



Tree Frontiers News

A newsletter that helps keep you abreast of interesting facts and information from the world of arboriculture and related industries

As we write this month's newsletter, we can see the first signs of spring outside our window, a welcome sight after the recent dark, wet days. Hopefully, all your trees survived the battering that Storm Eowyn wrought across the country – there were certainly a few that came down around Oxfordshire. While a long way from us, it is sad to see that the [Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh](#) were hit particularly hard, losing over 50 trees of valuable species.

In light of this, we draw your attention to the subject of Duty of Care. Landowners have a legal duty of care to prevent reasonably foreseeable risks of injury to people or property - this includes trees. If you own land with trees that are within falling distance of the above, and have recently experienced storm damage, or have concerns about your tree stock, we would recommend reading the [National Tree Safety Group \(NTSG\) Guidance](#) and seeking professional help where it is required.

Separate from tree risk management, a key talking point across the environmental sectors, and something that has had much social media attention, is Rachel Reeves' recent announcement that developers need not worry about 'bats and newts' causing delays to planning applications. While this statement was taken out of context, it is contrary to recent regulations and the need for greater biodiversity and habitat protection for development proposals. It will be interesting to see how the housing crisis is addressed with the need for consideration of all environmental factors.

This also comes at a time of a shake-up of local councils in England, which could see independent councils merged into unitary authorities. Our initial concerns are that where LPAs are already cutting tree budgets and tree officer posts, this is only going to be exacerbated, and could lead to staffing reductions in an already stretched profession. Hopefully, we will be proven wrong.

On a lighter note, this is the time of year to enjoy your trees as you see the first signs of new growth start to emerge. The buds which have been lying dormant all winter will soon start to swell, before they burst into leaf over the next few weeks. Fingers crossed we don't get too many more sharp frosts before that happens!



Royal residences now home to 'extinct' trees

The Wentworth Elm was thought to have been extinct in England nearly 30 years ago. However trees grown from saplings found during a tree survey in 2016 have been successfully grown in the grounds of two royal residences, with a hope to reintroduce them nationwide.

[Read more](#)

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Handbook of UK Urban Tree Allometric Equations and Size Characteristics

Version 1.4, December 2024

Joe Fennell and Luke Fay

Handbook of UK Urban Tree Allometric

Equations and Size Characteristics published

We are thrilled to share the Handbook of UK Urban Tree Allometric Equations and Size Characteristics report from ResearchGate. The document has been prepared by Treework Environmental Practice and Joe Fennell. This document provides Excel functions for calculating allometric relationships between Stem Diameter, Height and Crown Spread by species and genus, and will be a tremendous support with 2D and 3D growth modelling of trees, including canopy cover.

We helped provide measured tree survey data, alongside many

other arboricultural practices, which has been utilised as part of the document. The handbook can be downloaded by following the link below.

Download the Handbook



It's possible to build 1.5m homes without damaging the environment

During a recent session with the Environmental Audit Committee, Ed Lockhart of Future Homes Hub emphasised that 'it's absolutely possible' to build at that scale without damaging the environment, but home builders will need a clear plan and timescales so that the supply chain can bring forward the right products and the right skills are available.

[Read more](#)



Court of Appeal reinforces Natural England's powers

Natural England, the body charged with preserving England's green and pleasant land, has been granted a permanent injunction against a tenant farmer to seek relief to protect an area of archaeological interest.

The case centres on 30 hectares of land in Devon, owned by the National Trust and tenanted to a farmer. The land holds historically important archaeological value and became the subject of legal proceedings when the farmer ploughed and cultivated the land without obtaining consent from Natural England.

Following a High Court interim injunction, the Court of Appeal has reviewed Natural England's power, permitting them to "do anything which is reasonably incidental to its express powers" to protect England's land.

[Read more](#)



Sandi's Great British Woodland Restoration

The UK's ancient woodlands are at risk of extinction. Sandi Toksvig and her wife bid to save and restore a wooded patch using wit and a chainsaw in this eye-opening series.

Watch this fascinating series using the link below.

All Episodes



Biodiversity Net Gain For Small Sites

A report published by CIEEM in January 2025 summarises responses to a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for small sites in England survey.

This report shows that there is a strong body of evidence that should convince Defra and Natural England to consider reform of the BNG for small sites approach, and that a collaborative approach to designing those changes, involving all key stakeholders including the ecological practitioners charged with applying the scheme, will deliver the best and most effective outcomes.

[Read more](#)



National Trust planting 800 football pitches worth of woodlands over winter

This winter, the National Trust and England's Community Forests are working in partnership to create around 519 hectares (1,282 acres) of new woodlands and woody habitats across England, equivalent in size to more than 800 football pitches

By the end of March, almost 416,000 trees will have been planted to establish new woodlands, wood pasture, hedgerows and orchards. These woody habitats will help mitigate climate change, provide homes for nature and accessible woods close to towns and cities for people and communities to enjoy.

[Read more](#)

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The majority of the Oxpens site is currently wasteland next to the train line and the Oxpens meadow.

Planning committee approves plans for Oxpens

Oxford City Council have voted in favour of plans for the redevelopment of land lying between Oxpens Road and the railway line in central Oxford. This important development proposes to bring major regeneration to this previously disused brownfield site, incorporating new homes, commercial space and outdoor public areas.

We assisted this project from feasibility to design and reports to accompany the planning submission.

[Read more](#)



Case Study - Educational Development in Bloxham

Tree Frontiers were part of a wider team involved in the redevelopment of Bloxham School's Dewey Sports Centre. Planning permission has recently been granted for the extension of the existing building, as well as the addition of new tennis/netball courts, floodlighting and parking. Read about how our input aided the plans as they were developed.

Read the full Case Study



Tree of the month

This month we are celebrating a 'tree of life', a majestic evergreen conifer which can live for over a thousand years!

When the foliage is crushed, it emits a sweet smell of pineapple or peardrops.... Find out more below.

What Tree?



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