



## Overview

*GraftinGardeners Ltd* aim to conduct its business operations and tasks in a manner that reflects best environmental practice and implement the principles of sustainable development. We recognise that all of our activities and operations impact on the environment and that we have an obligation to manage and minimise these impacts and adhere to the wildlife and countryside act 1981.

### Responsibilities of *GraftinGardeners Ltd* include

- To provide accurate information and advice to clients, in relation to wildlife and ecology sustained by any trees in question.
- To provide aftercare to clients in relation to sustainable wildlife on site.
- To insure that all staff members are aware of their obligation in relation to the wildlife and countryside act 1981.
- To insure that site specific risk assessments that are carried out include the risk to wildlife and ecology.
- To insure that all members of staff are aware of *GraftinGardeners Ltd* procedures in relation to nesting birds.
- To insure that all members of staff are aware of *GraftinGardeners Ltd* procedures in relation to presence of bats.
- To insure that all staff carry out a brief inspection of a tree before commencing work within the crown of a tree as part of company best practice, in relation to wildlife and health and safety.
- To work with local and relevant authorities regarding the impact of scheduled or proposed work in relation to localised wildlife and ecology.
- To look out for unwanted pests and diseases and ensure where appropriate, that arising's are managed where necessary in accordance with guidelines and the law.

## Older trees

Trees are highly important in terms of conservation, wildlife and ecology. *GraftinGardeners Ltd* also acknowledge the importance of older trees, particularly large specimens in relation to the habitats of fungi and rare invertebrates such as beetles. The aging of trees creates a habitat for wildlife and although sometime difficult, where possible provisions should be taken to ensure the minimum amount of tree surgery is taken place to afford the maximum protection to localised wildlife and ecology. When trees are removed where possible the option of replanting should be considered and offered to our clients.

## Deadwood

Dead wood is essential to the local ecosystem as it provides a habitat for bats, fungi and invertebrates. It also provides nesting material for nesting birds and a source of food for species such as wood peckers. Although *GraftinGardeners Ltd* are aware that as much deadwood as possible should be retained in both a lying and standing state, *GraftinGardeners Ltd* must insure that health and safety take precedence and there for the removal of deadwood in urban situations is often necessary. Where it is possible *GraftinGardeners Ltd* will aim to leave cut deadwood on site.



## Nesting birds

When carrying out tree works consideration must be given to nesting birds and the implications of any works must be acknowledged. Although *GraftinGardeners Ltd* are aware that ideally tree works should take place between September and February as it is outside the nesting season this cannot be achieved. *GraftinGardeners Ltd* will insure that all employees understand that tree works must cease on discovery of nesting birds or eggs, and report any such discovery to management. *GraftinGardeners Ltd* understand their obligation to advise the client that works will need to be rebooked and cannot be carried out until the trees in question are free of nesting birds.

### *The law*

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is thus an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
- Intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built
- Intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
- have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954
- have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act or the Protection of Birds Act 1954
- use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds
- have in one's possession or control any bird of a species occurring on Schedule 4 of the Act unless registered, and in most cases ringed, in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations (see *Schedules*)
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

TIME OF YEAR	RISK OF ENCOUNTERING NESTING BIRDS	ACTION BY ARBORIST
October to early February	low	Complete site specific risk assessment– not likely that nesting birds will be discovered. If nesting birds or eggs discovered works to cease and management notified.
February to mid-March	moderate	Complete site specific risk assessment– be aware nesting birds could be discovered. If nesting birds or eggs discovered works to cease and management notified.
March-September	high	Complete site specific risk assessment– be aware nesting birds and eggs are likely to be found and work must be carried out with extra caution. Avoid large scale jobs in dense vegetation where possible. If nesting birds or eggs are discovered works to cease and management notified.



## Bats

Consideration must be given to the implications of any tree works on bats. Bat roost can be very hard to identify and are often not used at certain times of the year, baring this in mind employees of *GraftinGardeners Ltd* must be aware of this when caring out tree work within the crown of trees and understand the presence of bats if found must be reported to management who will arrange a bat survey to take place. In the event of an emergency, ie the accidental felling of a tree *GraftinGardeners Ltd* understands their responsibility to contact the English nature local office.

- English nature London office: 0207 340 4870

### *The law*

It is illegal to:

- To kill, injure or take a bat ☒
- To sell, hire, barter or exchange a bat, dead or alive ☒
- To be in possession or control of a bat or anything derived from them
- To damage or destroy a tree, or obstruct access to a tree, which a bat uses for shelter or protection
- To disturb a bat while it is occupying a tree which it uses for shelter or protection

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) protects bats and their roosts in England, Scotland and Wales. Some parts have been amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) which applies in England and Wales, and by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 which applies in Scotland. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 – better known as the Habitats Regulations – implements the European Union’s Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, better known as the Habitats Directive. All bats are listed as ‘European protected species of animals’. Bats and their roosts may also be protected by site safeguard measures, for example if their roost site or feeding grounds are notified as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



HABITAT	COMMENTS	PERCENTAGE OF TREE WORKS CARRIED OUT IN THESE LOCATIONS	RISK OF ENCOUNTERING BATS UTILISING TREES	ACTIONS		
				MANAGER	ARBORIST	SURVEYOR
Heavily urbanised densely populated inner city areas, major highways and busy residential roads	In urban areas There is a decreased risk of bat activity; this is due to a decreased suitable habitat. Bat corridors are still present in urban areas.	90%	low		Fill out site specific risk assessment, work as normal but if bat habitation is encountered, stop all operations, notify manager and client.	Carry out inspections/ visual tree assessments as normal, however, if bat activity is suspected record details and report to client.
Inner city parks / cemeteries. Large suburban garden, school grounds.	Condition of trees in these environments assists the required habitat for bats, this increases the risk of a bat presence.	8%	moderate	Ask client when order is issued whether there is any known bat activity. If 'yes' then request bat survey if 'no' proceed as normal. Notify client and SNCO if necessary.	Fill out site specific risk assessment, work as normal but be aware of increased risk of bat habitation. If bat habitation is encountered, stop all operations, notify manager.	Carry out inspections/ visual tree assessments as normal, however, be aware of increased risk of bat activity and where this is suspected record details and report to client.
Country Parks, water course edges, wetland areas, mature deciduous woodlands, rural cemeteries golf courses and veteran trees.	In such areas there is a high chance of bats being presence and extreme vigilance must be taken to ensure the conservation of habitat in relation to bats.	2%	high	Request bat survey from client, or arrange for one to be obtained. Subsequent works to be undertaken as directed by client, or SNCO	Works to be undertaken as directed by the client or Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation etc.	Carry out visual tree assessments, assume high risk bat habitation, when inspecting.