

## Please check for Strangling Tree-Ties

When a tree is planted, it is often supported using stakes and tree-ties. This holds the root system firm in the ground and ensures the tree doesn't blow over. Over time, the roots of a healthy tree grow into the surrounding soil. It is soon able to bear its own weight and withstand the elements, and at this point the stakes and tree-ties should be removed (typically 3-5 years after planting).

**Why?** The pressure of a tree-tie can constrict the growth of the trunk, causing damage to the bark and the living tissue underneath. This restricts the flow of resources that the tree needs to survive (water, nutrients and carbohydrates). Through a lack of good aftercare or a lack of understanding, these trees will struggle to establish in the landscape, with many dying as a result.

**Consider:** Tree-ties are meant to be reasonably tight, and they are often made of semi-flexible material to allow the tree some room to grow. Some tree-ties are adjustable, so they can be loosened-off when needed, but can continue to offer support. Ensure action is only taken when a problem exists – see what to check for below:



### How to spot a Strangling Tree-Tie

- Are you aware that the tree was planted more than three years ago?
- Is the tree-tie overly tight and very difficult to move by hand?
- Can you see a difference in the texture of the bark behind the tree-tie?
- Is the trunk bulging above or below?
- Is the tree-tie frayed or are the posts rotten?

### What to do?

- Make contact with the owner of the tree – this may be a homeowner, a local council, a highways authority or a management company. Advise them of the issue and suggest to them that they investigate with a view to removing or adjusting the tree-tie.
- When appropriate, the owner of the tree may appreciate an offer of help.

**You may just be saving this tree.**