

Most Sheffieldsers tell us how much they like their street trees



STAG

Many want to keep them, others have mixed feelings. We respect their concerns. **Here are some FAQs...**

'Surely diseased and damaged trees have to be removed?'

Sheffield Tree Action Groups (STAG) have always said that genuinely unsafe or sickly trees must be removed.

'The trees are so big and heavy they make our front rooms dark...'

This is due to years of poor maintenance. A simple procedure, called 'crown reduction', removes lower branches and thins out upper ones. It's a cheap solution, creating lots more light and should be done by a trained arborist every few years. Thinned crowns filter car-exhaust fumes more effectively and provide cleaner air for your street.

'Tree-roots have made the pavements uneven in places...'

This sort of damage is often superficial and is usually a sign of poor tree maintenance. Crown reduction controls a tree's nutritional needs, slowing root growth and safeguarding surfaces. Where pavements are very uneven, a range of common 'engineering solutions' can be used to improve both safety and the pavement's appearance. Affordable options, such as flexi-pave, are provided as standard by city councils all over the UK.

Amey claim that complex and expensive engineering solutions are needed, however in most towns and cities highways workers deal with street trees as a routine task. Why should our city be treated any worse than others?

'The leaves make a mess in the autumn...'

Amey have improved leaf clearing, as this is part of their contract. If fallen leaves are serious problem on your street, more than residents can deal with, you may complain to *Streets Ahead* who are responsible for street maintenance.

'I'm worried about tree roots causing subsidence to my house, or damaging drains and sewers...'

The *Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service* says: "There is considerable misinformation about the damage that can be caused by tree roots...Direct damage is rare and usually only occurs when trees are situated less than 1-2m away from lightly loaded structures such as boundary and garage walls."

The *Arboricultural Association* says that tree-roots "...do not usually cause the initial damage to the drain and will only enter drains which are already damaged and leaking. Therefore, if drains are watertight, roots should not normally affect them." If you think you have a problem, get impartial expert advice.

'I've heard that losing our street trees could affect our health...'

A well respected study has shown that living in a street with large, mature trees provides health benefits equivalent to taking 7 years off a person's actual age. The reasons why trees promote better physical and mental health are complex but well documented. If you want to look after yourself, your children and your grandchildren, keep the trees already growing in your street.

If you have any questions about the trees in your street contact your local tree group, details of which can be found at www.savesheffieldtrees.org.uk