



## **Best Practice Guidance Note: Japanese Knotweed Control.**

Japanese Knotweed is covered under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and is one of the most invasive plants in Great Britain. Under this Act, it is an offence to cause its' spread. It is a controlled waste for purposes of the Environment Protection Act and must be disposed of at a licensed landfill site in accordance with the Act.

In practice, it is often best left on the site, to die down once sprayed – removal and disposal is difficult.

Knotweed can colonise most habitats and grow through walls, tarmac and concrete. It is characterised through its fleshy red shoots in Spring arising from its network of rhizomes underground. By June, stems can grow up to 3 metres, bearing cream flowers in July. It dies back at first frosts but bare stems can remain over winter.

All seeds are non viable, the plant spreads by fragments of rhizome and stem transported by humans or through water courses. Even the smallest stem or rhizome can produce fresh plants.

Guidelines for control involve the use of cultural, mechanical, biological and chemical in an integrated manner. However, in practice, neither cutting, pulling or indeed grazing are effective methods of control. If knotweed is recognised, the first step must be containment by good hygiene practice combined with a chemical eradication programme.

In terms of control: Try to spray before top growth becomes too tall, otherwise cut down the knotweed and then treat the re-growth. Treatment can be accomplished by foliar sprays or stem injection. There are several products or mixtures that can be used containing: picloram, triclopyr, aminopyralid+fluroxypyr or glyphosate. The timings, methods of application and areas of use vary for each product.

It is important to note that relevant Environment Agency approval is required before use in aquatic areas. Only glyphosate can be used in these areas.

It is also important to regularly monitor sites with re-treatment as necessary.

