

Tree Care

Guide to Proper Pruning

The best form of tree management is not to prune at all. 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 a Tree specialist. 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. If you think your tree is subject to a Tree Preservation Order then please contact your Local Planning Authority.

Crown Thinning & Crown Cleaning

Removing a percentage of smaller branches from within the crown

This needs to be carried out carefully to leave a canopy of foliage with a well-spaced and balanced branch structure. The percentage of foliage to be removed should not exceed 30%.

Thinning also exposes previously sheltered branches to the wind which can increase the risk of branches snapping.



Branches to be removed shaded green

Crown Cleaning involves only removing dead, damaged or diseased branches.

Crown Lifting

Removal of branches below a specified height

Crown lifting is carried out frequently to allow pedestrian or vehicle access on paths and roads. A tree will have its branches removed up to 3 metres by a path or 5 metres beside a road.

As a guide, crown lifting should not exceed a third of the height of the tree. Crown lifting should be phased over a number of years to cause as little distress as possible to the tree.



Branches to be removed shaded green

Crown Lift to 5m

Crown Reduction

Reduction of overall height and/or spread of tree

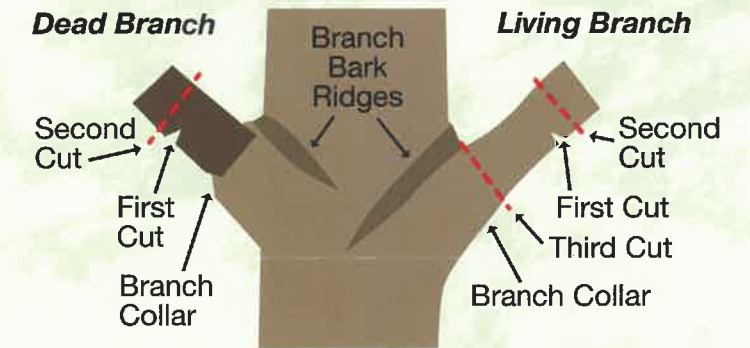
Crown reduction is necessary where clearance from a specific object i.e. building, street light, CCTV camera, telephone or power cable or another tree is required. Following Crown reduction, there should still be a strong framework of healthy, small diameter branches and twigs to maintain the vitality of the tree.



Branches to be removed shaded green

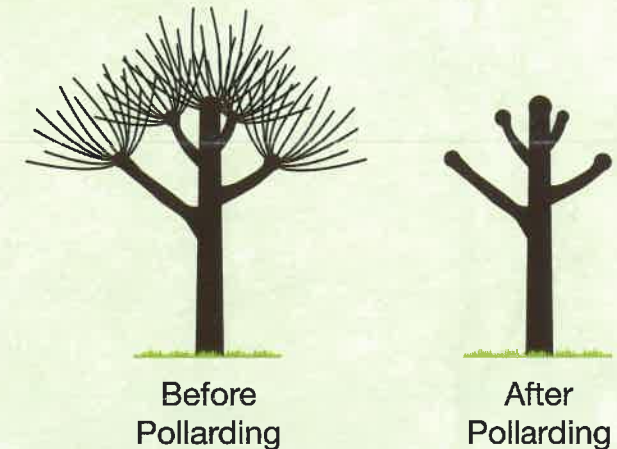
Formative Pruning

Formative Pruning tends to be restricted to young trees 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. At least two thirds of the height of the tree should always consist of live crown.



Pollarding and Coppicing

Pollarding is a traditional form of tree management that usually starts when the tree is young and involves pruning branches back to the same point on a regular cycle to prevent the regrowth getting too heavy and breaking out. Pollarding is often used for maintaining street trees that may overgrow their location.



Before Pollarding

After Pollarding

Coppicing is where the tree is cut down to leave just a stump to encourage the development of multiple stems. This technique is mainly used for broad leaved trees such as hornbeam, hazel, willow, lime and oak.

If in doubt contact a qualified Tree Surgeon for advice.