

Tackling Knotweed in Stockport

Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Delivering services to over 291,000 people, Stockport Council is responsible for a large and diverse area that stretches from the borders of the Peak District National Park through to cosmopolitan Manchester.

Stockport has a huge variety of parks and recreational spaces which cover almost half of the borough, as well as nine separate local nature reserves. One of the council's 'headline' objectives through to 2010 is to create a leading 'green' borough and within that is a strong environmental commitment to protect its greenspace.

The Challenge

In common with more and more areas of council and private land across the country, Stockport's borough has its own share of sites contaminated with non-native invasive plant species such as Japanese knotweed.

Many of the local nature reserves and parkland spaces were seriously infested with Japanese knotweed and, taking an environmental lead, Stockport Council was keen to get actively involved in its treatment.

The Solution

Specialists Japanese Knotweed Control were initially appointed by Stockport Council as consultants to advise on appropriate treatment methods at several problem sites and to actively work on eradicating the weeds. This led to Japanese Knotweed Control completing extensive treatments on a number of knotweed 'hot spots' across the Borough. Subsequently Japanese Knotweed Control's sister company, Stem Injection Systems (Europe) went on to supply its innovative new stem injection systems directly to the council's parks and recreation team and, with training, enabled Stockport to continue to carry out its own ongoing treatment programmes.

Relying on Japanese Knotweed Control's specialist advice and treatment methods and, latterly, using its own stem injection team, Stockport Council has successfully eradicated large swathes of the knotweed problem, specifically at local nature reserve sites such as Gatley Carrs and Reddish Vale Country Park.

The System

The stem injection system, available exclusively in the UK and Europe through Stem Injection Systems (Europe), works by delivering a measured dose of herbicide directly into the centre of the plant rather than just on the surface. This means it is a far more environmentally-friendly alternative to traditional chemical spraying or dig and dump methods since it avoids drift spray, run-off and contamination of watercourses and other sensitive vegetation.



Before treatment



Twenty-one days later

"We are proud to be the first council in the country to use the new stem injection system and we have been very pleased with the results. Our team has found it to be a much easier to use treatment method and much more accurate in delivering the herbicide and killing only those plants we need to."

This new treatment has brought significant environmental as well as economic benefits to our parks and recreation team."

- Shan Alexander, Executive Councillor (Leisure)