



The Knotweed Company Limited Case Studies

Japanese knotweed is a problem on many different sites and can be remediated in many different ways. The Knotweed Company has experience of dealing with this problem and has a considerable background to draw on in finding the most appropriate and cost effective solution(s) for a site.

The Knotweed Company has received recognition for our work, which includes developing solutions on complex and difficult sites. We work with our clients to ensure that our solutions are robust, practical and (where necessary) flexible to accommodate changes during the development process.

The below case studies are examples of some of our work.

1) Ham Lands – London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames (2005-present).

Ham Lands is a large (72 Ha) site in South-west London bordering the River Thames. The site is a nature reserve and consists largely of mature woodland and hay meadows. In 2005, works began on this site to control 5 Hectares of knotweed (approximately 4 Hectares of Japanese knotweed and 1 Hectare of the hybrid *Reynoutria japonica x Bohemica*). The knotweed originally consisted of nearly 100 different stands, often with poor accessibility and on steep terrain.

The knotweed on site is still making sporadic growth from the larger stands and some outlying areas, which needs to be located and treated every year by our team. This site demonstrates our work over a long period and ability to work on very large sites and on very large areas of knotweed. Our main team for this site is led by Paul Copper who began the treatments with Brian Taylor (our director) in 2005.

It is often mistakenly thought that Japanese knotweed can be fully controlled in 3-5 years. However, professionals who work in this field find that large infestations of knotweed take many more years to achieve completion. This is supported by the work of Swansea University and the research paper published by Dr. Daniel Jones (*Optimising physiochemical control of invasive Japanese knotweed*, Jones *et al.* 2018). Certainly our ongoing work at Ham Lands demonstrates the need for very long control programmes for large and mature infestations.

In 2018, we carried out an inspection of this site with the council's ecology officer, Tasha Hunter, and conducted some hand excavation of rhizome material in some of the stand areas. We found a section of hybrid rhizome which was decaying, though one small fragment of the rhizome was still alive (8mm x 4mm x 3mm) and formed a new shoot of 180mm in height within 3 weeks. This hybrid knotweed plant was subsequently sent to CABI for use in their biocontrol psyllid trials.

2) Merthyr Valley Homes (2014 to present)

Merthyr Tydfil and the surrounding area, including the River Taff, are very heavily infested with Japanese knotweed. We work extensively in this area treating properties and land for the local Housing Association – Merthyr Valley Homes. These include multi-garden infestations and also liaising with our client regarding spread from adjoining properties into or from their land.

We currently treat 34 individual sites for the housing association, each of which typically includes 3-4 houses (and in some cases more).

Our works typically include liaising with the property owners, supplying programme updates to the housing association and also offering professional advice and support (when requested) to the housing association.



Untreated area of Japanese knotweed in rear garden.

3) Cell burial in Suffolk

A large housing development was being built on an old landfill site. There were multiple stands of Japanese knotweed, as well as giant hogweed, over the area. The location was also in a Ground Water Protection Zone, which affected the choice of herbicides and meant permission to use herbicides on this site was required.

Fortunately, timescales for this work allowed time for plans to be prepared and the necessary permissions obtained from the Environment Agency.

The Knotweed Company advised two distinct strategies. Firstly, an herbicide programme for all the giant hogweed, as well as the Japanese knotweed that did not impact on the development. Secondly, a large cell burial for the areas of Japanese knotweed which would otherwise impact on the development. The Environment Agency was consulted and permission granted for these strategies.

A cell burial was agreed and undertaken.



Japanese knotweed emerging through crushed concrete.



Giant hogweed on site – numerous locations.



Preparing the burial cell.



Installing the cell liner.



Excavating the Japanese knotweed on site.



Excavating the Japanese knotweed on site.



Filling the cell with the excavated Japanese knotweed soils.



Sealing the cell burial.