

Advice about hiring an arborist (tree surgeon)

The national Arboricultural Association (AA) 'Approved Contractors' scheme ensures companies have undergone routine testing and accreditation to meet exacting industry standards. Alternatively, you can use directories such as Yellow Pages or Thompson Directory to find companies; however, be aware of these basic points:

- Professional tree-surgeons do not knock on doors to get business or offer all sorts of other garden & maintenance work as well as trees!
- Professional traders do not ask for cash-in-hand payment!
- Business cards should have full contact details including a name (personal or company), a full postal and email address & telephone number - not just a mobile phone number!.
- Always try to get at least two quotes from separate companies.
- Take a photograph of your tree/s before the work and after, just in case you have to judge it against the agreed specification.
- Always be at home when the work is being done.
- Do not part with any money until you judge the work to be completed.

Unless you choose an AA 'Approved Contractor'; ask them the following:

Are they insured? - Ask to see evidence of current insurance such as Public Liability & Employers Liability

Will they provide a written specification of work with a quotation? - If 'No', we advise that you reject this contractor.

What qualifications do they or their staff have? – they should state that they have 'NPTC – Chainsaw use' (the minimum compulsory qualification of training)

What standards do they work to? – They should make reference to 'British Standard 3998'

Will they provide you with an address/phone number of a previous client who can vouch for their work? - If yes, make that call and view the work.

Before deciding, make sure the written quote contains:

- References to BS 3998: 'Recommendations for Tree Work'.
- Full and clear details (in language you understand) of the work to be undertaken.
- An explanation of who disposes of the debris and how?
- Information on who will be responsible for obtaining permission from the Council if the trees are protected?
- A statement of what steps will be taken to protect you and your property during the works?

Parks & Countryside

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES Bracknell Forest Council, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD

T: 01344 352000, e-mail: tree.service@bracknell-forest.gov.uk