

Survey and inspect the condition of trees

Overview

This standard is about surveying and inspecting the condition of trees.

You will prepare for, carry out and report on both surveys and inspections. Survey and inspection may, however, take place together depending on the job specification. You may also be working to external standards.

NOTE: the use of invasive and semi-invasive techniques to investigate the condition of trees must only be used to confirm the diagnosis that the tree is to be felled.

Your work must conform to all relevant legislation and codes of practice when carrying out this work.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. assess the risks associated with the site and the proposed work
2. select and use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the work
3. agree the access arrangements for surveying or inspection work with the relevant people
4. correctly identify each of the trees to be surveyed or inspected
5. confirm the species and the position of the trees that are to be surveyed or inspected
6. plot trees in relation to fixed features of the site
7. select and use appropriate techniques and equipment to assess and evaluate the condition of trees
8. collect data about the tree, appropriate to the job specification
9. assess and record the condition and age class of trees, in line with the specification
10. collect data relating to the tree dimensions, appropriate to the requirements of the specification
11. collect data relating to the physical and physiological condition of the tree(s), appropriate to the specification
12. record and present information in a manner appropriate to the client requirements and data retrieval systems
13. make recommendations on the priorities for action based upon your assessment
14. minimise the impact of your survey or inspection on the health of the tree and the environment
15. maintain suitable records of your survey or inspection and recommendations
16. maintain the health and safety of yourself and others at all times, in accordance with relevant legislation

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. how to identify hazards and assess risks
2. how to interpret risk assessments
3. the selection, use and care of personal protective equipment (PPE)
4. how to agree access arrangements and why this is essential
5. how to use maps, plans, GPS systems and fixed features to locate and plot trees
6. how to identify tree genera and species and the implications of age classes
7. how to identify pests and diseases that affect trees and their implications
8. how to interpret survey and inspection specifications
9. how to present data to produce cogent reports that form the basis for further action
10. the process of “visual tree assessment” to inspect trees, the recording of pertinent data and the limitations of this methods
11. the stages in surveying and inspecting trees
12. the techniques and equipment used when surveying and inspecting trees
13. how to measure and record tree dimensions in line with the job specification
14. how to assess and record the physical (structure and vitality) condition of trees, in order to assist in decision-making and the production of management plans
15. how and when invasive and semi-invasive methods can be used as an aid to decision-making during the inspection process, and the implications of using these methods
16. how to analyse data generated by tree monitoring equipment such as decay detections and height measures
17. how to make recommendations for action which are based on, and supported by, your assessment
18. how to ensure that your work does not adversely affect the health of the tree
19. how to prioritise surveys and inspections based on target areas, risk to persons and property, and the age and type of tree
20. your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation and codes of practice

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Scope/range

Survey:

- single trees
- groups of trees

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**Scope/range related
to knowledge and
understanding**

Tree dimensions:

- height
- girth
- crown spread

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Glossary

Survey: recording (and where appropriate mapping) the presence and position of trees (species and individuals) within a defined area

Inspection: checking and recording the health, condition and status of trees and making recommendations for arboriculture care of these trees

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