



Press Release
For Immediate Release
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TEND AND GROW OUR TREES TOGETHER

The Tree Council launches annual Tree Care Campaign on 21st March

Spring is in the air, the sap is rising and The Tree Council is taking the opportunity to remind people across the UK that the trees they love and cherish need some TLC. The annual Tree Care Campaign runs from the 21st of March to the 21st of September and supports communities to improve their neighbourhoods through joining or organising tree care activities.

This year's campaign theme, 'Grow Together', aims to encourage social cohesion through tree care related activities, inviting everyone to organise their own events, involving friends and neighbours, promoting the importance of tree care while also proving that everyone has the ability to make a difference.

More than 90% of the population lives in towns and cities* so the trees are our neighbours as much as other people in our communities. We are used to enjoying trees in gardens and in parks but without proper care and protection, their survival can be at risk. The Tree Care Campaign aims to remind everyone that there are trees close to where they live, work or spend their free time and encourage communities to think local to improve their neighbourhoods for both people and trees.

Simple tree care tasks, such as clearing weeds, mulching and checking ties can save young trees from dying and allow them to develop into mature trees that enhance our urban and rural landscape, provide shade, support biodiversity and even help combat climate change.

"It's not just young or recently planted trees that need our help. If you have a tree that is starting to get old, you can boost its health by giving it a good thick mulch of about four to six inches deep. Spread it about a metre beyond the canopy if you can. It will add nutrients to the soil and improve the root condition." said Pauline Buchanan Black, Director-General of The Tree Council. "Mulch will also trap all the winter rain, stop weed germination and give your tree a good start to the growing season. If you know any poorly trees, or even healthy ones, go and give them some TLC now."

The Tree Council has free resources to help individuals and communities care for and celebrate their local trees during the Tree Care Campaign, available to download from the [charity's website](#). Everyone also has the opportunity to [list](#) their own events or find activities to take part in. **No-one should attempt tree care activities without the express permission of the tree owner.**

*2010 Defra statistics <http://bit.ly/1qgYMMG>

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. For **further information**, please contact (press enquiries only)

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Visit The Tree Council's website, <http://www.treecouncil.org.uk/> for details on each of the community action programmes. Event information is also available from the Tree Council info line, 020 7940 8180 (office hours)

2. Mulch

A good layer of mulch will keep weed levels down, reducing competition for water and nutrients; retain soil moisture - a layer of mulch helps to keep the soil moist, reducing the need for additional watering later in the year; protect the soil around the tree from the elements - rainfall can wash away soil from around a tree, whilst the sun can bake the ground dry; improve the soil – as the mulch decomposes it provides extra nutrients and organic matter to the soil; maintain an even temperature – warms the soil in spring and protects the soil from heating up in the sun in summer keeps away the grass cutting machines – if there is no grass at the base of the tree, there is no reason to use mowers or strimmers to cut it, ensuring that the tree is not damaged by mistake.

To be effective, biodegradable mulches should be between 5cm and 8cm thick and should be at least a metre circumference around the tree. Pull up any existing weeds before applying the mulch layer. Note – it is important not to apply mulch directly around the trunk of the tree as this can encourage rot. Too much mulch - a layer greater than 8cm - can generate heat as it decomposes, which can damage the tree. If a deep layer of mulch is too close to the base of a tree, then the increased moisture levels can also cause the base of the tree to rot. Therefore create a lower layer of mulch (less than 2 cm) immediately around the base of the tree.

3. The Tree Council

Environmental charity The Tree Council is the UK's lead charity for trees in all settings, urban and rural, promoting their importance in a changing environment and it works in partnership with communities, organisations and government to make trees matter to everyone. As the coalition body for over 180 organisations working together for trees, it focuses on getting more trees, of the right kind, in the right places; better care for all trees of all ages and inspiring effective action for trees.

It works with its national volunteer Tree Warden Scheme and member organisations to engage people in biodiversity and environmental issues and to promote planting and conservation of trees and woods in town and country. A major part of this is achieved through its annual Community Action Programme that includes Walk in the Woods month, Seed Gathering Season and National Tree Week (first run in March 1975), and through supporting groups organising local events.

It operates a tree-planting grants programme for UK schools and communities to plant trees and create woodland habitats, as well as working on an agenda for change that includes its annual Tree Care Campaign, the Green Monuments Campaign and Hedge Tree Campaign.