

The Control of Japanese Knotweed Growth in Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC

How to eradicate Japanese Knotweed

Cost effective methods of control and eventual eradication are achievable through the use of appropriate pesticides applied to the plant at the right time of the year.

Can this be done by the landowner/Occupier?

Yes, but once the cost of the equipment to apply the pesticide as well as the pesticide itself has been calculated plus the potential risk of pollution it may be best to employ a specialist contractor. There is also the reassurance that the works have been carried out to approved codes of practice.

I live next to a watercourse and there is Japanese Knotweed growing on the bank. Who controls the spread of the weed along the watercourse?

It should be noted that properties next to a watercourse could place riparian responsibilities on you, which will include the treatment of Japanese Knotweed. Riparian ownership may not be identified in deed documents.

A further point to highlight working within 10m of a watercourse will require Natural Resources Wales (NRW) approval.
Tel: 0300 060 3000

What does the treatment involve?

An application of the approved herbicide to the actively growing vegetation can be applied once the plants have reached their mature height. With Japanese Knotweed this is usually by the end of July. The treatment window is normally August through to early October.

A first treatment can achieve a 95% kill, however, it is important to repeat the treatment for at least a further two years. The treatment may have to be extended if the ground or the plants have been disturbed in anyway.

During the treatment period it is also very important not to disturb the area. If the land is disturbed there is the risk of triggering further growth.

Why is the treatment period so long?

The root system of Japanese Knotweed plant has the potential to put down roots to a depth of 3m. The first year's treatment will kill the root system in the upper depth of soil. The subsequent treatments will take out the growth that emerges from the lower levels.

If the ground where the plant is growing is disturbed it runs the risk of bringing the lower root system up to the surface making it easier for the plants to re-establish. Left alone the energy reserve of lower roots is spent before it can send shoots up to the surface.

Following each treatment, if so desired, it is possible to cut down and dispose of the dead stems. But it is important not to pull up such stems but to cut them. Pulling can retrigger growth next spring.

More detailed advice on the eradication of Japanese Knotweed can be obtained from the Environment Agency's 'Knotweed Code of Practice'

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/296930/LIT_2695_df1209.pdf

A list of suitably qualified contractors can be found on the Property Care Association website along with a lot more information about the plant, legislation and invasive non-native plants generally.

<http://www.property-care.org/homeowners/invasive-weed-control/>

My property is up for sale but I cannot sell because Japanese Knotweed has been found on my property, what can I do?

If your house is up for sale it is recommended that you seek the advice of suitably qualified professional company. A list of such contractors can be found on the Property Care Association website:

<http://www.property-care.org/homeowners/invasive-weed-control/>

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In general the appointed specialist should provide a report identifying the location of the plant and a programme of action to eradicate it from the property.

As well as implementing the programme of eradication as a seller you may need to provide a warranty for the treatment. Such warranties may need to be in place for a period of five years following the sale.

It should be noted that not all mortgage providers are happy with such proposals so you must check with the potential buyer what their lender will require to satisfy their lending criteria.

My property is free of Japanese Knotweed but it has been identified on neighbouring land and is preventing me from selling my property.

Japanese Knotweed is a **private nuisance** not a public nuisance. It is important to have dialogue with the adjoining land owner. If you are unable to speak to them you should communicate in writing (consider recorded delivery).

If the landowner is not known the **Land Registry** can be contacted to undertake a search:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/land-registry>

The Local Authority does not have an obligation to intervene to resolve the impact of Japanese knotweed growing on private land. However there are anti social behaviour powers which could be considered for private landowners. They would need to be deemed to be acting unreasonably in not eradicating Japanese knotweed which is persistently having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality.

To trigger the use of such powers there is a need to demonstrate that you have

advised the landowner of the problem and requested actions be taken to eradicate the weed but they have been ignored.

Alternatively you could also consider obtaining a bonded policy through an Insurance Company to cover the potential cost of removing the Japanese knotweed in the future. Whereby a fund of money is put into a bond which in the event of a claim, is paid out to cover the cost of any work required.

I have been informed that I have Japanese Knotweed growing on my property and it is causing a problem to my neighbours and I want to eradicate.

Do not panic and do not carry out anything rash such as cutting down the plants! Such action can only delay a positive result and can be costly to resolve.

Japanese Knotweed is a problem and can be detrimental to your property as well as neighbouring land. Although it is possible to undertake a do it yourself, without the right equipment and materials it may cost more than employing a specialist. It is advisable to contact a suitable specialist to arrange eradication and provide a guarantee in case the problem recurs. Adjoining land owners may also require evidence of treatment.

A do nothing approach is not advisable, you must cooperate and make reasonable efforts to make good the problems arising.

A Community Protection Notice can be served on the landowner if it is deemed that you are acting unreasonably by allowing Japanese knotweed to grow on your land and it is affecting neighbouring properties. Breach of any requirement of a Community Protection Notice, without reasonable excuse, would be a criminal offence, subject to a fixed penalty notice or prosecution with fines of up to £2500 for individual landowners.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR – A Visual Guide



Spring – but also regrowth following cutting

Action – do nothing allow to grow



Early Summer May – Mid August

Action – do nothing allow to grow

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July to November

Action: Apply approved herbicide by spray to foliage or injection of stems, undertake from mid August through to first week in October



Winter – and also after effective treatment

Action: Leave alone, but can cut back dead stalks if desired (do not pull).