

How Healthy Are Your Trees?

Most of us are aware of trees where we live. Perhaps we assume that they will always be there? However, like us, trees have a natural lifespan and there are always threats to their health. Sometimes, these may be killing trees. If this is likely to happen, then precautions must be taken, or new trees must be planted to replace some of the old, dead or dying trees - although some may be important for conservation, of 'deadwood' insects and fungi, for example. More information is needed before these steps can be taken.

Many towns and villages now have Tree Warden Schemes. You and your friends have been selected! Your job is to carry out a tree health survey in your local area.

1. Working in groups, start by plotting the distribution of trees on a large scale map of your area (get a 1:2500 if you can) - you will need to think carefully about how and what you are going to sample; whether you are going to look at all species, age groups and/or different land use types, for example.
2. Now try the tree health survey. Plot your results onto a table that you have drawn up beforehand.
3. Compare your results to the national averages on this page: are your results similar? If not, explain the possible causes for the differences in your area. Using this information, draw up a local tree management plan, but don't forget that looking after a tree can cost more than planting it!

Town Trees

National averages based on a survey of 320 sites in 66 towns in the UK

AGE

CONDITION

TYPE

LAND USE