

# Tree Planting and Establishment

Planting a tree and helping it survive to make a contribution in the landscape, to grow to maturity and benefit the environment.

# Planting

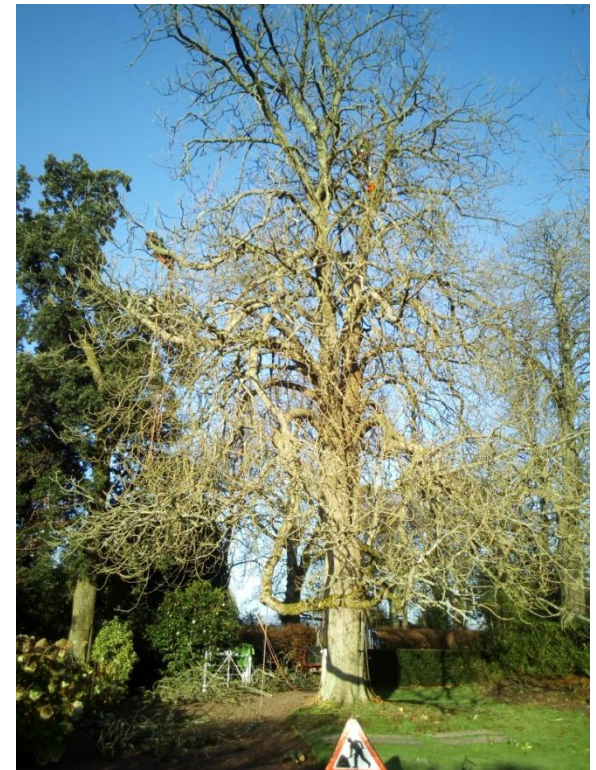
Choosing a planting site:

- Soil pH – will it support your choice of tree – ie an *Acer japonicum* will not thrive in limey soil. Look at trees growing around you.
- Compaction - what has happened to the soil previously to being a garden. Is there compaction – if there is it will be necessary to fork over as widely and deeply as possible and use mulch.

- Soil structure – is the soil free draining or water retentive.
- In west hill there are generally free draining acid sandy and loamy soils with clayey soils to the west and less acid towards Metcombe.
- Soilscales  
<http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales/>

# How big do you want your tree to grow?

- Ribbonwood - ult. ht. 4 – 8m
- horse chestnut – ult. ht. up to 25m



# Flowers

- Cherry blossom in Japan



- *Eucryphia x nymansensis*  
'Nymansay'





# Autumn colour

- *Acer palmatum* sp.
- Pleached hornbeams



# Form

- Fastigate – *Cupressus sempervirens*



- Spreading – *Cedrus libani*



# Bark

- *Platanus orientalis*
- Birch spp.



# Fruit

- Pear

- Walnut

# Screening

- Pruned conifers in Japan



- Yew hedge



# Planting position

- Having chosen your tree and researched the ultimate height, spread and soil preference of the species it is time to choose the planting position in the garden.
- Does it need the shade of other trees or full light?
- Are there utility services above or below ground that could be a problem?

# Choosing your tree

- Bare root or container grown? Bare root are generally cheaper but need to be planted in the dormant season.
- Is the tree in good health and free of pests and diseases – check for leaf blotches, aphids etc.
- Is the stem straight and tied parallel to the cane with only a slight bend at the graft union, if present?
- Look at the root ball is there new root growth and well rooted into the compost without being root bound.
- The tree should be labelled ideally with common name, Latin name and supplier details but must have identification.
- The HTA recommends 3 to 4 branch breaks evenly spaced around the stem.
- To conform to BS3936-1:1992 there are various criteria which the tree should fulfil, however, many trees are not grown to these standards as most garden centres want trees that can fit into customers cars.



# Planting pit

- BS8545 Trees from nursery to independence in the landscape is the manual for tree planting that should be referred to by all professionals dealing with tree planting, along with the Horticultural Trades Association guidance on plant handling and storage.
- The BS standard recommends that the planting hole should be 75mm larger than the rootspread and no deeper than necessary.
- The existing soil (sub soil and top soil separated and put back in the same order) should be used to plant the tree with as little other intervention as possible, ie no fertilizer.
- The tree must be planted so that the root collar is at the same level as the ground.
- Watering – the tree should be watered to field capacity.

# Support/Staking

- Newly planted trees should only be staked if necessary so that the rootball does not move in the wind. The stake should be low down to allow for secondary thickening of the trunk and it is ideally placed at an angle so that it doesn't go through the rootball.



# Mulching

- Newly planted trees should be mulched with woodchip to a depth of 8 to 10cm but kept away from the trunk as it can retain moisture which may encourage disease. Apply from the drip line to nearly to the trunk.
- Minimises fluctuations in temperature and moisture
- Suppresses weeds
- Soil nutrient enrichment
- Prevention of soil erosion in heavy rain
- Increased soil microbial activity
- Mitigates compaction improving aeration of the soil

# Formative pruning

- Formative pruning is going to save you money in the future. A well pruned tree will grow into a strong, resilient tree because there will be fewer poor, weak forks that are liable to break in high winds; fewer large wounds from tree surgery due to lack of pruning which results, for example, in low branches over pavements and roads.



# Aftercare:

- Check stake and tie – this may be removed after the first growing season so long as the rootball is steady in the ground, if not, then the tie should be checked that it is not digging into the stem.
- Watering – trees should be kept well watered for the first couple of years after planting in dry weather but NOT waterlogged. Frequency is more important than quantity.