Making and writing management recommendations
 - Practical exercises
 - Workshop sessions
 - Hazard evaluation
 - VTA tree walk
 - Introduction to decay detection and measuring equipment
 - Assessment
 - Final round up

Equipment & Facilities:

Trainees:

Trainees should bring with them outdoor clothing, including a 'Hi-viz' jacket or waistcoat, as there will be a number of practical tree inspection exercises over the three days. They should also bring any other equipment that they would normally use during tree inspection / survey, e.g:

- Clipboard
- Pro-forma record sheets
- Binoculars
- Mallet and probe
- Diameter tape
- Height measuring device (Hypsometer, clinometer, etc)

Trainees are expected to bring the following 'key books' to the course:

- Lonsdale, D. (1999). Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management, Research for Amenity Trees No, 7, Stationery Office, London.
- Mattheck, C. & Breloer, H. (1994). The Body Language of Trees, Research for Amenity Trees No, 4, Stationery Office, London.
- Strouts, R.G. & Winter, T.G. (1994). Diagnosis of Ill Health in Trees, Research for Amenity Trees No, 2, Stationery Office, London.

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Equipment & Facilities:

- Davis, C., Fay, N & Mynors, C. (2000). Veteran Trees: a guide to risk and responsibility. English Nature, Peterborough.
- Shigo, A.L. (1991). Modern Arboriculture. Shigo & Tree Associates, Durham, NH, USA.
- Weber, K., & Mattheck, C. (2003). Manual of Wood Decay in Trees, The Arboricultural Association.
- Recommendations for Tree Work. BS 3998. (1989 with 1990 amendment) British Standards Institute, London.
- Tree identification book(s)
- 9. Fungi identification book(s)

Venue:

- Classroom facilities with space and seating for up to 13, with light, heating and power, toilet facilities, tea and coffee provision.
- Flipchart / whiteboard (for newsprint, flipcharts etc plus pens)
- Power point projector and screen

Outside:

- A wide selection of trees with a variety of identifiable signs and symptoms to use in exercises in tree inspection and 'VTA (Visual Tree Assessment) tree walk'.
- An additional, separate selection of trees must be available for the assessment.