

Chequers Advice for Basic Residential Tree Maintenance



Trees bring so much to a garden, including shade, fruit, autumn colour, fragrance, flowers, height and many environmental benefits. However, it is really important trees are maintained correctly to keep them in check and to prevent more major works being required down the line.

If in doubt, please do seek professional advice from a NPTC qualified tree surgeon or contact Chequers on grounds@chequerscontracts.co.uk who would be happy to advise you on any works required.

This information is intended for general use only, for trees out with a Conservation Area and without a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Trees come in many different varieties and the type of tree determines when to carry out works. As a general rule:

- If your tree is deciduous (meaning it loses its leaves in the winter), it is best pruned in autumn or winter. Exceptions are with trees such as Magnolias and Walnuts which are best done late summer.
- Evergreen trees (meaning it doesn't lose its leaves) do not need a lot of pruning but damaged or dead branches to be removed later in summer. If the height needs reducing, you should contact a qualified tree surgeon.

General Routine Maintenance

Feeding

We recommend you feed trees annually from their second year. You can use tree fertiliser; spread the a general-purpose feed around the base of the tree.

Weeding

It is beneficial to trees to ensure the base is weed free. If possible, cut a tree circle around the tree and keep this free of grass and weeds. You can always plant some bulbs in this area for example snow drops or daffodils which will look colourful in early Spring.

Ties and stakes

If your tree has a tie or stake, please check it is not too tight and if it is, loosen it. If the stake or tie is no longer required, then it should be removed.

Overcrowded branches

Remove these branches in winter using a sharp pruning saw or loppers, particularly the branches which are crossing over each other. It is important to check that the tree is not in a Conservation Area or has a TPO in place ahead of these types of works. You can find this out by asking your local council or asking a qualified tree team to find out for you.

Branches growing from the base of the tree

These are called epicormic growth. These should be cut off in the winter months. If you have a log burner you can dry these and use them next year!

Where to obtain further advice?

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=233>