

## Staggered treatment programme suits local council at Chesham Moor



### **The Client**

Chesham Town Council

### **The Project**

Council maintained Chesham Moor is an attractive 17-acre stretch of common land at the southern end of the town which includes a number of football pitches as well as providing a popular recreational area for walking, picnicking, running and dog walking.

The Moor forms part of the Chess Valley Walk alongside it runs the River Chess, a chalk stream that is a characteristic feature of the Chilterns and provides a distinctive habitat for some of our country's most endangered wildlife.

### **The Challenge**

Chesham Moor was also the site of a massive 2,000m<sup>2</sup> infestation of Japanese Knotweed, an invasive, non-native plant that not only posed a threat to the rivers native plants and animals, but was comprising the space and quality of The Moor itself.

As part of its ongoing environmental commitment, Chesham Town Council has partnered with conservation bodies and community groups to form 'Impress the Chess', a project to protect and restore the River Chess, and it was quickly recognized that a programme of knotweed treatment was urgently required.

The scale of The Moor's infestation and the financial implications of its treatment presented the council with a major challenge as it sought to identify a reputable and cost-effective treatment provider and an environmentally responsible method.

### **The Solution**

Led by its Policy and Project Officer, Kathryn Graves, Chesham Town Council researched various contractors and considered several treatment methods before appointing Japanese Knotweed Control and its innovative stem injection technique.

Because of the size and potential expense of the programme it was agreed that the treatment and payment would be staggered over a three year period, an arrangement that was practical and advantageous to both parties.

Stem injection was recognized by the council as the most ecologically sound and cost-effective treatment method. Kathryn Graves commented: "As well as our river conservation project we also had to be mindful of adjacent allotments so spray treatments were immediately discounted. The localized stem injection eliminates the risk of contaminating watercourses or sensitive vegetation".

### **The Results**

Now in its third and final year of treatment, The Moor has seen a dramatic reduction in the knotweed infestation, with no regrowth from the first two years' stem injection and the site on course for total eradication by the end of this summer.

Kathryn Graves added: "We have been delighted with Japanese Knotweed Control's work and the results which are immediately apparent after each section is completed. Aesthetically it has already had a significant visual impact on The Moor and the staggered programme has enabled the council to cost-effectively manage what was initially a daunting environmental and financial challenge".